



# WOMEN AT THE CENTER: PRIORITIZING WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND EMPOWERMENT IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE AND RECOVERY



22-23 OCTOBER 2022  
MANILA, PHILIPPINES



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# Organisers



Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on  
Population and Development  
[www.afppd.net](http://www.afppd.net)



UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office  
[www.asiapacific.unfpa.org](http://www.asiapacific.unfpa.org)



The Philippine Legislators' Committee on  
Population and Development  
[www.plcpd.org.ph](http://www.plcpd.org.ph)



International Planned Parenthood Federation  
[www.ippf.org](http://www.ippf.org)



The Asian Population and Development Foundation  
[www.apda.jp](http://www.apda.jp)

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## Participating Countries



# Participants



**73**  
Total  
Participants



**21**  
Online  
Participants



**52**  
Inperson  
Participants



**19**  
Countries



# BACKGROUND

The meeting was hosted by AFPPD and APDA and hosted by PLCPD with the support of UNFPA APRO and in cooperation with IPPF.

The meeting gathered 52 in-person and 21 online participants for two days. Representatives from 19 countries participated in the meeting which included parliamentarians, CSOs, journalists, and Youth Representatives from different organisations.

The meeting aimed to contribute to improved policy environments for women's rights and gender equality in the Asia-Pacific region on the road to Covid-19 pandemic recovery, particularly in the areas of economic empowerment and political participation, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the elimination of discrimination and prevention of violence against women and girls, through accelerated action to fulfill commitments central to realizing sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's rights, and human development (i.e. ICPD, BPfA, SDGs 3 and 5) and subsequent regional- and national-level plans and programs of action for these commitments.

With the theme of prioritizing women's rights and gender equality in pandemic recovery, the meeting will focus on addressing shocks from and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on women, identifying top concerns of women in the region during the Covid-19 pandemic, putting forward policy actions to address these concerns, and how parliamentarians can accelerate these actions. The meeting's specific objectives were :

1. To discuss and identify policy solutions to address the top concerns of women during the Covid-19 pandemic and on the road to recovery
2. To secure commitment for concrete plans of action from parliamentarians

# Opening Remarks

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT AND KEY EVENT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND FOR AFPPD AND PARTNERS. THIS KEY EVENT HAPPENING IN PERSON AFTER 3 YEARS AND PROVIDE WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS KEY ISSUES.



Ms. Sarah Jane Elago, PLCPD



Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi, AFPPD

ICPD25 AND 2030 AGENDA CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT EMPOWERING WOMEN. SUSTAINABILITY OF EVERY COUNTRY IS DEPEND ON INVESTMENT. WOMEN, GIRLS AND AGEING PEOPLE ARE MOST IMPACTED. THE PARLIAMENTARIANS ARE THE CATALYST FOR CHANGE AND AFPPD PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN THE REGION TO ADDRESS GENDER ISSUES.

UNFPA AIMS TO ACHIEVE THREE ZEROS CHANGING RESULTS BY 2030. IT INCLUDES ENDING THE UNMET NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING, ENDING PREVENTABLE MATERNAL DEATHS AND ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES WOMEN HAVE RIGHTS TO TAKE THEIR OWN DECISION AS WELL AS SRHR.

UNFPA ENCOURAGE TO WORK AND FOLLOW UP GLOBAL COMMITMENTS.

UNFPA ENCOURAGE VISIT FACILITIES IN YOUR RESPECTIVE CONSTITUENCIES.



Mr. Bjorn Andersson, UNFPA APRO

# Opening Remarks



ALL THE WOMEN AND GIRLS AND MEMBERS IN MY COMMUNITY BROUGHT ME TO THIS POSITION. WE CAN DO ANYTHING IF WE PUT OUR HEARTS AND SOULS TOGETHER FOR COMMON GOAL.

Hon. Josephine Veronique Lacson-Noel  
House of Representatives

PARLIAMENTARIANS CAN DEVELOP POLICIES FOR MIGRANT WORKERS AND WOMEN.

WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO PUT AT WOMEN AT CENTER BECAUSE WOMEN'S ISSUE AND NEED ARE ALWAYS SEEN AS LESS IMPORTANT.

INEQUALITIES AGAINST WOMEN HAD BECOME MORE STRONG DURING PANDEMIC.



