

arrow

annual report

Rallying for Sexual and Reproductive Rights

2015

the asian-pacific resource and
research centre for women
(arrow)



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annual report
2015

We Are the ARROW Women

We work towards an equal, just, and equitable world, where every woman enjoys her full sexual and reproductive health and rights. Since 1993, we've been putting forward Global South perspectives, and amplifying the voices of women from the Asia-Pacific region. Through ARROW's programmatic interventions, and with our partners, we've challenged patriarchy, and its intersections with regressive forces, such as the markets and religious conservatisms, extremism, and fundamentalisms, as well as emerging trends such as climate change. With every gender-sensitive goal or indicator adopted by the international community, a new partnership cemented, an ally built from other social movements, an ARROW staff invited to an expert panel or UN conference, an evidence-based research or blog published and then shared/re-tweeted by others on social media, an ARROW-trained organisation cascading SRHR knowledge and advocacy skills learnt to others, and a once-silent woman who has found the courage to go to the nearest local government agency to demand for her and other women's right to safe and quality sexual and reproductive health services, we know that the small and concerted steps we take are in the direction of that world for which we aspire.

We are proud of our achievements in 2015—achievements that could not have been realised without your confidence and trust in us, and in the power of collaborations.



*ARROW Women at the Organisational Development Session, 29-30 October 2015, Kuala Lumpur.
Source: Sivananthi Thanenthiran, ARROW Photobank.*

Contents

<u>Reflections from the Executive Director</u>	6
<u>ARROW's Network of Partners and Global Reach in 2015</u>	8
<u>About ARROW</u>	10
<u>Championing SRHR at the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Process</u>	14
<u>Bridging Siloes: Intersectionalities and Inter-movements</u>	24
<u>Strengthening Advocacy Capacities of Women and Youth</u>	32
<u>Stimulating Social Change Through Information and Communications</u>	42
<u>Organisational Development and Finance</u>	50
<u>The ARROW Community</u>	60

Reflections from the Executive Director

2015 was a critical year for ARROW and the NGO community. The year marked the end of the era of the [Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#), and the beginning of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The time of transitioning to a new global set of development goals, indicators, and targets was indeed a pivotal moment. Compared to the MDGs, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) materialised through consultations and negotiations led by Member States.

The period of the intergovernmental negotiations, which ran from January to July, saw the United Nations (UN) open up spaces for civil society. These spaces allowed for us to actively make statements during the negotiations, through open processes of nomination, voting, and selection. Spaces also began to be allocated to the private sector—development stakeholders pushed by the UN as key partners in funding and implementing sustainable development: a move that expands the power and influence of business in the development sector.

For us, ARROW women, our more than two decades of work on evidence generation and perspective building brought us in good standing at international spaces.

We were selected to speak in six of the eight [intergovernmental sessions](#) in 2015. The presence of ARROW women was also felt strongly at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September, being one of the 24 participants from around the world to officially represent civil society. It was indeed a proud moment for us, to see women from the Global South standing up again, and again, and again for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR): an agenda strengthened by our intersectionality analysis, which helped elaborate the links between gender equality, health, SRHR, climate change, right to food and nutrition, and other sustainable development issues. Our unrelenting commitment to SRHR, and the investments we made to mobilise action, positioned us as a global CSO player in the various post-2015 development agenda processes.

During the year, we joined the women's movement and the SRHR movement in recognising that the agreed-upon SDGs hold more promise for our work than the MDGs did. Reducing maternal mortality, addressing adolescent pregnancies, and increasing access to contraception remain in the SDGs, and issues such as violence, female genital mutilation, child, early and forced marriage, and reproductive rights (as put forward by Beijing and Cairo) have been added. However, significant gaps do remain, as there always is with negotiated outcomes.

In line with ARROW's on-going advocacy work, critical issues missed by the SDGs include sexual rights, reproductive cancers, and key aspects of young people's rights.

The absence of sexual rights within the SDGs implies that many governments have significantly been at a standstill on the issue, even when 20 years have already passed since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Tokenistic and siloed approaches continue to persist, with governments opting to selectively address elements of sexual rights: such as early marriage, while excluding completely Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer (LGBTIQ) rights. Although reproductive cancers pose the greatest challenge to public health in the next 15 years, especially for women in the Global South, the SDG framework

does not enable governments to prepare adequately for their impacts. Finally, the marginalisation of young people's needs—such as comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly SRHR services—runs the risk of implementing an SDG framework disconnected from the realities of the generation it serves.

Parallel to our involvement at the intergovernmental negotiations, and consistent with our intersectionality approach, ARROW also started the process of influencing various Geneva human rights mechanisms, with evidence and perspectives from the ground.

The end of the year brought home to all of us the stark realities of the divided and fragmented world we live in: a world of chaos, conflict, and crisis. The possibility of unending war, and continuing terror attacks across the Western and Eastern world brought home to us how much more work needs be done, and how much more challenging the work has become. In Asia Pacific, governments hailed the signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, while people's movements denounced the move. Yet another example of how regressive agreements that crown corporations over people compromise national sovereignty, accountability for development, inequality redress, and the sustainability of our planet.

It was only fitting then that we ended the year with further plans to strategise with partners, allies, and young people to see how we can, together, keep working towards realising sexual and reproductive health and rights for women in Asia Pacific and the Global South, amidst these demanding contexts.

The times call upon us to act with courage, with creativity, and in collaboration with like-minded stakeholders, to create a more gender-just world for us all.

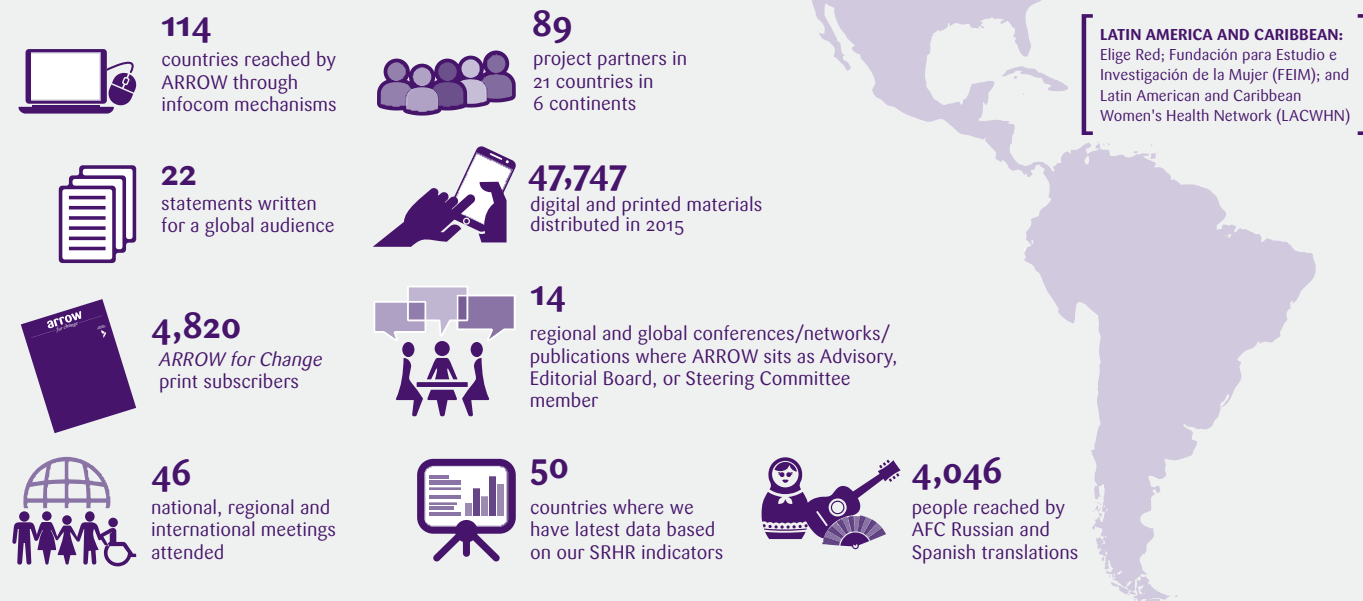
We are proud, yet humbled, to partner with some of the most incredible hands-on SRHR champions on the ground—both from the NGO and donor communities, and a passionate group of women, men, and young people across Asia Pacific and the Global South who are our touchstones. Through them, we are reassured that the work we do is much needed for the majority of people who remain at the periphery of development.



Sivananthi Thanenthiran
ARROW Executive Director

Photo by Sachini Perera, ARROW Photobank.

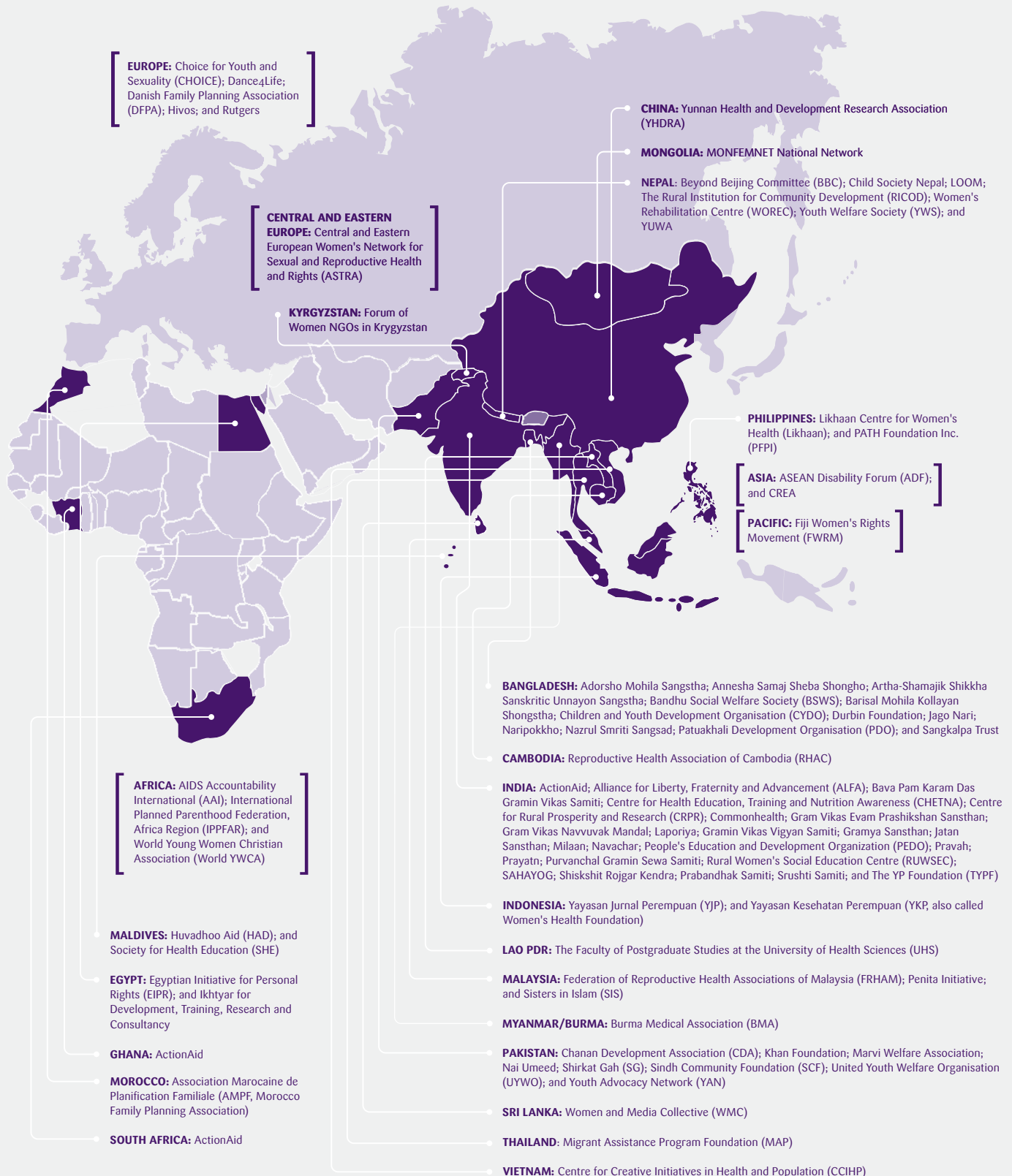
ARROW's Network of Partners and Global Reach in 2015



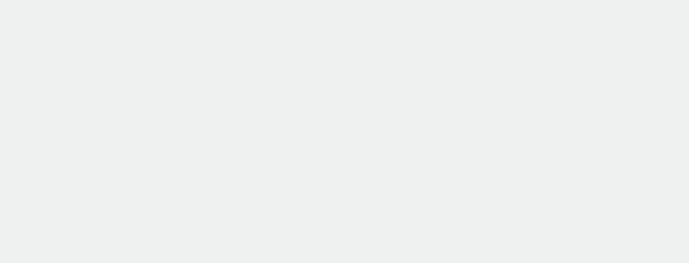
Networks and Committees We Work With or Are Part of:

ActionAid Research on Inter-linkages between Young Women's Economic Rights and SRHR International Advisory and Expert Group
 AP-RCEM Thematic Working Group on SRHR, Gender and Sexuality
 ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum 2015 (ACSC/APF) Regional Steering Committee
 Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights (APCRSHR) International Steering Committee
 Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM)
 Asia-Pacific Safe Abortion Partnership (ASAP)
 Asia-Pacific Women's Watch (APWW)
 Asian Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC)
 Association for Women in Development (AWID)
 Civil Society Platform to Promote SRHR Beyond 2015
 Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies (CSBR)
 Feminist Watch on Fundamentalisms
 FP2020 Rights and Empowerment Working Group
 Global Network on the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNRFN) (observer)

International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP)
 International Initiative on Maternal Mortality and Human Rights (IIMMHR)
 International Women and Health Meeting (IWHM)
 Observatory on Universality of Rights (OURs)
 Population and Sustainable Development Alliance (PSDA)
 Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations Stakeholder Steering Committee (March, April and May sessions)
 Post-2015 Women's Coalition
 Reproductive Rights Advocacy Alliance Malaysia (RRAAM)
 Right to Food and Nutrition Watch Editorial Board
 UNFPA Global Civil Society Advisory Panel
 UN General Assembly Hearings on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, May 2015
 Unzip the Lips
 Women's Major Group (WMG)
 Women's Working Group for Financing for Development
 Young Urban Women's Project
 Youth Leadership Working Group



About ARROW



ARROW is a regional non-profit women's organisation in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia that has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

OUR VISION

An equal, just, and equitable world that enables all women to be equal citizens in all aspects of their lives, and that protects and advances their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

OUR MISSION

We promote and defend women's rights and their needs, particularly in the areas of health and sexuality, and reaffirm their agency to claim these rights.

