



# **Safe Abortion Advocacy Initiative**

## Global South Engagement

### **Leveraging digital innovations for improving access to abortion**

**(In-person parallel event at CSW 2023)**

*March 13, 2023 (Monday) 10:30 AM to 12 Noon EDT  
10th Floor, Church Centre of the United Nations (CCUN),  
777 United Nations Plaza,  
New York, NY 10017,  
United States*

#### **Moderator:**

*Sivananthi Thanenthiran*

#### **Speakers:**

Samia Habli, The A project, Lebanon  
Marevic Parcon Bing, WGNRR, The Philippines  
Samia Afrin, Naripokho, Bangladesh  
Manuela Tironi, Catholics for Choice, Chile  
Kalpana Rai, BBC, Nepal

**Background:** Access to non-judgmental quality information and services for safe abortion remains crucial to achieving gender equality and empowerment of all those in need of these services. However, restrictive and poorly understood legalities, non-inclusive legal vocabulary, limited focus on abortion in health services, lack of relevant and reliable health information coupled with socio-cultural factors has made access elusive to most in need. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted health systems and Civil Society Organisations to explore integrating digital components for service and information delivery. These innovations and beyond can potentially leverage technological changes (already being done in certain settings) to improve abortion access, especially access to and experiences of self-managed abortions. The event would deliberate on the current and prospective innovations with plausible adaptations and advocacy opportunities for diverse socio-legal country settings. Digital alternatives can effectively



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challenge restrictions and stigma within the context of complex socio-cultural milieu and increasing hostility to reproductive rights.

### Agenda

Time	Description	Speaker/ Moderator
10:30 -10:40 am	Welcome and Introduction	Siva
10:40- 10:50	Presentation by A Project: Situation of safe abortion in the region, work of A project and opportunities/ progress in digitalizing access	Samia Habli
10:50- 11:00	Presentation by WGNRR: Situation in the Philippines, Digitalization MA problems and prospects in restricted settings.	Marevic Parcon Bing
11:00-11:10	Presentation by Naripokkho : Revised MR guidelines and digitalization of MR - situation and opportunities	Samia Afrin
11:10-11:20	Presentation by Catholics for Choice: International perspective focused on Latin America regarding its challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and access to abortion services in conservative/difficult legal contexts and the influence of Church	Manuela Tironi
11:20- 11:30	Presentation by BBC: Progressive laws and gaps in digital access- experience from Nepal	Kalpana Rai
11:30-11:50	Q&A with panelists	Siva
11:50-12:00	Wrap up and Closing	Siva

### **About the organizer:**

The Safe Abortion Advocacy Initiative - A Global South Engagement (SAIGE), launched in 2018 is committed to realizing safe abortion as a human right. It aspires to shape discourse at all national, regional and global level; consisting of CSOs and provides a platform for advocates, activists, academics and service providers. <https://saige.arrowadvocacy.org/>