Hon. Risa Hontiveros, PLCPD





# Opening Session





**Day**

**1**

# Session 1

## Sexual and reproductive health and rights during lockdowns: Ensuring essential services during the Covid-19 pandemic

Chair of Session: Hon. Arlene Brosas, MP Philippines

Hon. Jetn Sirathranont, MP Thailand

Dr. Juan Antonio A. Perez III, Forum for Family Planning and Development

Ms. Ermalena Muslim Hasbullah, IFPPD, Indonesia

Ms. Kamma Blair, UNFPA APRO



### Starting remarks from Session Chair, Hon. Arlene Brosas :

She reminded how the pandemic disproportionately impacted women and girls. Women lost their jobs, and they received little to no support for economic relief, food and medical care. The crisis in public health was characterized by decades of meagre public funding and impacted the poor women's overall health and in particular, their sexual and reproductive health, including their access to modern contraceptives and maternal and childcare services.



She also highlighted that women had greater difficulties in accessing mechanisms to report abuse and access support services also, as per current data with regards to gender disparity in public and political life participation, we only have a 23.1% of those in elective positions.

The four forwarded recommendations from the chair in the Philippines in recent time were:

1

To ensure full and effective implementation of the Magna Carta of women to improve work opportunities, receive equal pay for equal work, and guarantee against discrimination.

2

To ensure full and effective implementation of the responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act, including provisions and access to modern contraceptives to ensure comprehensive sexuality education in informal and non-formal institutions and put a stop to discriminatory practices preventing access to SRHR services.

3

The divorce bill that allows the dissolution of marriage, especially those involving violence against spouses, and to correspond this with amendments to the family code

4

Enhanced measures to prevent violence against women and girls, including expanding psychosocial support and legal services and integrating the services internationally and national Covid-19 recovery measures. As well as recognize women's rights groups and organizations.



**First Speaker: Hon. Jetn Sirathranont, MP Thailand**

The speaker reminded the global community and countries must advance the new agenda of SDGs. He mentioned that, In Thailand, progress was made. The National Assembly has passed the adopted Criminal Court for abortion in Thailand to be legal up to 12 weeks of pregnancy since 7 February 2021.

The parliament removes first-term abortion from the Criminal Court. In addition, the new section allows abortion after 12 weeks but no later than 20 weeks of pregnancy in the case where women, after consulting with experts, insist that they must have an abortion.

He also highlighted 'The Prevention and Solution of the Adolescent Pregnancy Problem Act 2016', which elected rights of adolescents in sector 5, including the right to education in school with pregnancy, comprehensive sexuality education in all schools, and there are existing more tools to collect adolescent pregnancy problem and unfair or unwanted pregnancies.

Thailand Developed 'Guidelines of Pregnant Women Care During Pandemic' that ensured care during pregnancy. This included the vaccination for women, including migrant workers. National Health Security Office also took all the expenses of COVID-19 care.

Unplanned pregnancy helpline 1663, which is funded by the Thai health promotion foundation and is also a one-stop crisis centre was active during the pandemic.

The speaker also mentioned that In Thailand Coronavirus Omicron variant was the key cause of the mortality rate of women. Between 2020-2022, a total of 71 cases of mortality were reported, and in 2021 along counted for 66 deaths.

As conclusion, the speaker highlighted the five key things. These were

- Prevention and Solution of Adolescent Pregnancy Problem Act 2016.
- Adopted criminal codes article 301,302,305 since 7 Feb 2021.
- Increase online services and decrease on-site SRHR services, as well as decreased public services and increase NGO services due to pandemic
- Role of Village health volunteer during the pandemic.
- Helpline numbers and other mechanisms during the pandemic.
- As a closing statement, the speaker also mentioned that various studies had demonstrated clearly that family planning it the best investment that a country can make for human development and literally, he hopes that the new law will very increase opportunities for women and girls in Thailand and have the opportunity to help down the line in the reproductive sector.

1663 and OSCC responsible for Vulnerable cases

1. Young age group
2. Gestation >12 wks.
3. Psychosocial problems
4. Economic problems
5. Health risk

1663 will

1. Monitoring for medical use
2. Complicated cases concern
3. Advice for FP

Year	Patients number	Mortality number
<b>2020</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>2022</b>	<b>2,676</b>	<b>5</b>
Total	<b>3,915</b>	<b>71</b>