Our work contributes to achieving the following long-term outcomes:

1 Systems, policies and programmes are reoriented to uphold gender equality and SRHR, and to deliver comprehensive, gender-sensitive, and rights-based sexual and reproductive health services that are accessible, just, equitable, and of the highest quality.

2 Strong and effective women's movements and civil society that are vigilant in influencing policy agenda on women's health, sexuality, and rights; in demanding for governments and donors to deliver to their international and national commitments; and in claiming spaces for their representation and participation within decision-making structures.

3 Improvements in the lives and health outcomes of all women, particularly in the area of SRHR of the poor and the marginalised.

HOW WE WORK

We believe that together, we must take concerted, collective, and progressive steps to achieve our vision for change.

We approach our work through a four-pronged strategy:



**KNOWLEDGE SHARING
THROUGH INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION**



**BUILDING STRONG AND
EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS
AND NETWORKS**



**MONITORING AND
EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH
FOR ADVOCACY**



**IMPROVING ORGANISATIONAL
SYSTEMS FOR BETTER
OUTCOMES**

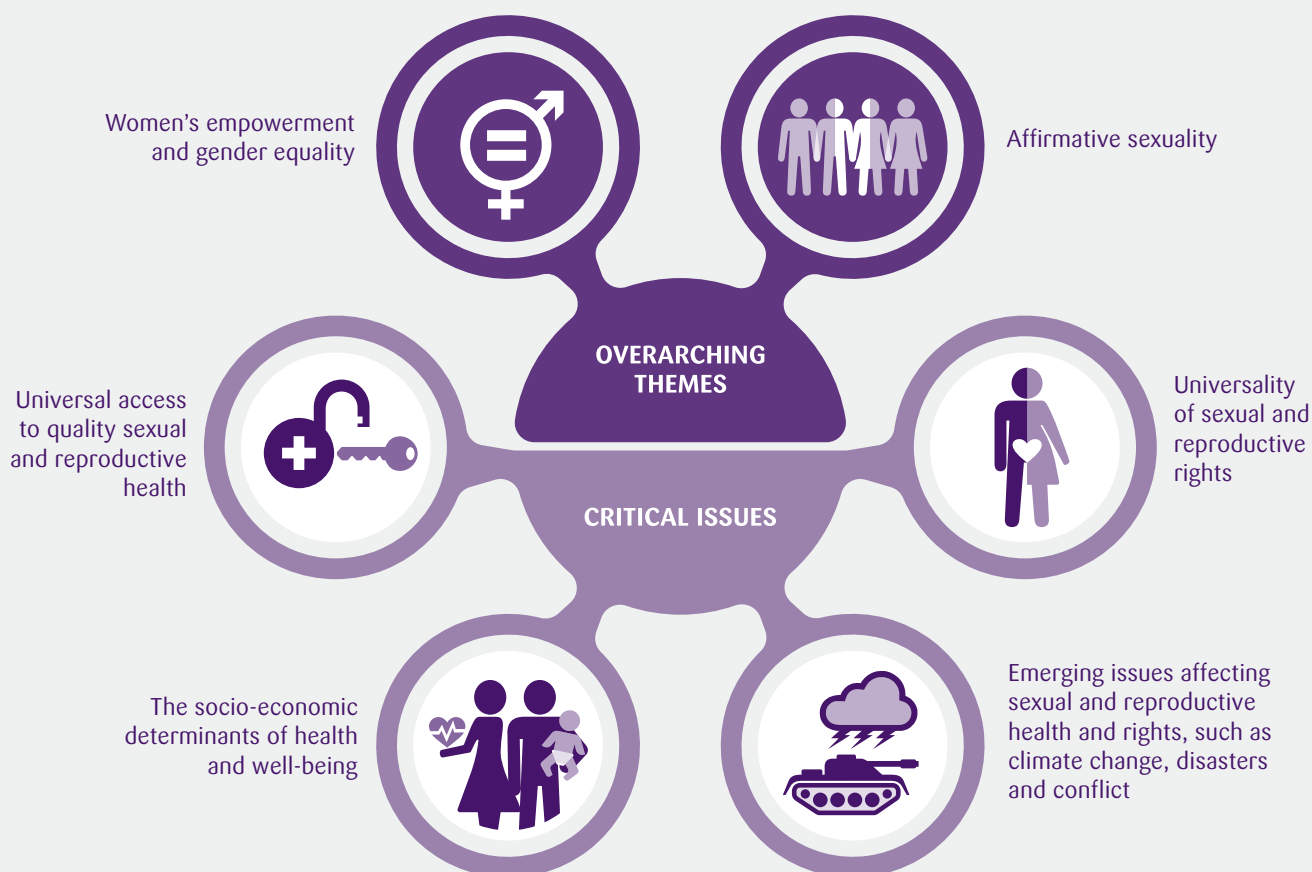
WHO WE WORK WITH AND THE TOPICS WE WORK ON

Ultimately, we want to see significant and sustained improvements in the SRHR of women and young people across Asia and the Pacific, and globally.

We work with non-governmental organisations and social movements, health service providers and associations, governments and their institutions, international agencies, human rights institutions, and the media.

Our aim is to collaborate with them, and influence their approach so that they too are able to co-develop and advance rights-based and gender-sensitive policies and programmes related to health, sexuality, and rights.

With like-minded stakeholders and SRHR champions, we tackle the following topics:





ARROW women speak at the Post-2015
Intergovernmental Sessions
(from top to bottom):
Maria Melinda Ando at the 2nd session,
Sai Jyothirma Racherla at the 3rd session,
Nabila Nasir at the 4th session;
Arpita Das at the 5th session;
Sachini Perera at the 6th session;
and Nalini Singh at the 7th session.
Sources: Screenshots of UN video recordings.

“ Our Global Partnership will be successful when we reach the most marginalised communities. We need to prevent early-age marriage for girls in villages, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services for the poor, and create a world free from violence and discrimination for all.

For THAT, we need to uphold the HIGHEST STANDARDS, even if they are CONTENTIOUS. ”

Sivananthi Thanenthiran

Executive Director of ARROW, addressing the UN General Assembly during the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015.



Source: UN.

Championing SRHR at the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Process

Since ARROW's founding, we have been monitoring progress in the uptake and implementation of commitments to SRHR, from a Global South perspective. To ensure that our interventions are relevant, we operate in a circular mode—that is, we bring our analysis from the ground to the national, regional, and international halls of decision making, and vice versa.

Because systemic change requires concerted advocacy efforts at multiple fronts—often occurring at the same time—the sharing of knowledge and tools is high on our agenda. With our research and project partners, we engage in mutual sharing and learning exercises, to build capacity and launch effective actions.

While the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) framework was successful in “raising the bar” for international development cooperation, inequalities and sustainability threats persist.

As the deadline for the MDGs drew near, there was unanimity in acknowledging the gaps in meeting many of the goals and targets, as well as the need to sustain the MDGs and expand them. These calls resulted in the emergence of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda—the successor framework of the MDGs.¹ With our partners, we welcomed the UN's decision to open up the post-2015 sustainable development agenda processes, and enlarge civil society's role at related intergovernmental processes.

Aided by the enormous amount of SRHR monitoring data we had accumulated over the years, in 2015, there was evidence of a growing recognition of the unique space that ARROW occupied.

ARROW women participated in 15 UN-initiated post-2015-related meetings and side events, and led and/or supported post-2015 communications and advocacy work of networks, such as in five intergovernmental sessions for the Women's Major Group.

Monitoring SRHR Status in the Global South Made Possible Through Partnerships

Since Member States' adoption of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD PoA) in 1994, ARROW has been monitoring the status of women's rights and SRHR at five-year intervals.

Today, our SRHR monitoring framework titled “Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Database of Indicators” contains 47 key SRHR indicators, with data for 50 countries around the world. Our data is critical for advocacy around the development and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

For the 20th review of ICPD, we up-scaled our monitoring efforts across other Global South regions. This was made possible through partnerships with ASTRA (Central and Eastern Europe); EIPR (Egypt); LACWHN (Latin America and Caribbean); and World YWCA (Africa).

Last updated in November 2015, data in our SRHR monitoring framework is derived from ICPD+20 SRHR and youth SRHR status reports for Africa, Asia Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, and the Middle East and North Africa.

As part of our capacity strengthening activities, we directly trained 14 national and regional organisations/networks to engage in post-2015 sustainable development processes, develop communications strategies, and launch effective campaigns.

POST-2015 INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS

We presented at six of the eight intergovernmental sessions in 2015, and served as Steering Committee members of some sessions. As Steering Committee members, we had the opportunity to facilitate the participation of CSOs as resource persons and/or members of succeeding Steering Committees.

Of the 435 CSO applications received by the UN to formally address participants of the UN Sustainable Development Summit 2015, ARROW was the only women's rights and SRHR organisation invited to speak. The Summit was the site where governments adopted and signed on to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—the outcome document of monthly intergovernmental sessions that took place during the year.

Selected as one of the 24 CSOs to address participants of the Summit, it was a privilege for us to represent the movement's rallying cry for SRHR, and our shared brand of social justice.

Top: Sai Jyothirmai Racherla at the First Meeting of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), 1-2 June 2015, New York. Source: Screenshot from video.

Middle: Biplabi Shrestha at the side event, “Financing Development Justice: How Can FfD 3 Deliver for Rights and Sustainability?,” during the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, 13 July 2015, Addis Ababa. Photo by Nurgul Djaneva.

Bottom: Maria Melinda Ando at the High Level Political Forum, 1 July 2015, New York. Source: IISD.



Our Calls: ARROW Key Messages

✓ **Gender equality and empowerment, women's rights, and human rights are vital for delivering sustainable development.** Sustainable development cannot be built upon oppressive systems.

✓ **Enlarge the discourse of human rights** to explicitly protect, promote, and advance full SRHR for all. SRHR is interlinked with and crucial to achieving sustainable development, and sexual rights is a critical component of this.

✓ **Recognise that all rights are intertwined.** Gender inequality, poverty, hunger, malnutrition, climate change, conflict, disasters, and religious extremisms and fundamentalisms are key factors that impact on the achievement of women's and young people's SRHR.

✓ **Integrate targets for universal access to SRH services and comprehensive sexuality education** in national strategies and programmes.

✓ **Protect sexual and reproductive rights, and guarantee universal access to SRH services for all**, including the most marginalised groups, such as “stateless” actors, i.e., indigenous communities, undocumented migrants, refugees, and others.

✓ **Set up institutional transparency and monitoring mechanisms** that would hold governments accountable for translating their commitments to action.

✓ **Introduce appropriate accountability measures** to make sure that businesses adhere to human rights and gender-just standards.

✓ **Institutionalise sustainable development indicators** that are rights-based, internationally comparable, and measureable.

✓ **Guarantee the meaningful, and wide participation of civil society**, particularly women's rights and youth-led organisations, in all aspects of SDG formulation, implementation, monitoring, and review, at all levels.

✓ **All goals are interlinked**, and hence, sustainable development is not possible if governments pick and chose, and take a siloed approach. An intersectional approach to solve inequality, and to achieve the SDGs is necessary. Whilst national realities need to be taken into account, this should be done only to achieve higher standards within the targets and goals, and not to dilute the transformative agenda.

