

Webinar: Digital Safety, Disruption in Contraceptives Supply, Quarantine as New Challenges for Safe Sex during Pandemic

Find My Method and Jakarta Feminist discuss with Southeast Asian activists how the current pandemic is affecting sexual behaviors and health.

JAKARTA, INDONESIA, October 9, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Jakarta: The coronavirus pandemic is redefining how we traditionally understand safe sex as a method of prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, making digital safety an equally important component as more of us are going online to seek pleasure, Indonesian sexual and reproductive health and rights champion Bryant Roosevelt said during a webinar on Saturday titled, "COVID-19 and us: a Southeast Asian conversation on sex and pleasure."

Marking World Contraception Day, global eHealth platform [Find My Method](#) and Indonesian feminist association [Jakarta Feminist](#) organized this webinar to discuss the challenges around sexual and reproductive health during the current pandemic.

Activists from the region—Roosevelt from Indonesia, Niq Maravillas from the Philippines, Catherine Harry from Cambodia, and Yadanar from Myanmar—took part in this discussion, which was moderated by Anindya Restuviani, the head of Jakarta Feminist and Hollaback Jakarta.

Elaborating on Roosevelt's point about digital safety, Yadanar—who is a program analyst at UNFPA-Myanmar—stressed the importance of knowing each other's rights and the concept of consent during a digital sexual encounter. "We need to be careful about who we are chatting with; that we use secure platforms and if it is a casual interaction, that our identifiable body parts are not visible," she said, adding that if your trust is betrayed, remember, it is not your fault but rather the perpetrator's fault.

Extending the discussion of safe sex to access and use of contraceptives, Harry—a feminist vlogger—shared that in Cambodia, the policy allows free access to safe sex methods to women of all ages; however, the stigma around premarital sex makes it difficult for some women to access contraceptives. "One of the challenges we face in Cambodia is misconception and cultural barriers especially for unmarried women who face judgement when buying these methods. Premarital sex is frowned upon and that limits access to contraceptives," she explained. Yadanar added that this is similar to the situation in Myanmar and it's compounded by disruption in the supply of contraceptives and the ability to go out due to the pandemic.

In Indonesia, Roosevelt shared, the policy on contraceptives is contradictory. “The first part of the law says everyone has the right to choose the contraceptive they want but in the following part, it says this right is only for the legally married people. It is fixated on providing contraceptives to married couples and leaves so many groups out like young, unmarried and queer people. In practice, everyone can access contraceptives but due to the ambiguity in law and barriers created by certain providers, it is challenging to get them,” he stated.

Speaking about the Philippines, Maravillas—who works as a program associate at the Forum for Family Planning and Development—said that the reproductive health law, which was passed in 2012 after 10 years of struggle, calls for the provision of free contraceptives to people from low-income and marginalized groups as well as adolescents but gaps remain due to sex being a taboo topic in the country. “This is a challenge but luckily many non-governmental as well as governmental organizations are pushing for comprehensive sex education and there are new youth-focused health services which will improve the situation,” she hoped.

To listen to the full discussion, you can view the webinar on the Find My Method social media platforms: [YouTube](#), Facebook, and Twitter.

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