CDC Thailand

• Prevention and Solution of Adolescent Pregnancy Problems Act. 2016

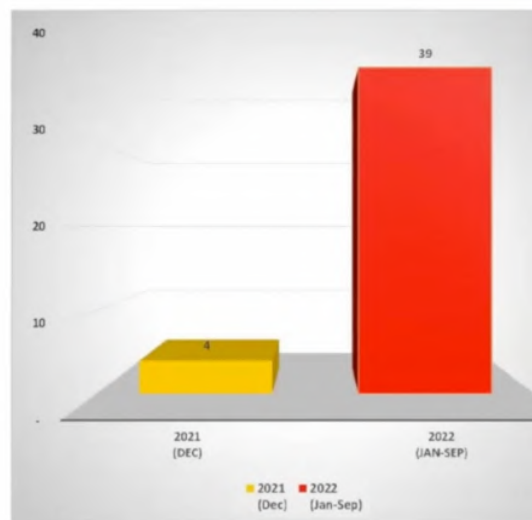
• Adopted criminal codes article 301, 302, 305 since 7 Feb. 2021



NUMBER OF FEMALE MIGRANT WORKERS REFERRED TO RECEIVE SAFE ABORTION CARE SERVICE AT PPAT CLINIC

PPAT is implementing the end to end to safe abortion care for female migrant workers in Samut Sakorn Province.

Project support by Grand Challenges Canada (GCC)



**Second Speaker: Dr. Juan Antonio A. Perez III, Forum for Family Planning and Development**

The speaker started with the presentation focusing on the Philippine situation and its policy implications during the pandemic. With the title of Sexual and reproductive health trends and services in the Philippines in the time of COVID-19 in the last two and half years.

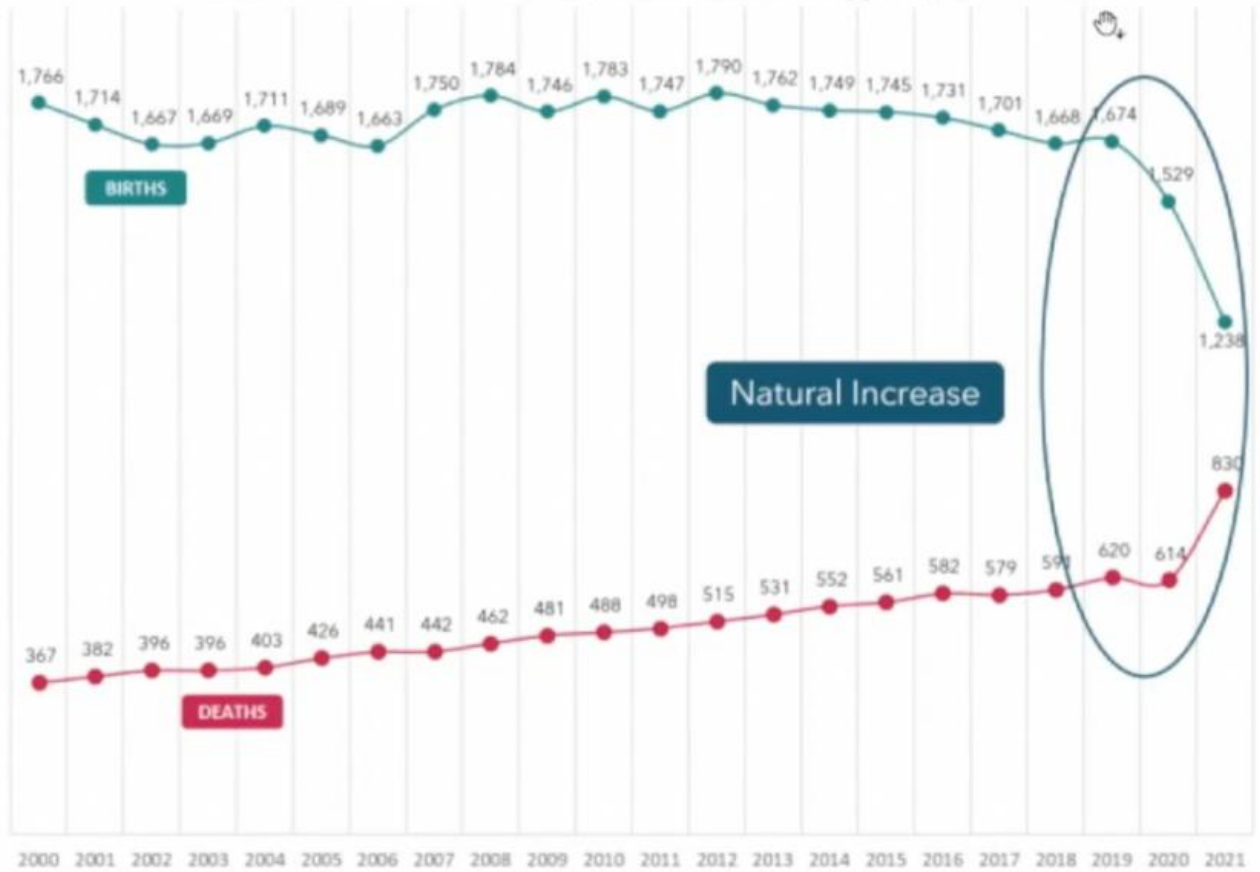
The speaker highlighted that the Philippines implemented community quarantines starting in March 2020, which were among the most strict quarantines, particularly Luzon island of the country, and they continued up to 2021. Evidence from the surveys that were done in late 2020 we found out that women were refraining from visiting health facilities, particularly at the primary level but also at the hospital level for fear of exposure to COVID-19 and also they themselves could not move around because of transport lockdown.