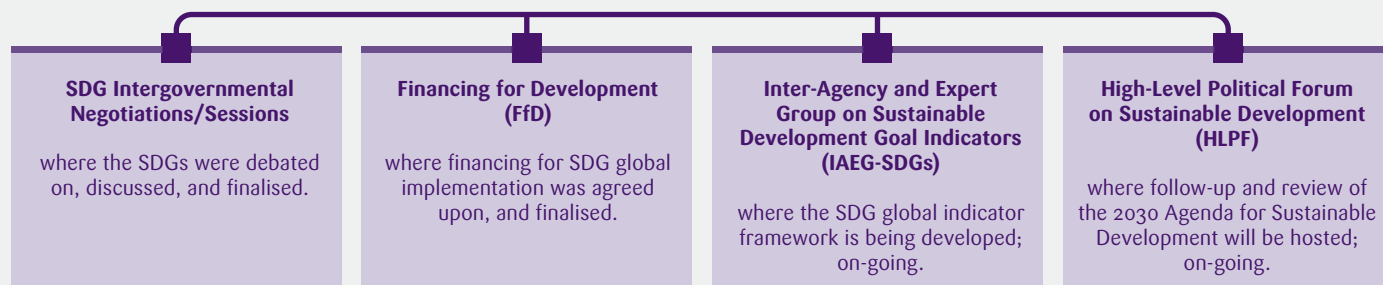
Key Post-2015-Related Events Attended by ARROW Women in 2015*

January	February	March	April	May
<p>Post-2015 Intergovernmental Session 1: Stocktaking</p> <p>CSO and UNFPA Global Strategy Meeting—ICPD Beyond 2014 and Post-2015 Development Agenda (Istanbul)</p>	<p>Post-2015 Intergovernmental Session 2: Declaration</p>	<p>Post-2015 Intergovernmental Session 3: Sustainable Development Goals and Targets</p> <p>46th Session of the Statistical Commission</p> <p>High-Level Thematic Debate on Advancing Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls for a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda</p>	<p>Post-2015 Intergovernmental Session 4: Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Post-2015 Intergovernmental Session 5: Follow-up and Review</p> <p>Integrating SRHR within the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda – Regional Strategising Meeting (Kuala Lumpur)</p> <p>Asia Pacific CSO Forum on Sustainable Development (Bangkok)</p> <p>2nd Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) (Bangkok)</p>

* With the exception of meetings where a city is mentioned, the rest took place in New York, USA.

Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda Processes During the Year

Occurred Simultaneously in Four Tracks



Resulted in Member State Adoption of Two Key Outcome Documents



FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

The MDG framework has been critiqued for the absence of a financial mechanism to support the achievement of goals. This resulted in the coming together of the SDG agenda process with the once separate international track of Financing for Development (FfD). In 2015, the FfD was on its third year of implementation.

This convergence pushed us into uncharted topics and spaces beyond our comfort zones. With the Third International Conference on Financing for Development scheduled for 13-16 July, ARROW had some eight months to orient herself with these issues.

ARROW has tackled financing issues before, and published an *ARROW for Change* volume on this, particularly around the politics of aid. However, tackling the intersectional issues of financing within the FfDs, sustainable development and means of implementation in a post-2015 era, demanded for us to update, and strengthen our analyses—not only for our own capacity building, but to also share the latest knowledge with our partners so that together, we can launch concerted and simultaneous SRHR actions at multiple levels. ARROW's capacity to break down these concepts were shown in the articles on financing, means of implementation, and indicators featured in our AFC Vol. 21 No. 1, "Gender, SRHR and the



ARROW and partners at the *Third International Conference on Financing for Development and CSO Forum*, Addis Ababa, July 2015. Source: ARROW Photobank.

Post-2015 Agenda" bulletin. AFC Vol. 21 is available in English and Russian.

As ARROW and her partners' knowledge deepened, we came together for a Regional Strategising Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in May. There, we planned for the next steps of our post-2015 engagement, and commenced write up of our national/region-specific advocacy briefs titled, "[Call for Action to Integrate SRHR for ALL into the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#)."²

With very little time, our collective achievements were indeed a source of inspiration for the partnership. Shortly after our Regional Strategising Meeting, our partners were quick to engage CSOs and various government agencies on these issues, at national level. Across all consultations and dialogues attended by our partners, their respective evidence-based advocacy briefs provided useful analyses and data to enrich discussions.

Engagement: Integrating SRHR for All Into the Post-2015 Development Agenda at the National and Regional Levels in the Global South Regions

DURATION: May 2015-December 2015

ARROW PARTNERS: Naripokkho, Bangladesh; RHAC, Cambodia; YHDRA, China; Commonhealth, India; YKP, Indonesia; Forum of Women NGOs, Kyrgyzstan; UHS, Lao PDR; MONFEMNET, Mongolia; SG, Pakistan; Likhaan, Philippines; WMC, Sri Lanka; CCIHP, Vietnam; AAI (Africa, Regional); Elige Red (Latin America and the Caribbean, Regional)

Integrating SRHR for All Into the Post-2015 Development Agenda Partnership Activities



Multi-sectoral engagement (covers CSOs and national governments):
All project partners



Participation at the FfD and CSO Forum in Addis Ababa:
ARROW; RHAC, Cambodia; YHDRA, China; Forum of Women's NGOs, Kyrgyzstan; MONFEMNET, Mongolia; WMC, Sri Lanka; CommonHealth, India



CSO awareness training and skills development workshops: ARROW; CCIHP, Vietnam; RHAC, Cambodia; CommonHealth, India; WMC, Sri Lanka; YHDRA, China; Forum of Women, Kyrgyzstan; AAI, Africa (Regional); Elige Red, Latin America and the Caribbean (Regional)



Advocacy briefs completed: RHAC, Cambodia; UHS, Lao PDR; YKP, Indonesia; YHDRA, China; Forum of Women's NGOs, Kyrgyzstan; AAI, Africa (Regional); Elige Red, Latin America and the Caribbean (Regional)



Advocacy briefs translated: CCIHP, Vietnam; UHS, Lao PDR; RHAC, Cambodia; YHDRA, China; Elige Red, Latin America and the Caribbean (Regional)

INTER-AGENCY AND EXPERT GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL INDICATORS

Data for evidence generation is crucial to hold institutions accountable for their development commitments. At the same time, while data is essential, it is also able to hide inequalities and systemic discrimination. This is why ARROW, with her long history of monitoring international commitments, and developing rights-based indicators, deemed it necessary to engage within the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG)—a key platform where indicators for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda were being developed.

At the two IAEG-SDG events (as well in others), we proposed the application of rights-based SRHR indicators, and debated fiercely for the highest standards of principles, accountability, and regulatory mechanisms to monitor and assess government and private sector performance of their development roles. Our on-going monitoring work and evidence generation with partners informed our interventions in the IAEG-SDG space.

CONCLUDING THE POST-2015 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA PROCESS

This year's post-2015 sustainable development agenda process culminated with the Member States' adoption of two outcome documents: the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The development mantra was to **LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**. However, for the SRHR community, many contradictions remain to be addressed:³

- Sexual rights, comprehensive sexuality education, LGBTIQ, sexual orientation and gender identities, and reproductive cancers continue to be excluded from the negotiation tables.
- Increased private sector involvement in development is being encouraged, without giving much attention to rights-based regulation and accountability measures.
- At key 2015 events, the international community failed to reach consensus on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) between countries. For ARROW, the CBDR is an equity-facilitating concept that is grounded on solidarity and mutual respect. It is a reflective acknowledgement that a big majority of the

world's population does not benefit from the current world order.

Nevertheless, along with our partners and other SRHR stakeholders, we recognise that the SRHR community does have a good practical starting point to work with in the next 15 years:

- The language of human rights, gender equality, and empowerment of all women and girls appear on the Preamble of the 2030 Agenda.
- The 2030 Agenda reaffirms the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action, and follow-up initiatives of these conferences.
- SRHR is well integrated within the SDGs and its targets, in particular, in Goals 3 and 5.

Appropriate and Uninterrupted Investment to Universal SRH Will Yield Great Returns



Source: High-level Task Force for ICPD. *Smarter Investments for Financing the Post-2015 Development Agenda*. As cited in the statement [Gender Equality and SRHR: Crucial Components of the Asia-Pacific Roadmap for Agenda 2030](#)

SRHR Champions

“It’s often problematic to express ideas and thoughts on sexuality freely. This deprives people from learning and building new capacities, but with the right platform, fear can be overcome. The ARROW-TARSHI internship gave me an opportunity to learn about sexuality, gender, sexual health and rights, and understand how organisations and governments address the SRHR of diverse groups. It exposed me to youth networks in India, Nepal and Bangladesh, and broadened my knowledge—to make sure that no one is left behind.

In Nepal, people with disabilities (PWDs) are vulnerable due to various myths and stigma. The internship helped me gain new ideas to enable YUWA’s pre-existing programmes to work with PWDs. Working with a person who could understand sign language—Nepali and English—we trained him on HIV and AIDS, and other SRHR issues, and later conducted joint training sessions at the Central H.S. School for Deaf. This was a new initiative, and participants really enjoyed it. This experience taught me that visual aid with translations, and written documents on sessions’ content are helpful for participants with hearing impairment.

I am motivated to work and design different programmes to reach out to other underprivileged groups. Many thanks to ARROW and TARSHI for creating a platform where youth like myself, could get inspired and learn to express our ideas freely.”

Photo: Khil Bahadur Thapa



Khil Bahadur Thapa

YUWA, Nepal; partner of the initiative Building the Next Generation Movement Leaders and Organisations in South Asia for Young People’s SRHR

“ When I started engaging on women's SRHR, one common issue that I came across was that girls are often not treated as human beings, and thus, are not aware of their human rights. I listened to stories of how almost every adolescent girl was harassed at least once in her life. It troubled me—knowing that I could identify the reasons, but did not know how to solve them. When Durbin Foundation was founded, it was not easy to find the right organisation to collaborate with: large organisations gave less emphasis to youth-led organisations. ARROW was different.

After many ARROW capacity building workshops, I have learnt to talk about issues, which even I considered as taboo. I have learnt various ways of approaching different age groups, using rights-based language, making people aware of their rights, and raising my voice to end gender-based violence. As Durbin Foundation follows Islamic norms and values, we have successfully conducted training workshops on SRHR in Rajshahi, while keeping to our Islamic values strictly. After each SRHR training we facilitate, I feel more motivated, and more responsible towards this cause. My engagement with ARROW has boosted my confidence to work on such a challenging field. ”

Youth participant

Durbin Foundation, Bangladesh,
partner of the initiative Building the Next Generation Movement
Leaders and Organisations in South Asia for Young People's SRHR

Photo: Juthamane Areeya



“ Now that we've completed the work and have these products—we see the importance of SRHR, and its contributions to women's development. At first all we could do was talk about sexual and reproductive health in our trainings, and there was no discussion of rights. But as we got deeper into the subject, we started bringing rights into the discussion, and women participants started realising how important comprehensive SRHR was. It's not just about their bodies, but also about their rights. Social transformation is going on in Burma, and although many women who come to the Thai side are exposed to SRHR information, back home there is a lack of information, and a restricted social environment. So we really need to work on the environment on that side. ”

Mai Mai Twe

MAP Foundation, Thailand, partner of WHRAP-SEA
and Strengthening SRHR Capacities of Partners

“ My understanding and ability to question has increased after participating in the accountability and CQC training carried out by Shirkat Gah, as part of WHRAP-SA. I now make sure that hospital staff are held accountable for the care they provide. For example, staff at the Lady Wellington Hospital Lahore were not issuing blood when I took my bhabhi (brother's wife) to the hospital for the delivery of her child. I immediately contacted the hospital's medical superintendent, who then promptly questioned the staff of the blood bank. I was able to receive blood after my intervention. I realised that common people, especially women, are not aware of their rights. There is great need to ensure that women hold duty bearers accountable. If we can do this, then no one can stop us from claiming our rights. I now share my example with other women in my village, and intend to share this with participants in the accountability trainings that I will conduct as a WHRAP-SA champion. ”

Rahat Bibi

Sheikhupura, Pakistan, WHRAP-SA

Source: Nai Umeed Welfare Society Sheikhupura







*Regional Strategising Meeting to Integrate SRHR within the Post-2015 Development Agenda, May 2015, Kuala Lumpur.
Source: ARROW Photobank.*

Bridging Siloes: Intersectionalities and Inter-movements

In ARROW, we believe that a woman's access to SRHR is affected by many factors. In our view, gender equality, human rights, social justice, and ultimately, sustainable development cannot be realised if the SRHR of all are not guaranteed. We approach all aspects of our work through an intersectional lens—whether it is in investigating development issues and trends, in designing our capacity strengthening activities, and/or in advocating for social change. In doing so, we hope to offer development stakeholders with a holistic analysis that surfaces the root causes of, and systemic challenges to universal SRHR.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SRHR

Countries within the Asia-Pacific region are among the most vulnerable to climate change. How climate change exacerbates vulnerabilities of women, especially as these relate to SRHR, is not well understood.

Within the ARROW project, “Building New Constituencies for SRHR, Gender, and Climate Change,” we are examining the links between SRHR and climate change across eight countries in Asia.

Initial findings of our partners' scoping studies validated that multiple identity markers, such as race, class, ethnicity, gender, age, and others, disadvantage some individuals more than others.



ARROW co-hosted a side event with PSDA in COP21 titled “Breaking the Silos for a Healthier Planet: Addressing Reproductive Health Matters to Build Climate Resilient Communities,” 1 December 2015, Paris. Photo by Erika Sales, ARROW Photobank.

We found that historically- and culturally-embedded patriarchal norms and societal arrangements have resulted in limited (or zero) presence of gender-fair policies that advance SRHR; SRH services, especially during (post-) crisis situations are lacking, or do not fully respond to the unique needs of women; and women's leadership and full participation in decision making remain wanting.

At the Conference of Parties 21 (COP 21), the key forum where emission reduction governance and national determined contributions were discussed, five ARROW representatives received UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) Accreditation for Observer Status during formal proceedings.

We were equally fortunate to see two of our partners attend COP 21 as members of official government delegations. Through Imad Mohamed (Maldives) and Sunitha Bishan (Malaysia), the main findings of the partnership were shared as evidence from the ground.

With ARROW's initial support, our partners, Khan Foundation (Bangladesh) and the Sindh Community Foundation (Pakistan) became accredited Observer Organisations of the Green Climate Fund—a UNFCCC mechanism that assists developing countries on climate change adaptation and mitigation practices. Their presence will help hold the GCF accountable for the mechanisms' *raison d'être*.

Our research found that the marginalised—women, children, the elderly, the poor, and disabled—are most vulnerable to climate change impacts. Because climate change itself is a fairly new topic, we knew that presenting its linkages with the sexual and reproductive health

and rights of marginalised groups raises the level of complexity. To address this, ARROW and her partners put great effort to repackage her research findings to achieve maximum impact.

Online and Printed Advocacy Materials Produced for COP21

Advocacy Material and Format	Description
 <p><u>What Women Need: Addressing Gender and SRHR Needs in the SDGs and the 2015 New Climate Agreement</u> (Regional Position Paper)</p>	4-page position paper that advocates for the elimination of social, political and economic barriers to women's human rights to secure gender equality and the full participation of women in climate change processes.
 <p><u>Why More Women are Needed in the Climate Negotiations</u> (Blog Post)</p>	Provides a short presentation of the factors that have led to women's, girls,' and marginalised groups' disproportionate vulnerability to natural disasters, and why they need to take part in the negotiating tables.
 <p>Women's Stories from the Climate Frontlines (Postcards)</p>	Postcard narratives of real-life hardships and impacts of climate change on women in the Asia Pacific that may have been prevented (or eased) had full SRHR been normalised in services delivery and planning mechanisms.
 <p><u>Five Indicators of Climate Change and Their Impact on Women</u> (Infographics)</p>	Summarises the five manifestations of women's disproportionate vulnerability to climate change: sexual violence and harassment; severe malnutrition; water contamination and high health risks (particularly for children and pregnant women); feminisation of poverty; and increased mortality rates.

Building New Constituencies for SRHR, Gender and Climate Change

DURATION: January 2014-December 2016

ARROW PARTNERS: Khan Foundation, Bangladesh; YJP, Indonesia; UHS, Lao PDR; Penita Initiative, Malaysia; HAD, Maldives; WOREC, Nepal; SCF, Pakistan; PFPI, the Philippines

RIGHT TO FOOD AND NUTRITION

Women are less likely to own, operate and control land, credit, technology, and other productive resources in rural and peri-urban areas. Compounded by socio-cultural norms of son preference and women's unequal role in care, women tend to eat least and last, despite the multiple burdens they carry at home, and within the productive sphere.

In 2015 we officially closed our project, “Revitalising and Strengthening the SRHR Agenda through Inter-movement Work to Impact the ICPD+20 and the MDG+15 Processes.” The project received positive feedback on its external review. Aside from producing cutting-edge publications on the intersections of SRHR with food security, and the right to food and nutrition, our achievements surpassed projected networking and advocacy plans, and we were successful in building cross-movement linkages across SRHR, food sovereignty, food security, and poverty movements. During the year, an ARROW staff became a proud member of the Editorial Board of the journal, *Right to Food and Nutrition Watch*.

ARROW also attended the first annual meeting of the Global Network on the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNRtFN)—an inter-movement alliance that pursues joint actions at the global level on the right to adequate food and nutrition—and applied to become a member. We are also following up on the outcome documents of the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), a high-level intergovernmental meeting that focused global attention on addressing malnutrition in all its forms. All these point to the sustainability of our intersectionality work on this area, despite the lack of continued project funding.

“There was a very diverse group of people coming from the nutrition and health movement, and ARROW brought in the perspective of the SRHR movement, and raised the awareness of these constituents. ... ARROW was the main group to bring SRHR into the ICN2 process; they were most vocal.”

Denisse Cordova

FIAN International, key informant interview for the project evaluation



Annual Meeting of the Global Network on the Right to Food and Nutrition, 20-22 July, 2015, Kathmandu. Source: FIAN Secretariat.

INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON WOMEN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

The power of religion cannot be underestimated. In times of conflict or peace, fundamentalist interpretations (in the name) of “god,” “morality,” or “sacrifice,” is used to justify the most degrading, demeaning, and violent practices against women, girls, and other marginalised groups.

In 2015, our partnership's research for advocacy across ten countries highlighted the links between religion, gender-based violence, and SRHR violations. For example, in countries where SRHR-facilitating policies/bills have been passed, governments have shown a lack of political will to set up the necessary formal and informal mechanisms to support comprehensive sexuality education, family planning, and

Some ARROW Engagements in Human Rights Mechanisms (Focus on the Influence of Religion, Religious Conservatism, Extremisms, and Fundamentalisms on SRHR)

Public Hearing: Right to Life of the ICCPR (14 July; Geneva)	29th Session of the Human Rights Council (27 July; Geneva)	62nd Session of the CEDAW Committee (16 November; Geneva)
<p>General Comment No. 36-Article 6</p> <hr/> <p>During the public hearing, ARROW submitted <u>written</u> and <u>oral statements</u> that highlight the ways in which the right to life of women and girls continue to be threatened. We illustrated these through examples of restrictive policies, practices, mindsets, beliefs, and traditions rooted in structural inequalities and patriarchy. Included in our recommendations was the need to “Ensure that legal and policy-making i.e., formal and informal spaces are free from the influence of extreme interpretation of religion.”</p> <p><i>*ARROW, the only CSO from the Global South in the public hearing, presented her statement during the session.</i></p>	<p>Resolution on the Protection of the Family</p> <hr/> <p>ARROW contested a Resolution prepared by Egypt and endorsed by 14 other countries, during the HRC session. In our <u>intervention</u>, we argued our case by sharing our analysis and examples of the different forms and meanings of family that exist today. We critiqued the Resolution’s attempt to view the family as one unity, thereby making invisible the rights of an individual within the family.</p> <p><i>* ARROW’s statement, uploaded online, was endorsed by over 50 CSOs, but the Resolution was nevertheless passed during the 29th Session. Despite this set back, the Resolution was left out on the final Outcome Document of the SDGs.</i></p>	<p>CEDAW General Recommendation 19: Violence against Women</p> <hr/> <p>At the <u>Thematic Briefing Religious Fundamentalisms, Extreme Interpretations of Religion and Gender Justice</u> during the 62nd Session of the CEDAW Committee, we presented examples of how religion—as an instrument of power—limits women’s freedoms, human rights and SRHR. We pushed for this conception to be incorporated in the update of GR19, and advocated for the set up of international mechanisms that would hold State Parties accountable for inaction over gender violence perpetuated by fundamentalist and extremist interpretations of religion.</p> <p><i>*For the occasion of the session, ARROW and partners AWID, SRI, and the World Council of Churches prepared a <u>briefing paper</u>.</i></p>

others. In societies with traditions of early child marriage, or where governance is heavily influenced by religion—women and young people’s bodily integrity, right to information, and right to choose, are constantly being violated.

At the international level, we offered several UN human rights mechanisms with evidence on the pernicious effects of religion, and why we still lack the necessary safeguards to protect women, girls and marginalised groups.

INFLUENCE OF RELIGION

DURATION: 2014-2016/7

ARROW PARTNERS: Naripokkho, Bangladesh; Ikhtyar, Egypt; RUWSEC, India; YKP, Indonesia; SIS, Malaysia; SHE, Maldives; AMPF, Morocco; SG, Pakistan; Likhaan, Philippines; WMC, Sri Lanka

DISABILITY AND SRHR

People with disabilities (PWDs) are among the more marginalised groups in development planning, and are largely invisible within SRHR discourse. Similarly, the SRHR of PWDs are often invisible at PWD conferences and meetings. During the year we engaged in two PWD-focused fora as advocacy trainer and speaker/participant. For us, it was a rewarding experience to share our work, and in turn, learn from PWDs where there was room for our own conceptual and methodological improvement.

At the Training on Disability workshop organised by the ASEAN Disability Forum (ADF) and CREA, ARROW supported participants in formulating a PWD statement on the post-2015 SDG process, which was released in time for the UN Summit on Sustainable Development.

Recommendations

for more effective inclusion of people with disabilities (PWDs) in the new development agenda

GOAL 3

PWDs need to be included more effectively in promoting healthy lives and wellbeing for all including on issues of maternal mortality & morbidity.

Forced sterilization, institutionalization & medical interventions of PWDs must be recognized & addressed as forms of violence.

GOAL 4

Universal access to SRH including sexuality education will be incomplete without effective inclusion and better access to education for PWDs.

GOAL 7

Lack of accessible energy leads to further discrimination of PWDs restricting their mobility when lifts don't work and transport is affected thus further leading to limited access to SRH services.

GOAL 9

Concerns of PWDs must be addressed in the need for building resilient infrastructure to ensure better physical environments in the construction of buildings and roads for better mobility.

GOAL 13

PWDs are worst affected in conditions of climate change and disaster situations. We call for improving education & better preparedness for disaster relief for PWDs.

GOAL 16

Peaceful and inclusive societies are possible only with the inclusion PWDs in national level laws and policies, disaggregated methods of data collection, better qualitative and quantitative methods of generating evidence-based research to include issues of PWDs, and the inclusion of better systems of communication including sign language and audio-visual materials.



Top: At the Training with the ASEAN Disability Forum on Disability, SRHR, and Advocacy, 2-4 September 2015, Hanoi. Bottom: The facilitators: Nidhi Goyal, Janet Price, and ARROW's Arpita Das. Sources: ARROW and CREA.

“Engaging with participants from the ADF, along with CREA (India), has been a fulfilling experience as it allowed me to interact with a newer group not exposed to the post-2015 process, and it enhanced my knowledge on diversity in training spaces. I conducted a few sessions on advocacy and SRHR focusing on ARROW's work at regional and global events, and on religious fundamentalism. Participants developed their statement highlighting gaps from the perspective of PWDs, based on our discussions on the SDG document. They worked through the sustainable development agenda in smaller groups, came up with their unique perspectives, and saw advocacy in action. It was humbling to find the training space welcoming of diversities among people with and without disabilities. As a learning, we need to redesign interaction spaces and training methodologies that support a genuinely inclusive and engaging learning framework for PWDs. As co-trainer, I learnt that to embrace diversity fully, we need to respect and put PWD concerns at the centre of our discussions, and to be alert and responsive to the different needs of participants.”

Arpita Das

Co-Trainer, ARROW

OTHER INTERSECTIONAL AND INTER-MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES IN 2015

Migration

At a 30-member Expert Group Meeting organised by the UN Thematic Working Group on International Migration, including Human Trafficking (TWG-Migration) held last July, we facilitated the entry and stronger formulation of migrants' SRHR and bodily integrity on the [“Asia-Pacific Migration Report 2015, Migrants’ Contributions to Development.”](#) Our AFC publication, [“Labour Migration, Gender, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights,”](#) was cited on this report.

Young Women’s Economic Rights and SRHR

As member of ActionAid’s International Advisory and Expert Group for Research on Inter-linkages between Young Women’s Economic Rights and SRHR, we provided content and methodological feedback to the research on decent work, SRHR, and unpaid care work.

Inter-movement Building with Key Affected Women and Girls and Labour Movement

The intersections of SRHR with broader development issues, the formation of multi-constituency platforms of civil society, and ways to create inter-movement synergies were promoted by ARROW in various meetings, such as the “Regional Consultation on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among Women Community Partners in Greater Mekong Sub-Region” (organised by the Raks Thai Foundation), and the [“Regional Meeting on Labour Rights and Decent Work for Women Workers”](#) (organised by the Asia Monitor Centre).

Top: Azra Abdul Cader delivering an [intervention](#) at the General Discussion on the Preparation for a General Comment on Article 6 (Right to Life) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), July 2015, Geneva.

Middle: [Advocacy and Partner Meeting for the initiative on the influence of religion on women’s rights](#), Kuala Lumpur, August 2015.

Bottom: Maria Melinda Ando at the [Regional Meeting on Labour Rights and Decent Work for Women Workers](#), 26-28 October 2015, Bangkok. Sources: ARROW Photobank.







*Cambodian university students during a site visit of a sexual and reproductive health and rights class in Phnom Penh.
Photo by Maria Melinda Ando, ARROW Photobank.*

Strengthening Advocacy Capacities of Women and Youth

SRHR-supportive policies or commitments at international level do not always reach women, young people, and marginalised groups in countries. For this to happen, they need to receive the latest information on their rights and entitlements, and they need to build the confidence to demand for their respective governments to take action, amongst other actions needed.