The most affected area was in Mindanao, where 29%, or almost a third, found it difficult to access family planning services during the pandemic. The population trends also changed in the Philippines during the pandemic. The speaker presented that in 2020 the increase in population went down to only 914,000 and in 2021 last year it was at its lowest growth of 407,000. In 2021, 879,000 deaths were recorded, which was the highest number of deaths in the Philippines that was ever recorded historically it was the highest number of deaths ever, and therefore it impacted the natural increase in population.

The country saw that during the pandemic, women turned to family planning in the last two years, and there was a significant decline in births also women wanted to avoid pregnancy, so births went down from 1.5 million in 2020 went down to 1.3 million in 2021.

Number of Live Births and Deaths (in thousands): Philippines, 2000-2021



Note: Births and deaths in 2021 are preliminary (as of 31 January 2022)

The births have continued to decline for ages 15 to 19 in 2021. The Philippines Department of Health reported that the births among 10 to 14-year-old mothers increased by around 20 plus percent from 2100 it went up to 3000 birth among 10 to 14 years old. The births among minor mothers are characterized by a partner older than the minor who is below 18 also, the Philippines has large numbers of older husbands or partners of young women.

It was also reported that violence during pregnancy was highest among the 15 to 19-year-old group, not teen pregnancies we could not get reports below 15 due to the limitations of the service.

**Births among 10-14 mothers decreased from 7 births a day in 2019 to 6 births a day in 2020.**

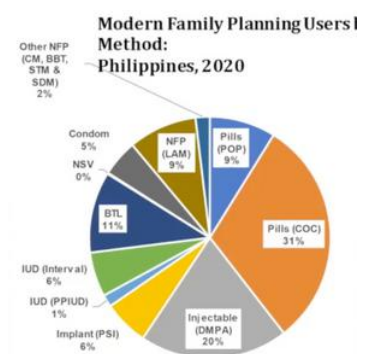
**However, in 2021, DOH reports that there have been 3,027 births among 10-14 mothers or 8 births a day among very young adolescents.**



**127,139 or 10% of 1.3M births were teenage births in 2021**

124,112 births (15-19)

3,027 births (10-14)



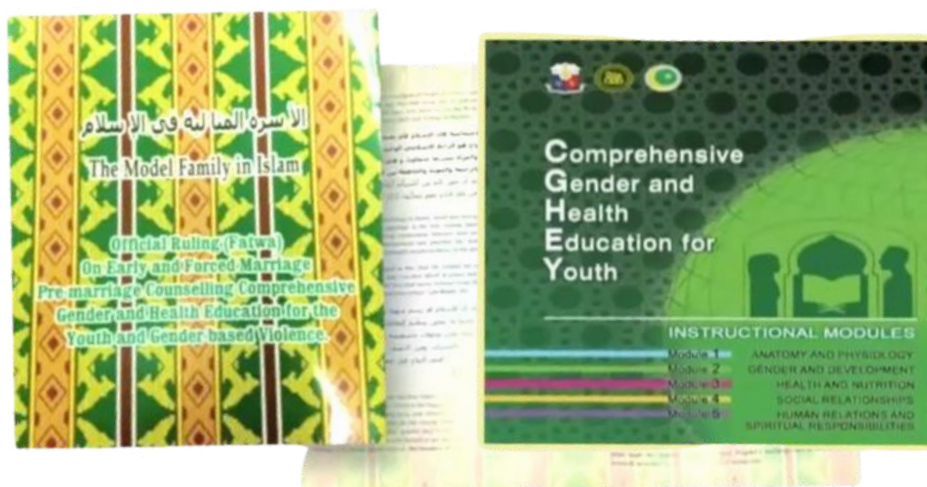
Source: 2020 Field Health Services Information System (FHSIS), DOI

The speaker also mentioned that the Philippines, like other Asian countries, is starting to see an ageing population we expect that the Philippines will become an ageing society by the end of this decade by 2030 with 11% of the population above 60 years old. The majority of the 11% will be female 55% . The older female population tends to be more disabled and have more health problems and also the older population,49% of them are still working and because they have low incomes. So the oldest population, 60 and above, in the Philippines is growing very fast, but they are poor and they are not healthy.