Through our joint activities, we mobilise youth idealism and energies, and we strengthen broad-based and national alliances for change to occur at ground level. Our close interaction with young people and community women also helps to make sure that our interventions at global level resonate with actual experiences on the ground.

THREE NEW YOUTH INITIATIVES STARTED THIS YEAR!

In 2015, we welcomed three initiatives that gave new energy to our on-going work with young SRHR advocates and leaders.

At the global level, we joined the five-year consortium project, [“Right Here, Right Now,”](#) which seeks sustained policy changes for comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and health care for young people, and aims to form regional networks. During the project’s pre-inception phase, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, and Pakistan were selected for the Asia track—countries with a long history of collaboration with ARROW. During the year, the partnership met twice to prepare for the coming year’s official inception phase.

With eight youth-led organisations in South Asia, we developed a partnership framework for young leaders on CSE, under the project, “Building the Next Generation Movement Leaders and Organisations in South Asia for Young People’s SRHR.” A short-term internship programme, hosted by Talking About Reproductive and Sexual Health Issues (TARSHI) in New Delhi has been negotiated, and is scheduled to kick off the partnership’s two-year activities next year.

We also became proud supporters of the Pravah initiative, “Turn The Tide: Youth Advocate Against Child Marriage.” Implemented at the Indian states of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, the Pravah Initiative offers young people with training possibilities that enable their deliberation, discussion and engagement in social justice issues, such as early-age and child marriage. The training activities are framed by a curriculum that is based on the principles of trust, empathy, co-creation, and shared leadership.

OUR SAFE APP IS GOING PLACES

After the launch of our [SAFE \(Sexuality Awareness for Everyone\) app](#) in Malaysia last year, we were pleased to receive the news that SHE Maldives was interested to adopt our mobile app. SAFE app was initially designed for the Malaysian youth—to educate them on CSE, and provide them with online resources, such as a clinic and pharmacy locator. During the year, we supported SHE Maldives in liaising with the app’s developers, to make the app more fit for the context of young people in Maldives.

Together, the successful implementation of our youth initiatives offers us the promise to bring our advocacy on young people to scale that will hopefully result to strengthened youth-led organisations in the Global South.



ARROW and partners from youth-led organisations at the *Partnership Building Capacity Development of Youth-led Organisations in South Asia Meeting*, October 2015, Kuala Lumpur. Source: ARROW Photobank.

Youth-Focused Initiatives

► RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW

DURATION: 2016-2020

ARROW PARTNERS: Rutgers, CHOICE, dance4life, and Hivos, the Netherlands (Global); IPPFAR (Africa, Regional); LACWHN (Latin America and the Caribbean, Regional)

► BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION MOVEMENT LEADERS AND ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH ASIA FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S SRHR

DURATION: October 2015-2017

ARROW PARTNERS: BSWS, and Durbin Foundation, Bangladesh; Pravah and TYPF, India; LOOM, and YUWA, Nepal; CDA, and YA, Pakistan

► TURN THE TIDE: YOUTH ADVOCATE AGAINST CHILD MARRIAGE

DURATION: July 2015-2016

ARROW PARTNERS: Pravah, India, with CBO partners: Milaan and ALFA

REGIONAL/INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY

ASEAN Women's Forum

With APWLD, IRAW-AP, the Southeast Asian Women's Caucus, and WAO, ARROW co-organised the first ASEAN Women's Forum, held back-to-back with the ASEAN People's Forum. The Forum gathered 400 participants, and tackled four priority themes: development justice, democratic processes, governance and fundamental rights and freedoms, and peace. Women leaders from each ASEAN country spoke of their issues and demands to their governments and to the regional body.



The first ASEAN Women's Forum, April 2015. Source: ARROW Photobank.

ASEAN Film Festival

Our documentary, titled "Our Stories, One Journey: Empowering Rural Women on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights," which was co-developed with the Asian Rural Women's Coalition, was shown at the ASEAN Film Festival in April. Selected under the theme of Non-Discrimination and Equality, the film was a welcome change in that it surfaced issues not usually discussed in these forums.

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND RIGHTS ADVOCACY PARTNERSHIP

The Women's Health and Rights Advocacy Partnership (WHRAP) aims to strengthen the SRHR agenda by empowering women and young people to claim their rights, and ensure government accountability to usher in real changes at the ground level. Operationalised in two sub-regions, WHRAP-South East Asia (WHRAP-SEA) conducts activities to improve SRHR outcomes for young people, while WHRAP-South Asia (WHRAP-SA) works with community-based organisations (CBOs) and community women to entrench a rights-based continuum of quality care (CQC) in project implementation areas.

WHRAP-South East Asia

In 2015, we wrapped up our work in South East Asia with an external evaluation, and the revitalisation of the Regional Youth Moving (RYM) for SRHR Network. WHRAP-SEA received a positive evaluation, and identified several promising strategies for the future programming of youth-led and youth-focused initiatives.

At the level of policy, noteworthy to mention are WHRAP-SEA achievements in Cambodia: inclusion of sexuality education in its school curriculum; and Vietnam: inclusion of young migrant workers' SRH in the revision of the country's Youth Law, and the establishment of a network of young migrant workers.

Inspired by the success of the project, former members of the RYM for SRHR Network, and some young people associated with WHRAP-SEA, established a working group to discuss WHRAP-SEA evaluation outcomes, and outline the network's future directions and working modalities.



*WHRAP-SEA Evaluation and Partners' Meeting, April 2015, Kuala Lumpur.
Source: ARROW Photobank.*

Promising Partnership Building Techniques to Sustain Youth Initiatives in a Post-Funding Situation: Lessons from WHRAP-South East Asia

- Design activities that complement existing research or advocacy initiatives of partners to ensure the longevity of initiatives (or development agenda), post-funding.
- Develop mutually agreed positions, and advocacy asks that all partners are able to relate with.
- Involve young people meaningfully from the start, and across the entire span of project implementation to obtain high levels of ownership.
- Organise youth internships to facilitate youth-adult partnerships, to build skills of young people, and at the same time enlarge adult or stakeholder recognition of the leadership qualities and competencies of young people.
- Engage grassroots young people in generating evidence, and demanding for accountability from duty bearers.
- Develop the capacity of young people to engage in the full cycle of project development, implementation, evidence-based advocacy, reporting, and others.

** Elements of the abovementioned techniques have been applied in the management and implementation of our new youth initiatives.*

WHRAP-South East Asia

DURATION: 2009-2015

ARROW PARTNERS: RHAC, Cambodia; YHDRA, China; UHS, Lao PDR; BMA, Myanmar; MAP, Thailand; Likhaan, Philippines; CCHIP, Vietnam



Top: WHRAP-SA partners join the #SRHR4ALL and #May28 campaigns.
Bottom: ARROW and WHRAP-SA partners at a *writeshop* on documenting change, 17-20 May 2015, Colombo. Sources: ARROW Photobank.

WHRAP-South Asia

ARROW's longest running and funded partnership initiative—now on its 13th year of implementation—WHRAP-SA's CQC work is still on-going, and continues to show sustained examples of resistance from community-based organisations (CBOs), community women and groups, and through the voluntary acts of local government and health officials. There is evidence that stakeholder collaboration is creating ripples of change, infrastructural improvements are being made, and quality and safer health care are being delivered (see WHRAP-SA milestones).

Consistent with ARROW's advocacy strategy, CQC-related evidence generated by WHRAP-SA was shared in various regional and international spaces. Some accomplishments at this level include:

- BBC joined the Nepal government delegation at the 59th CSW, and presented state input on women's health.
- We provided CQC input to the World Health Organization's Zero Draft of the Global Strategy for Women's Children's and Adolescents Health.
- In collaboration with the DFPA, UN NGLS, AAI, and the Government of Nepal, we discussed the reproductive health challenges of South Asian girls and women 15 years after the ICPD, during a side event at the July intergovernmental session at the UN HQ.

WHRAP-South Asia

DURATION: 2003-2017

ARROW PARTNERS: DFPA, Denmark (Global); Naripokkho, Bangladesh, with CBO partners: Adorsho Mohila Sangstha; Annesha Samaj Sheba Shongho; Artha-Shamajik Shikkha Sanskritic Unnayon Sangstha; Barisal Mohila Kollayan Shongstha; CYDO; Jago Nari; PDO; Nazrul Smriti Sangsad; and Sangkalpa Trust; CHETNA, India, with CBO partners: CRPR; Gram Vikas Evam Prashikshan Sansthan; Gram Vikas Navvuvak Mandal Laporiya; Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti; Jatan Sansthan; Navachar; PEDO; Prayatn; Shikshit Rojgar Kendra Prabandhak Samiti; and Srushti Samiti; SAHAYOG, India, with CBO partners: Bava Pam Karam Das Gramin Vikas Samiti; GRAMYA SANSTHAN; and Purvanchal Gramin Sewa Samiti; BBC, Nepal, with CBO partners: Child Society Nepal; RICOD; and YWS; SG, Pakistan, with CBO partners: Marvi Welfare Association; Nai Umeed; and UYWO

WHRAP-South Asia Milestones for 2015

Bangladesh

Implementation Area: Barisal Division

FOCUS: Sustaining 'right to health' civil society alliances at the local level to amplify women's voices, and strengthen the functioning of health facility oversight mechanisms to improve quality of services delivered.

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS AND REACH

- Nine training sessions organised, reaching 155 Right to Health Alliance (RHA) members.
- Wide media coverage of Naripokkho-CBO organised International Day of Action for Women's Health (by six national newspapers, 20 local newspapers, and seven national TV stations).
- Ten Union Parishad Standing Committees, and five Hospital Management Committees trained on the roles and responsibilities of health professionals, including the health challenges faced by local women.

SOME RESULTS

- Adolescent reproductive health incorporated in the school curriculum of ten High School Committees.
- Six *upazillas* benefitted from blood donation drive (treating 62 pregnant women), improved health service delivery (corrective action taken against several medical and health professionals), and construction of a new health camp (at Chor Hadi).
- Emergency surgery facilities for childbirth in one *upazilla* health facility were made available; where none was available prior.
- 167 women screened for sexually transmitted diseases and cervical cancer in one *upazilla* health facility, aided by new testing facilities.

India

Implementation Area: Rajasthan

FOCUS: Sustaining 'right to health' civil society alliances at the local level to amplify women's voices, and strengthen the functioning of health facility oversight mechanisms to improve quality of services delivered.

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS AND REACH

- Two SUMA-Rajasthan White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood multi-sectoral meetings organised to develop state-level advocacy plan. Attendees included: officials of the National Health Mission, the Government of Rajasthan, Rajasthan Medicare Relief Society (RMRS) members, and *Panchayat* representatives.
- Five CBOs became members of the RMRS—body in charge of fulfilling/monitoring health and sanitation needs of local health facilities.
- CHETNA and CBOs systematised engagement with *Panchayats* (Local Self Governments), and within *Gram Sabhas* (constitutionally mandated village meetings with budget for community actions)—16 of 24 planned *Gram Sabhas* organised across eight intervention districts, reaching a total of 744 women, and facilitating the submission of 26 proposals on maternal health issues (by 201 women).

SOME RESULTS

- CBO membership at RMRS has led to service quality improvements in 13 of 17 RMRS.
- CHETNA-CBO engagement resulted in funds for repairs of *Anganwadi* Centres (mother and child care centres); land acquisition and construction of subcentres; and recruitment of medical officers for vacant posts.
- All 26 proposals submitted by women in *Gram Sabhas* were received and duly passed, with 11 resolutions being implemented.
- The newly elected leaders of the *Panchayat* have begun addressing the health concerns of women and communities.

India	Implementation Area: Uttar Pradesh
<p>FOCUS: Sustaining ‘right to health’ civil society alliances at the local level to amplify women’s voices, and expand engagement with human rights guardian institutions on SRHR violations, and state failure to regulate delivery of quality SRH.</p> <p>ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS AND REACH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some 170 CSO members, academics, activists and community leaders from around 35 districts were mobilised for the Right to Health Convention (27-28 November) for discussion, and to detail advocacy plans on SRHR issues. SAHAYOG/National Alliance on Maternal Health and Human Rights (NAMHHR) submitted a report to the National Human Rights Commission on sub-standard practices of women’s mass sterilisation at Pathalgada in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, Gorakhpur, Mirzapur, Chitrakoot, and Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh. <p>SOME RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An advocacy plan—produced by CSOs from the four regions of Uttar Pradesh: Northern, Eastern, Western UP, and Bundelkhand—was completed. The SAHAYOG/NAMHHR submission was registered formally as National Human Rights Commission Case 301/33/2/2015. It documents the death of 11 women, and the critical condition of 50 others, after being treated at a sterilisation camp at the Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare has included SAHAYOG/NAMHHR recommendations on family planning and female sterilisation, which highlighted the urgent need for policy and budgetary changes on its 82nd Report. Budget allocation for tribal populations increased from 8% to 11% on the Demand for Grants section of the 89th Report. 	
Nepal	Implementation Areas: Lalitpur, Makwanpur, and Morang Districts
<p>FOCUS: Increasing women’s voices, and expanding engagement with human rights guardian institutions on SRHR violations, and state failure to regulate delivery of quality SRH.</p> <p>ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS AND REACH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organised 40 training sessions, reaching 600 community women, and nine meetings with Health Facility Operation Management Committees (HFOMCs) on CQC. Produced Menstrual Hygiene Management flyer in the April earthquake’s aftermath, and was the only SRHR organisation actively involved in post-disaster efforts. BBC/Reproductive Health Right Working Group (RHRWG) organised the first-ever safe abortion day celebration of Nepal on 26 September, and co-organised the 7th Human Rights National Magna Meet 2015 on 9-11 December, gathering more than 1,000 participants, with attendance from high-level officials and the President of Nepal. <p>SOME RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75 trained community women demanded for quality and safe abortion services from local government. Six of nine HFOMCs saw through structural improvements, and recruited trained health staff. Increased awareness of safe abortion services at Morang district, with separate counselling room for safe abortion at Haraicha and Letan facilities constructed. BBC now considered a reliable expert on SRHR and community women’s needs; was invited by government to provide input to the country’s post-disaster needs assessment framework, and to develop SRHR recommendations for Nepal government’s Universal Periodic Report. 	

Pakistan

Implementation Areas: Charsadda District in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Sheikhpura District in Punjab Province, and Sukkur District in Sindh Province

FOCUS: Increasing women's voices to articulate their views/demands for quality RH services, and strengthen the functioning of health facility oversight mechanisms to improve quality of services delivered.

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS AND REACH

- Organised 144 sex-segregated training sessions, reaching 1,008 females and 900 males in 18 villages.
- Engaged in regular meetings with local government agencies.
- Organised media trainings on SRHR.
- Launched birth registration campaign in Sheikhpura.

SOME RESULTS

- 20 new SRHR champions identified, bringing total champions to 60.
- 200 pregnant women received antenatal care, 100 gynecology referrals (Sheikhpura) made as a result of champions' advocacy.

- Free medical camp set up (mainly for pregnant women health issues; 130 women directly reached); improved complaints processing; and increased collaboration with district health professionals and local government established in Sheikhpura.
- 40 complaints ranging from lack of medicines to staff misbehaviour were reported to the Basic Health Unit Oversight Committee in Sukkur. All complaints were resolved.
- Birth registration campaign in six Sheikhpura district villages led to registration of 1,304 births: an accomplishment applauded by local government and health officials.
- 60 news items were published, leading to increased awareness on SRHR issues and violations.

SRHR Champions



Source: RUWSEC

“ My name is Sathya, 30, and I am a mother of two from a small village near Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu, India. I attended RUWSEC's young people leadership training four years ago, and realised that we, the women from the community, had to take matters in our own hands, empower ourselves, and go out there and help the rest of us. The past three years have been both an exciting and life-changing journey. I've earned the respect of my community, who would otherwise see women as weak and subservient. Through my work with RUWSEC, I've been able to educate women and young people who have no other way of getting information about SRH, referred those in need of suitable healthcare providers, counseled newly-married couple on contraception and sexual health issues, convinced women to undergo cervical cancer screening, and created awareness on the need to stand up against gender-based violence. Every time I face a difficult situation in doing the work that I do, I gather my strength from these words that I learned at my youth leadership training: Manathil uruthi vendum, vakkiinilay thelivu vendum (Have a strong mind, and speak courageously, with clarity). ”

Sathya

RUWSEC, India, partner of Strengthening SRHR Capacities of Partners initiative

Photo: Rachel Arinii



Meenoy Panda
former youth intern, UHS,
Lao PDR partner of WHRAP-SEA

As part of our involvement in the WHRAP-SEA initiative, the University of Health Sciences at Lao PDR worked with the Vientiane Youth Centre to train young people to collect data from other young people, and build their capacity on SRHR, communications, advocacy and messaging. The peer education programme brought about a visible change as the capacity of trainers strengthened. The big success here is that the 50 peers reached in rural areas—those who were trained on sexuality, decision making, and negotiation—are still continuing with the programme, despite their limited budget. This demonstrates the extent of ownership these young people have over the programme and its issues, and suggests the sustainability of the youth programme beyond its funded life.

“ I got a lot of knowledge and experience from this project. Because I worked with the Vientiane Youth Centre, most of my work was in Vientiane. But after I joined WHRAP-SEA, I had the opportunity to work in another place, and saw the situation there. It was so different from my situation in Vientiane – this motivated me to continue as I learnt a lot. ”

“ My name is Zhang Nanjie, youth intern and Project Officer of the WHRAP-SEA project implemented by Yunnan Health and Development Research Association in Yunnan, China from 2010 till 2012. We focused our work on ethnic minority young people at the border areas of Myanmar and China, at a time when SRHR was not as clear, and well framed within their context. The WHRAP-SEA project aimed to make young people aware of the SRHR issues they were facing in their communities, which included HIV and AIDS, and lack of SRHR information and services. A combined strategy—of knowledge delivery, the establishment and strengthening of a youth network, as well as stakeholder dialogue and advocacy—was implemented. For me, the experience of working with young people living in remote cross-border and under-developed areas was enriching. The young people that I worked with have now grown to become the new generation of young leaders in their own villages, townships, and municipal governance bodies. They now play a critical role in empowering young people, and improving resource distribution. My journey continues as I remain engaged in calling for SRHR for young people as part of the SDGs in China, Asia Pacific and globally. ”

Source: Zhang Nanjie



Zhang Nanjie
former youth intern, YHDRA, China partner of WHRAP SEA
(current Chair of the Board, YouthLEAD)



RUWSEC Executive Director Palanisamy Balasubramaniam conducting a sexuality/life skills training session at a local school in Thirukazhukundram, Tamil Nadu. Photo by Erika Sales, ARROW Photobank.



Stimulating Social Change Through Information and Communications



Information and communications (infocom) is vital to ARROW's advocacy. With a reach of more than 114 countries around the world, our infocom work serves to build a critical mass of supporters for SRHR, as well as provide them with the latest analysis, and carefully curated (and intersecting) news items on the topic. Because existing and potential SRHR champions are very diverse, and are dispersed all over the world, we constantly search for creative methods of strategic communications, and innovative and affordable infocom technologies.

Through our engagements in social media, the campaigns we launch, and the knowledge materials we produce—we offer rights-based perspectives and analyses to help illuminate the diverse paths to positive social change.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND SHARING SYSTEMS REFRESHED

As a resource centre, we have the responsibility to make sure that the information and knowledge we share does not only reach our audiences, but also meet their specific needs and interests.

In the last half of the year, ARROW staff welcomed a fresh knowledge management and knowledge sharing strategy. These resulted in the following:

- Increased infographic development within ARROW, to share repackaged information that caters to a larger and diverse audience.
- Development of a Management Information System (MIS), to make knowledge assets more accessible, and facilitate improved intra-organisational collaboration.
- Development of a Digital Resource Centre, to complement our physical ASK-us resource centre: ARROW's Knowledge Sharing Centre.

NEW MEDIA AND ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS STRENGTHENED

Parallel to the above, within the year, we saw:

- Increased staff engagement on social media reporting while at key events.
- A completely revamped mobile-friendly ARROW website, with enhanced appearance, usability, and interactivity.
- Our e-newsletter service migrate fully to MailChimp, to allow for more flexibility in design, mobile responsiveness, social media sharing, and analytics.
- Increased staff engagement with YouTube for on-site video reporting while ARROW women delivered statements at key events.

For ARROW to continue to serve as a leading resource centre, it is essential for her to harness the power of new media and online communications, to engage users on SRHR.

PUBLICATIONS

ARROW publications are essential for her perspective building work to advance the SRHR agenda, from a Global South and women's perspective. Attesting to the relevance of her analysis, during the year, selected ARROW publications were made available through other online databases, libraries and websites—such as EBSCO, Academia.edu, and ShareNet International.

In 2015 we brought six of our flagship materials to publication, and started the development of four more, which are scheduled for publication next year. For the first time, we published translations of selected *ARROW for Change (AFC)* bulletins in two global languages: Russian and Spanish.

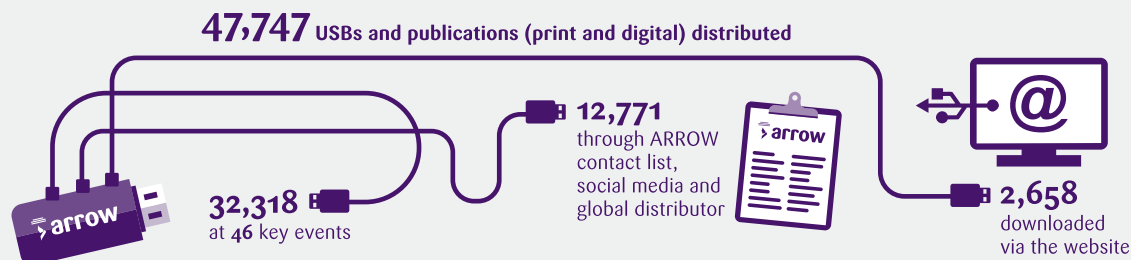
As our USB compilation of publications continued to top our list of most sought-after ARROW resources, we produced an updated compilation of available digital resources, incorporating the latest of our publications.

To further professionalise ARROW's research and publishing arm, we developed an editorial quality mechanism to safeguard consistency and quality across all ARROW publications.

“I want to inform you that we are actively using the AFC bulletin in preparation for our next strategy on gender equality for 2016-2025 in Kazakhstan. (The bulletin will be used) to prepare for a meeting of women's NGOs and Ministry representatives on 18 January 2016. It is very important that this information was (made) accessible (in the Russian) language. It is a huge information break!”

Yevgeniya Kozyreva

President, Feminist League, Kazakhstan, on the Russian edition of Vol. 21 No. 1 Gender, SRHR and the Post-2015 Agenda



Database Update Project

DURATION: In 2015, ARROW updated her contacts database, with support from 20 of her partners worldwide.

ARROW PARTNERS: Naripokkho, Bangladesh; RHAC, Cambodia; YHRDA, China; YKP, Indonesia; RUWSEC, India; Forum of Women's NGO Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyzstan; Vanphanom Sychareun, Lao PDR; FRHAM, Malaysia; SHE, Maldives; MONFEMNET, Mongolia; Myint Su, Myanmar; BBC, Nepal; SG, Pakistan; Likhaan, Philippines; WMC, Sri Lanka; MAP, Thailand; CCIHP, Vietnam; ASTRA, Central and Eastern Europe; Selamawit Tesfaye Gebremedhin, International/North America; FWRM, Oceania/Pacific

FLAGSHIP PUBLICATIONS 2015

ARROW for Change (AFC): Peer-reviewed serial publication that features rights-based perspectives and a gender analysis of the global discourse on health, sexuality, and rights, and their interlinkages with other development issues.



ARROW for Change Vol. 21 No. 1 2015:
“Gender, SRHR, and the Post-2015 Agenda”

ARROW for Change Vol. 21 No. 1 2015:
“Gender, SRHR, and the Post-2015 Agenda”
(Russian edition)

Offers necessary critical perspectives on key post-2015 sustainable development agenda discussions and key concepts, such as, financing, means of implementation, indicators, communications, role of NGOs, and the High-Level Political Forum.



ARROW for Change Supplement 2015:
“Gender Equality, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda”

Puts a spotlight on Kyrgyzstan, offering proposals on financing, monitoring and accountability for country-specific implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



ARROW for Change Vol. 17 No. 2 2011:
“Violencia de Género, Salud y Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos y la Respuesta del Sector de la Salud” (Spanish edition)

Translated 2011 edition that tackles gender-based violence, its impacts, particularly on SRHR, and the health sector’s response. Also includes a new article by FEIM.



ARROW for Change Supplement 2015:
“Violence against Women and Girls and Its Consequences on Sexual and Reproductive Health in Latin America and the Caribbean”

Draws a complex picture of the status of gender-based violence and SRH in the region, and outlines urgent measures that governments need to take.

Thematic Papers: ARROW publications that deepen analysis and understanding of SRHR and related development issues.



Sexuality:
Critical to Addressing Poverty and Food Insecurity

An exploratory investigation of poverty and food security, approached through a sexuality and sexual rights lens.

STRENGTHENING SRHR CAPACITIES OF PARTNERS

“Strengthening SRHR Capacities of Partners” is a partnership project of 15 organisations in the Asia-Pacific region. It aims to deepen collaboration and global SRHR outreach on universal access to sexual and reproductive health. During the year, the project underwent an external mid-term review. The review found our work to be well on track, cost-efficient in project spending, and successful at enlarging our global visibility.

This year’s activities included two capacity building workshops on advocacy building and social media—one in February with Likhaan (Philippines), and another in August, co-organised with YKP (Indonesia).

As part of our evidence-generation work, three country profiles: Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka were completed, bringing our total country profiles to 13. Using their own resources, elements of the country profiles of Sri Lanka and China were also translated in local languages. The year ended with the last two country profiles: Maldives and Vietnam, undergoing their final production stages, and the regional SRHR profile of the 15-country partnership at its final writing stage. Partners continued to use their respective country profiles for advocacy at national level.



MONFEMNET National Coordinator Enkharjal Davaasuren at the launch of the Mongolian country profiles. Source: MONFEMNET.