To cope with COVID-19. The Philippines have expanded virtual health through helplines, and instituted programs are in on the Internet, YouTube, and other platforms to talk about population issues. Also, the speaker mentioned that the training also moved online due to the pandemic pills became the most popular method.

The speaker also highlighted the south-south cooperation between the Philippines and Indonesia, where the Ministry of Health Indonesia and the Philippines focused on family planning and health programs in Muslim Mindanao.

The speaker concluded with key involvement with young people, LGBT, People with Disabilities, and women and came up with new laws and policies such as the age of consent and child marriage.



## Declining births in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic...

Year	January - September		January - December	
	No. of Birth	% Change from previous year	No. of Birth	% Change from previous year
2017	1,229,063		1,700,618	
2018	1,217,873	-0.91	1,668,120	-1.91
2019	1,232,411	1.19	1,673,923	0.35
2020	1,131,905	-8.16	1,534,797	-8.31
2021	912,511	-19.38	1,309,601	-14.7

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, Civil Registration Service, Vital Statistics Division





Third Speaker: Ms. Ermalena Muslim Hasbullah, IFPPD, Indonesia

The speaker started with information on the expansion of the Commission. In the past, it was only the health and Family Planning Commission now, they have expanded the two special Commissions, which are the education special Commission and another one for the youth and women's and which are tech part of the Indonesian forum parliament population.

Ms. Ermalena Hasbullah also highlighted the Muslim Religious Leaders (MRLs) engagement in the promotion of reproductive health, family planning services, and protection of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PPK University of Indonesia's research in 2020 showed that women and girls were in the most vulnerable position during the pandemic. Violence against women and girls, and potential family conflict were also due to the lockdown and economic difficulties were also faced due to the pandemic. The health facilities and healthcare workers focused more on COVID-19, and family planning services decreased 47% in Jan-April 2020 in comparison to 2019. Similarly, during the pandemic Muslim religious leader played an essential role in providing guide guidance for all aspects of the for Indonesian people, were around the 87% were Muslim and young people were involved in a project with the support of UNFPA and partners.

Social media influence was used for the activities as well as information discrimination through social media. The speaker also shared that 9 videos were produced for the information of SRHR as per the local context. She also mentioned how the videos were decimated.

Finally, the speaker also mentioned how they train religious leaders as well as women and girls in both online and offline.





### **Forth Speaker : Ms. Kamma Blair, UNFPA APRO**

The speaker focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as innovations that communities and countries made as a response to the pandemic. The speakers also highlighted the unmet needs for family planning and Gender Based Violence as well as harmful practices as the impact of Covid-19. The impact of COVID-19 was also highlighted, which showed the changes in terms of access to services utilization of services.

Ms. Kamma Blair highlighted that access resulted in Women's Health seeking behavior changing globally and in the Asia Pacific. Women were seeking care during pregnancy and delivering it at home with a skilled birth attendant, and that has thus resulted in increased maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidities. The maternal health workforce was not always well protected such and personal protective equipment (PPE) was not always available. The speaker provided the fact from The Lancet published in 2021, which showed evidence that global maternal and fetal outcomes did worsen during the pandemic, and there was an increase in maternal deaths and maternal depression. She also mentioned there is still an urgent need to prioritize safe, accessible, and equitable maternity care within the strategic response to the pandemic.