Our country profiles provide critical recommendations to improve in-country SRH policies and programmes, and offer advocacy tips and strategies for the inclusion of SRHR-focused goals and targets in country implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These profiles form an important basis for partner engagement at national, regional, and international levels.

National Advocacy Highlights	Regional/International Advocacy Highlights
Country profile (complete with policy recommendations) submitted to the President of Mongolia, members of the parliament, and relevant government agencies.	Partnership is producing a 2030 Agenda brief on SRHR, which will document how the process evolved over the different mechanisms, and will provide a critical examination of SRHR positioning in the final outcome document, to help identify advocacy entry points.
An additional 16 articles on CSE, youth-friendly services, and young people’s SRH developed by YHDRA in China; WHO Beijing and Regional Office for the Western Pacific representatives expressed interest to incorporate elements of YHDRA advocacy issues in their plans for next year.	Formation of the regional cross-constituent civil society platform focusing on SRHR—AP-RCEM’s SRHR Thematic Working Group—during the Asia-Pacific CSO Forum on Sustainable Development.
Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the World) applauded the WMC’s translation of Sri Lanka’s country profile and expressed a desire to deepen collaboration with WMC.	#SRHR4ALL campaign social media followers increased by 457% (Facebook), and 113% (Twitter) respectively.
Five policy dialogues carried out by partners in Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Sri Lanka.	Hashtag #SRHR4ALL continued to become a rallying call among our SRHR advocates and allies. Also collaborated with other campaigns, such as the International Day of Action for Women’s Health #May28 campaign and #TalkSexuality twitterthon.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS INITIATIVE

Compared to health issues, sexual and reproductive rights are often seen as contentious issues. Under this initiative, ARROW works with 14 country partners to generate evidence for national policy dialogues, and a regional social media campaign.

In 2015, partners in Mongolia and [Sri Lanka](#) completed their country profiles, bringing the total number to 11. Country profiles of Vietnam, Maldives and Bangladesh, now at their final stages of completion, are slated for publication next year. Two policy dialogues, in India and Sri Lanka, were organised by partners in 2015.

The SRR country profiles report on country-level achievement of universal access to sexual and reproductive rights 20 years after governments signed on to ICPD POA.

GROWING REPUTATION OF ARROW AS A GLOBAL ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

During the year, there too was evidence of an increasing recognition of ARROW as a competent regional/international campaigner. This was manifested by the Women's Major Group invitation for ARROW to lead the group's communication activities at the April to July sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations, and spearhead its #WhatWomenWant in #Post-2015 campaign.

Also, in lead up to COP21, and during the alliance's on-site activities, ARROW supported the Population and Sustainable Development Alliance in improving upon their communication materials, and developing their messages in Paris.



#WhatWomenWant campaign during the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations, New York. Source: ARROW Photobank.

Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Rights Initiative

DURATION: 2013-2016

ARROW PARTNERS: Naripokkho, Bangladesh; RHAC, Cambodia; YHDRA, China; RUWSEC, India; YKP, Indonesia; UHS, Lao PDR; FRHAM, Malaysia; SHE, Maldives; MONFEMNET, Mongolia; BBC, Nepal; SG, Pakistan; Likhaan, Philippines; WMC, Sri Lanka; CCIHP, Vietnam

Strengthening the Networking, Knowledge Management, and Advocacy Capacity of an Asia-Pacific Network for SRHR

DURATION: March 2013-February 2017

ARROW PARTNERS: Naripokkho, Bangladesh; RHAC, Cambodia; YHDRA, China; RUWSEC, India; YKP, Indonesia; UHS, Lao PDR; FRHAM, Malaysia; SHE, Maldives; MONFEMNET, Mongolia; BBC, Nepal; Likhaan, Philippines; MAP, Thailand; SG, Pakistan; WMC, Sri Lanka; CCIHP, Vietnam

Page 10

Page 10: Women's Constituency Statement

Developing the Women's Constituency Statement

at the Asia Pacific CSO Forum on Sustainable Development

Photo by Mangala Namasivayam, ARROW Photobank.

RHAC staff and community leaders during the partner visit.

Photo by Maria Melinda Ando, ARROW Photobank.

ARROW and partners at the ASEAN People's Forum 2015, 21-24 April 2015, Kuala Lumpur.

Source: ARROW Photobank.

ARROW and partners at the capacity strengthening workshop on advocacy, knowledge management and social media, 24-27 August 2015, Bali.

Source: ARROW Photobank.

Side Event co-sponsored with BBC, Sex og Samfund, and UN-NGLS with the support of the government of Nepal at the final Post-2015 Negotiations, focusing on the continuum of quality care framework, 20 July 2015, New York.

Source: ARROW Photobank.

#SRHR4ALL is being used by allies.

ARROW and allies from AP-RCM at the Expert Consultation on Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;

UN ESCAP, 9-10 November 2015, Bangkok.

Source: ARROW Photobank.



This page, top to bottom:

Sandhya and Sangita from SAHAYOG showing support for #SRHR4ALL and #May28 campaign.

Photo by Sameer Thakur.

Developing the Women's Constituency Statement at the Asia Pacific CSO Forum on Sustainable Development.

Photo by Mangala Namasivayam, ARROW Photobank.

RHAC staff and community leaders during the partner visit.

Photo by Maria Melinda Ando, ARROW Photobank.



Facing page, clockwise from top left:

ARROW and partners at the ASEAN People's Forum 2015, 21-24 April 2015, Kuala Lumpur.

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Source: ARROW Photobank.





Organisational Development and Finance

Additionally, to prepare for strategic planning, we also conducted external evaluations of our programmes on information and communications, monitoring and evidence-generation, and partnership-building for advocacy. Reports will be available in early 2016.

In ARROW, we make it a point to share the results of our evaluations as a transparency and accountability measure. All ARROW end-of-the-project evaluations are conducted by third-party consultants, are shared with our donors, and are available at request.

Our continuous efforts to strengthen ARROW's organisational framework serves two goals: for her to remain an effective advocate of change, and for her to serve as a good example of feminist governance and systems management.

In ARROW, we apply principles of inclusive participation, accountability, fairness, and equity within the organisation, and in all aspects of programme/project implementation—the very same principles that inform our advocacy interventions. In practical terms, we consistently review progress in our initiatives, to hold ourselves accountable, to facilitate adaptive learning, and to take stock of lessons to inform our future planning.

PROJECT REVIEWS AND END-OF-THE PROJECT EVALUATIONS

Of the four ARROW projects reviewed during the year, two were mid-term reviews: WHRAP-SA and Strengthening the Networking, Knowledge Management and Advocacy Capacity of an Asia-Pacific Network for SRHR; and the other two were end-of-the project evaluations: WHRAP-SEA, and Revitalising and Strengthening the SRHR Agenda through Intermovement Work to Impact the ICPD+20 and the MDG+15 Processes.

IMPROVING OUR SYSTEMS

Over the years, we've seen progressive growth in our portfolio of projects and partners. This resulted in a tremendous amount of information and knowledge flows that we needed to capture, and whose intersections we needed to understand better.

To support ARROW women's work, we welcomed the new framework of a smarter Management Information System (MIS). ARROW's MIS, which is in its final development stage, offers greater possibilities for intra-organisational monitoring and evaluation. MIS synchronises organisational processes, improves communication across teams, and makes the storing and retrieval of different content types easier.

To prepare staff engagement with MIS, and to optimise MIS utility as a sharing and monitoring tool—a staff orientation was conducted in 2015.

Several publication support guides were also developed and/or updated during the year to safeguard the quality of our materials, and ensure consistency in messaging, branding, and processes.

ARROW ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW AND STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESSES

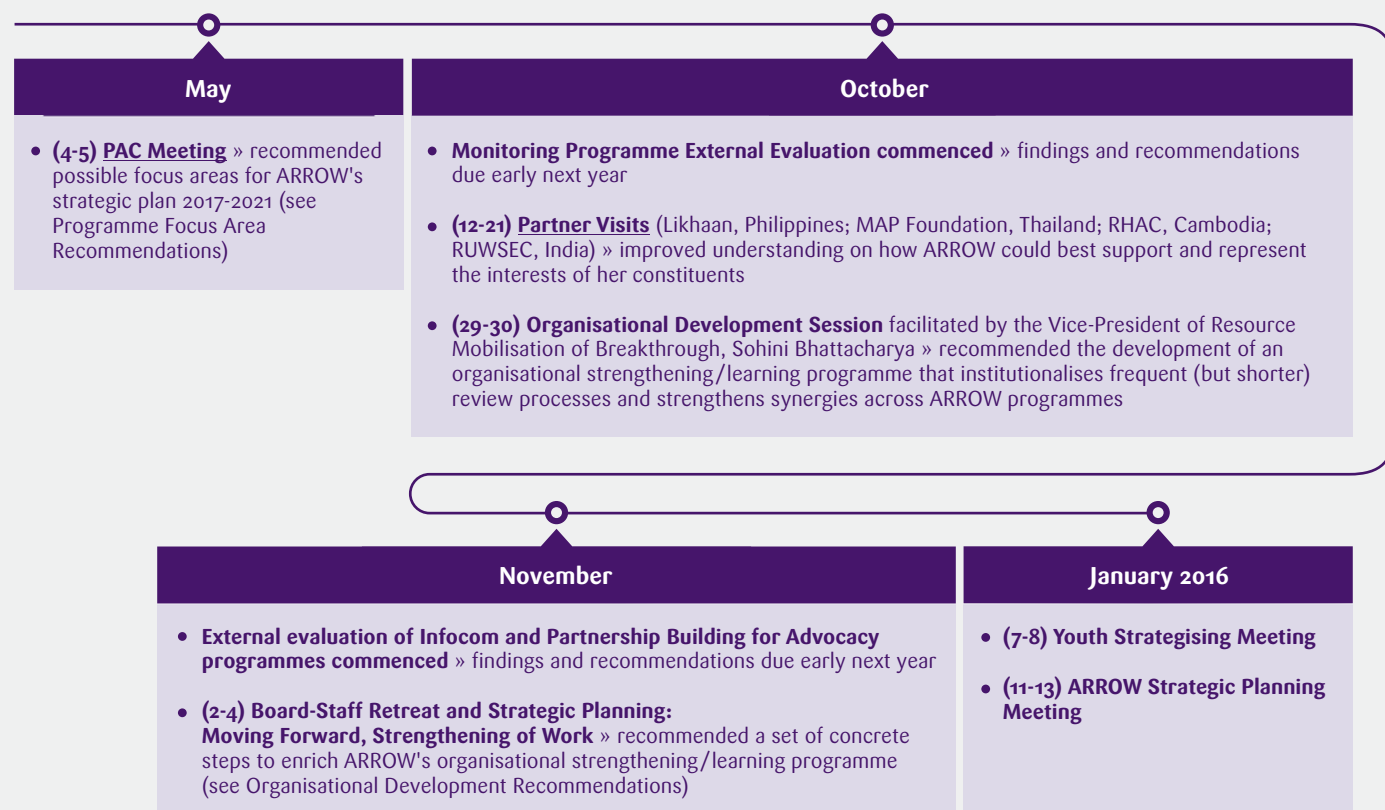
Next year is a transitional year for the organisation, as we conclude our current strategic plan, and move on to planning for the next five years.

During the year, ARROW staff participated in several “looking back” and “forward looking” exercises to assess her work (and work modalities); account for today’s trends, perceived risks, and opportunities; and gather data for next year’s joint five-year strategic planning session, with members of her Board of Directors (BoD), Programme Advisory Committee (PAC), partners/networks, and other allies.

A smaller team of ARROW staff worked on the strategic planning meeting at the end of the year, which was to be carried out in January 2016; as December was not feasible for many staff and partners. The strategic planning exercise in January had two key parts: a youth strategic plan (to find out the type of support needed by young people in the region from ARROW), and the overall organisational strategic plan.

The strategic planning exercise was led by Pramada Menon and Sivananthi Thanenthiran. The youth strategic planning exercise gathered 27 people from 16 countries in the region, excluding staff, while the organisational strategic planning exercise was attended by 50 staff and partners, from 20 countries in the region.

ARROW Timeline of Strategic Planning Events



Programme Focus Area Recommendations

(from PAC Meeting, 4-5 May)

- The inclusion of SRHR information and services is essential, but is often missing in disaster response and aid disbursement.
- Engagement with (young) men on human rights, women's rights, and gender equality issues, as well the World Health Organization, to gain better traction in countering sexual violence.
- Continued empowerment of partners and other development actors on evidence generation, and the use of indicators for monitoring.
- Continued community mobilisation for local-level advocacy through WHRAP, and further strengthening of the partnership as a regional SRHR advocacy platform.
- Network expansion of SRHR-Climate Change advocates, and partnership strengthening with Pacific groups.
- Creation of online platform to counter religious fundamentalisms, exploration of more strategies to counter these, and engagement in further alliance and constituency building.
- Strengthen partner involvement in ARROW's strategic planning process and Mid-Term Review.

Organisational Development Recommendations

(from Board-Staff Retreat and Strategic Planning, 2-4 November)

- Revise the core values of ARROW to reflect those already exemplified by staff: respect for others; inclusive participation and intersectional learning; commitment to excellence, transparency, honesty and fairness; commitment to affirmative sexuality; and commitment to staff well-being.
- Identify ways to facilitate cross-team collaboration to better integrate programmatic work, and avoid the pitfalls of a siloed work culture.
- Revise organisational structure to support the vision of ARROW's strategic plan 2017-2021.
- Revise the current appraisal system, in the interest of gathering broader feedback for performance appraisals, and improving ARROW's overall work.