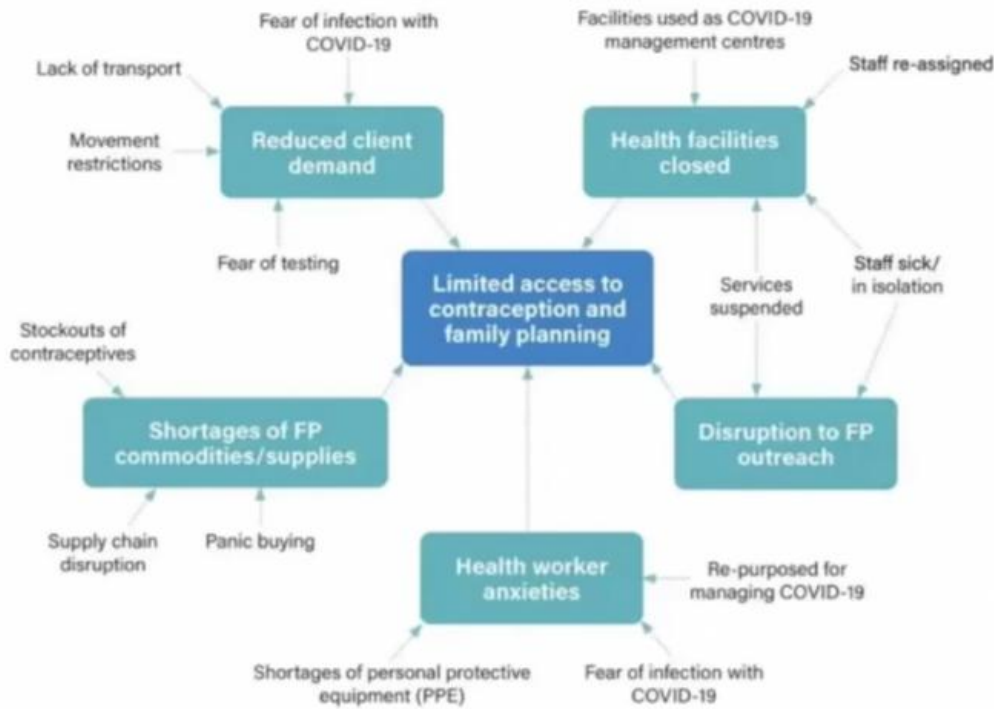


Some of the other facts provided were particular disruptions in antenatal facilities, which showed the country Bangladesh reported a 41% decrease on the basis of monthly reports, and Myanmar reported a 6% decrease in March and a 3.5% decrease in April 2020 compared to 2019. Similarly, Bangladesh reported a 30% reduction in institutional deliveries.

In terms of another impact, the speaker mentioned that there was a shift in contraceptive method choices that limited options, so there was a reduction in the availability of permanent and long-lasting reversible methods, as well as there is a potential surge in demand for emergency contraception and abortion. UNFPA estimated that 12 million women will have been unable to access family planning and services as a result of the pandemic. Similarly, UNFPA estimates that around 1.4 million unemployed unintended pregnancies may have occurred due to limited access to family planning services.

The facts were presented, which showed the initial decrease in testing for sexually transmitted infection (STI), as well as treatment one of the critical things also to note is the disruption of antiretroviral (ARV) distribution during COVID-19. The speaker also emphasized to policy makers looking at monitoring the changes in legislative protections and so, particularly at emergency decrees or new bills or legislations that are being passed in the coming months and years ahead, and for us to be mindful of the principles no one being left behind in human rights.

# Effect of COVID-19 on family planning services



Twitter @HRPresearch

Source: Rita Kabra, Komal P. Allagh, WHO FP Accelerator project



## Countries reporting on ARV disruptions due to COVID-19, 2020

Preliminary results compiled from a survey conducted by WHO between April and June 2020 (n=127)



Source: Global HIV, Hepatitis and STIs Programmes (HSS), WHO, 2020

Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.





# Session 2

## Responding to the shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls

Chair of Session: Hon. Elvira Surabaldieva, MP Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Karen S. Gomez Dumpit, Former Commissioner, Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines

Hon. Dr. Ameer Yajnik, MP India

Ms. Humaira Farhanaz, UNFPA Philippines



### First Speaker: Ms. Karen S. Gomez Dumpit, Philippines

The speaker highlighted that the Philippines was one of the countries to have the longest lockdowns, and the pass system provided by the government was mostly given to 1 person per home, and it was primarily men. Women and girls were not protected as women and girls were forced to stay at home despite of cases of Gender-Based Violence. Also, the women had multiple burdens at home during the COVID crisis and during the lockdowns, it actually tripled.



There was an information gap on government assistance and benefits there have been exclusions in terms of benefits as well, and when the government actually gave out assistance cash assistance to households, it was actually quite difficult for others who had not registered and were not able to access government assistance. The homeless again, even in terms of the vaccinations when it was rolled out, we had projects that would ensure that there would be bridging of gaps in terms of gaining access to vaccines. Even if someone was already categorized as a priority but those who don't have IDs were not been able to access it right away.