ARROW PAC Meeting, May 2015, Kuala Lumpur. Source: ARROW Photobank.

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC GUIDANCE: THE ARROW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In 2015, our five-member BoD met three times: twice for their regular governance meetings; and once, to attend the 22nd Annual General Meeting of ARROW. In addition, BoD members Naeemah Khan, Rashidah Shuib, and Pramada Menon participated in the November Board-Staff Retreat.

At BoD governance meetings, four staff policies—travel, dependent relocation allowance, child education and non-wastage of food—were approved for immediate implementation. A Partnership Strategy Paper—which describes the different ARROW partnership modalities, and serves as guiding document for future endeavours—was approved by the BoD. Finally, the BoD approved the recommendation to expand her membership from five to seven, which includes a slot for a youth board member. Hoang Tu Anh from Vietnam and Rachel Arinii Judisthari (youth representative) from Indonesia accepted the Board's invitation to the BoD, and will commence their duties next year.

In 2015, the composition of our BoD remained the same as last year.

PROGRAMMATIC GUIDANCE: THE ARROW PROGRAMME ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Of the ten members of ARROW's Programme Advisory Committee, Otgonbaatar Tsedendemberel, Renu Khanna, and Sundari Ravindran joined ARROW staff and BoD member Rashidah Shuib (observer) in May, to discuss ARROW's future programmatic directions.

Towards the end of the year, we bade farewell to PAC members Hoang Tu Anh and Tara Chetty, who both completed their terms in 2015. Tu Anh is slated to join the ARROW BoD in January 2016, while Tara will move on to join the "Friends of ARROW" circle. Within the PAC, two slots are allocated to youth representatives.



ARROW Board of Directors Rozana Iza, Rashidah Shuib, and Bishakha Datta with Executive Director Sivanthi Thanenthiran and Staff Representative Arpita Das, May 2015, Kuala Lumpur. Photo by Rosnani Hitam, ARROW Photobank.

THE ARROW STAFF

ARROW ended 2015 with 21 staff members, each representing diverse backgrounds, and disciplines in the Asia-Pacific region. Apart from two remote-based staff members in Sri Lanka and Thailand, all ARROW women are based in Malaysia.

In ARROW, we take our professional growth and development seriously. Because we want all staff training opportunities to be accessible to each and every ARROW woman, many of these take place at our office in Malaysia. In 2015, we organised six staff training opportunities, and tapped into the expertise of our existing partners and networks for facilitation.

During the year, we welcomed six colleagues to the team: Goh Guan Yen, Mangala Namasivayam, Nabila Nasir, Sai Jyothirmai Racherla, Samreen Shahbaz, and Tabinda Sarosh. Four colleagues left ARROW to pursue other endeavours and career opportunities: Lor Yin Yin, Nabila Nasir, Nadia Rajaram, and Yukari Horii.

Two ARROW women shifted to new positions, Erika Sales (now Programme Officer for Climate Change) and Maria Melinda (Malyn) Ando (now Senior Programme Officer, Publications, Advocacy and Communications). On 1 May, Malyn moved to Thailand.

Staff Trainings/Seminars Conducted in 2015

Training Session/Seminar	Facilitator/Speaker
Most-Significant Change (MSC) Technique for Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation	Nur Hidayati, Programme Officer, HIV, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, ResultsinHealth, Netherlands
Human Rights Treaties and SRHR	Lucy Lim, ARROW Intern
Gender and Sexuality Workshop Series	Alankaar Sharma, Independent Consultant Gender and Sexuality, and Child Protection
Internet and Sexualities	Maya Indira Ganesh, ARROW PAC Member (Director of Tactical Tech)
Programming and Policy Making Experiences from a Grassroots Lens	Renu Khanna, ARROW PAC Member (Founder Trustee of SAHAJ)
Climate Change, Gender, and SRHR	Sunita Bishan, ARROW Climate Change Project Partner (Founder of Penita Initiative)
Compliance Training (Organised by David and Lucille Packard Foundation): Attended by three ARROW women.	



Gender and Sexuality Workshop with Alankaar Sharma, April 2015, Kuala Lumpur. Photo by Rosnani Hitam, ARROW Photobank.



Board members Pramada Menon (left), Naeemah Khan (middle), and Rashidah Shuib (right) at the ARROW BOD-Staff Retreat 2015. Source: ARROW Photobank.



As part of our strategic planning process, ARROW Women divided into four groups and visited *partners* in Cambodia (*RHAC*), India (*RUWSEC*), Philippines (*Likhaan*), and Thailand (*MAP Foundation*), October 2015.
Sources: ARROW Photobank.

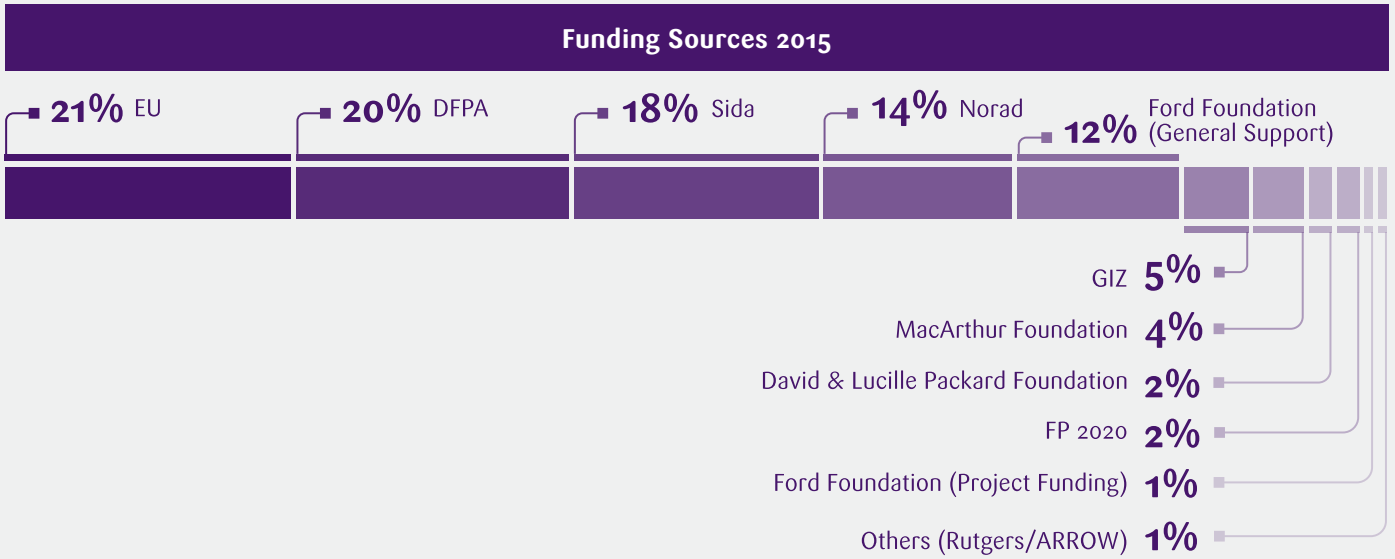


NEW GRANT FUNDING

ARROW enjoyed a financially viable year in 2015 through the sustained core funding support of the Ford Foundation and Sida, and the generous support of our current project funders. During the year, we successfully secured new funding for three initiatives, with a total approved budget of USD600,000 from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für

Internationale (GIZ), David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the MacArthur Foundation.

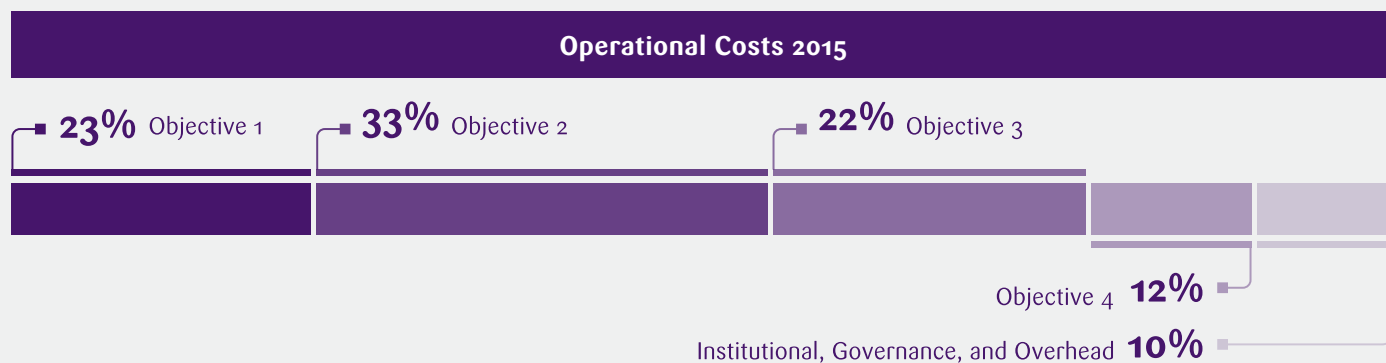
In the first half of 2015, ARROW projects supported by the Danish Family Planning Association (DFPA), the European Union (EU), and the Norwegian Agency for Development (Norad) underwent project audits, in addition to our annual statutory audits as an organisation registered in Malaysia.



ANNUAL BUDGET AND OPERATIONAL COSTS 2015

Our total budget for 2015 was USD2,700,379—this represents USD2,297,373 of allocated and new funding for the year, and an amount of USD403,006 carried over from 2014. Project funding represented 68% of this year's budget.

During the year, our total operational costs was USD2,689,337; 10.6% less than last year's costs (USD3,022,011), mainly due to favourable exchange rates. Due to the intensity of our engagement within the post-2015 sustainable development process, a significant amount of this year's funding went to activities under ARROW's programme objective 2. New funding received for this year was also channelled towards programme objective 2, resulting in increased activity uptake.



Total Operational Cost and Particulars				
OPERATIONAL COSTS AND PARTICULARS	ACTUAL COST (USD)	% TO TOTAL COST	ALLOCATION	
			ARROW	PARTNERS
PROGRAMME COSTS				
Obj. 1: Information & Communications	630,701	23%	459,487	171,214
Obj. 2: Evidence-based Research	874,885	33%	447,996	426,889
Obj. 3: Strengthening Partnerships	598,106	22%	234,520	363,587
Obj. 4: Organisational Development	314,152	12%	314,152	—
Institutional, Governance, and Overhead	271,492	10%	271,492	—
TOTAL OPERATIONAL COST	2,689,337*	100%	1,727,647	961,690
@RM 3.26 : USD 1.00			64%	36%**

*Figures may not tally during round off.

**About 36% of the total annual operational costs went to partners, compared to 41% in 2014.

Source: ARROW Audit 2015.



*At the ARROW Staff and Board Retreat 2015, 2-4 November 2015, Port Dickson.
Source: Sivananthi Thanenthiran, ARROW Photobank.*



The ARROW Community

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Bishakha Datta, Executive Director, Point of View, India
- Naeemah Khan, Independent Consultant, Fiji
- Pramada Menon, Independent Consultant, India
- Rashidah Shuib, Professor, Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA), Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang
- Rozana Isa, Project Coordinator, Musawah Secretariat, Malaysia

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- Arpita Das, Senior Programme Officer, Monitoring, Research and Advocacy
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- Erika Sales, Programme Officer, Climate Change
- Goh Guan Yen, Senior Administration and Finance Officer (joined September 2015)
- Lee Mei Poh, Administration and Finance Manager
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- Mangala Namasivayam, Senior Programme Officer (joined April 2015)
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- Nadia Rajaram, Programme Officer, Monitoring, Research and Advocacy (until March 2015)
- Nalini Singh, Programme Manager, Capacity Building and Advocacy
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- Samreen Shahbaz, Programme Officer, Knowledge Management and Research Support (joined June 2015)
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- Sivananthi KV Thanenthiran, Executive Director
- Tabinda Sarosh, Programme Manager, Information and Communications (joined May 2015)
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- Yukari Horii, Programme Officer, Strengthening Capacities of SRHR Network (until June 2016)

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- FP2020
- Ford Foundation
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- Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)
- MacArthur Foundation

The list of our partners and networks are on the map on pages 8-9.

Notes

- 1 Sustainable Development 2015, “Intergovernmental Processes,” accessed May 8, 2016, <http://www.sustainabledevelopment2015.org/index.php/intergovernmental-processes>.
- 2 Some of the published calls are found here: ARROW, “Publications in Post-2015 Development Agenda,” accessed May 6, 2016, <http://arrow.org.my/thematic/post-2015-development-agenda/>.
- 3 ARROW’s statement on the outcome document can be found here: <http://arrow.org.my/response-to-the-outcome-document-of-the-un-summit-to-adopt-the-post-2015-agenda/>.





*Migrant women enjoying a relaxed moment during a day-long session on SRHR at MAP Foundation, Chiang Mai, Thailand.
Photo by Arpita Das, ARROW Photobank.*

championing women's sexual and reproductive rights

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