**Need to highlight disproportionate impact of COVID-19 crisis on women, girls, and vulnerable sectors;**

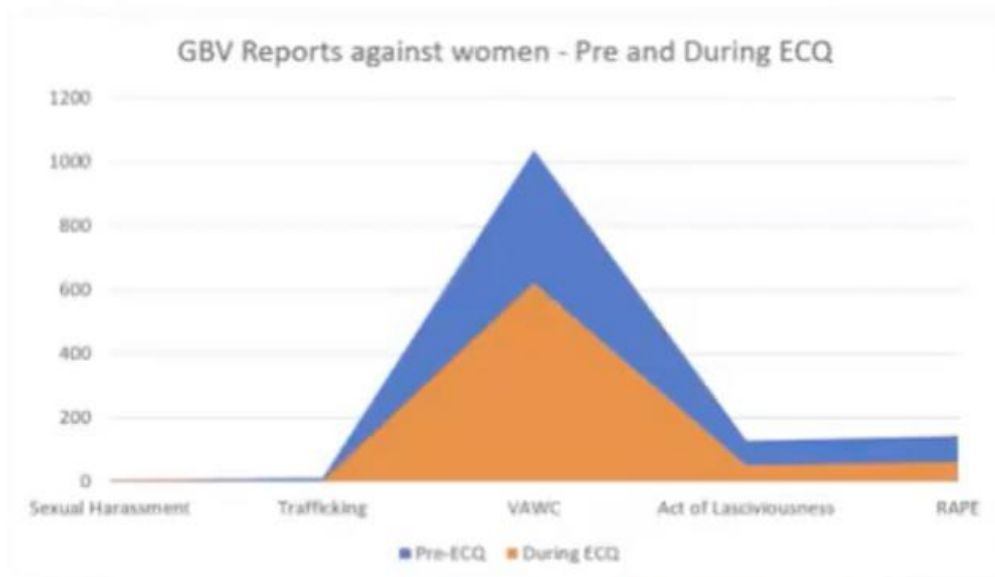


**Information gap on government assistance and benefits; Exclusion from benefits**



There was an information gap on government assistance and benefits there have been exclusions in terms of benefits as well, and when the government actually gave out assistance cash assistance to households, it was actually quite difficult for others who had not registered and were not able to access government assistance. The homeless again, even in terms of the vaccinations when it was rolled out, we had projects that would ensure that there would be bridging of gaps in terms of gaining access to vaccines. Even if someone was already categorized as a priority but those who don't have IDs have not been able to access it right away.

....



	14 Feb - 14 March	14 March - 14 April
RAPE	144	63
Acts of Lasciviousness	129	53
VAW	1037	623
Trafficking	13	2
Sexual Harassment	7	7

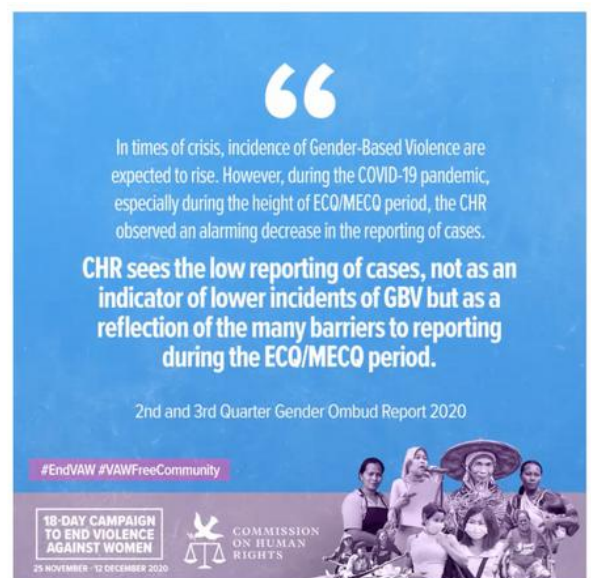
Data Source: PNP WCPC, PNP CIRAS as of 14 April 2020

The speaker mentioned that during monitoring, many of the villages delayed the release of village Protection Orders for women and women's desks at the Philippine national police deferring action even rate during the lockdowns, so the inability to file complaints with the prosecutor's office because it's not only the households that were locked down it also included women shelters.

National Human Rights Commission in the Philippines provided temporary shelters for women seeking shelter because of their situation at home we not safe. They were also able to provide even transportation but most of the things that they did at the beginning of that lockdown were to call local shelters and to tell them that even in an emergency, they cannot just simply lock down the facilities because the women need those sanctuaries for their safety and security.

The COVID-19 guidelines during lockdown only allowed people to access public transport only if they were doing essential work or essential services. However, even the people who needed access to public transport to report GBV or take other services were not allowed to take public transport. Even people above 60 who need to take a pension had to walk several hours to get their pension as they were not allowed to access public services.

Similarly, online portals and helpline numbers were established by the commission on Human Rights, and even people were disabilities involved on peer to peer support and monitoring.



## GENDER OMBUD IN THE TIME OF COVID





### Hon. Dr. Amee Yajnik, MP India

The speaker started with the issues of Gender Based Violence and the nature of violence on a global scale. She focused on the adverse effect of Violence, such as psychological effects not only in women but also in other family members such as children. She highlighted the risk factor due to COVID-19 regarding violence against women. The data from WHO was published, which showed the increase in violence within intimate partners during lockdowns.

In terms of India, as per the survey from the Ministry of Health, spousal violence increased, but there was limited access to online and helpline numbers for women. The lockdown also affected the collection of data, but later it was found that there was a huge increase in calls from children and women on the helpline numbers.

In India, there had been four lockdown phases followed by the countrywide 'Janata Curfew' on 22 March 2020.

1. LD1.0: 25 March 2020 to 14 April 2020
2. LD2.0: 15 April to 3 May 2020
3. LD3.0: 4 May to 17 May 2020
4. LD4.0: 18 May to 31 May 2020

Unlocking was done in phased manner with lockdown restrictions.



In terms of India, as per the survey from the Ministry of Health, spousal violence increased, but there was limited access to online and helpline numbers for women. The lockdown also affected the collection of data, but later it was found that there was a huge increase in calls from children and women on the helpline numbers. Similarly, she reflected that as per the data of UNWOMEN, during lockdowns only 7% of men lost their jobs compared to 47% of women. She highlighted that there is a need for a shadow pandemic even in this current situation.

## Risk factors for Violence against Women

**Individual factors:** Frustration, substance abuse, lack of awareness and stress.

**Relationship factors:** Male dominance, infidelity and women's economic dependence.

**Community factors:** Poverty, social isolation and lack of support and weak law enforcement.

**Cultural factors:** Gender roles and marriage practices.





The speaker emphasized the need for the role of parliamentarians in response to violence against women and girls. The key points she highlighted were :

1

Parliamentarians can play a very important role on all aspects.

2

Parliamentarians are leaders and serve as a role models for the community members and bring positive changes.

3

Parliamentarians' voice is seriously heard by people, which is reached all people. They can interact with the program staff of GBV related programs and can support the services.

4

Parliamentarians can interact with people of their constituency regularly and create awareness on the issues and inspire them to use the existing services.

5

Parliamentarians can influence the policies and strategies and make them more effective. And can monitor and supervise the existing GBV services to make them more efficient. In this way, they can strengthen the support system and increase the use of program services.

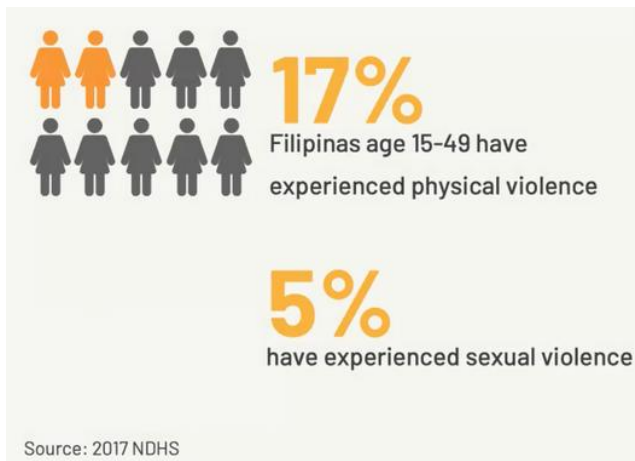
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Parliamentarians can do Policy advocacy and concrete steps to see that women re-enter the workforce participation. And also can create and lobby for specific policies for the provision of counselling centers for vulnerable ones, including women, girls, and children.



### Third Speaker: Ms. Humaira Farhanaz, UNFPA Philippines

The speaker started with the presentation focusing on gender-based violence data and the ground situation in the Philippines. 17% of Filipino woman aged 15 to 49 has experienced physical violence, and also on top of that, 5% of women and girls have also experienced sexual violence. The situation is usually exacerbated during disasters crisis which include the COVID-19 crisis. In the Philippines, there is a significant difference in the rates of violence experienced by women in areas which is which are highly exposed to disasters and natural disasters such as typhoons and other natural hazards.



The study from UNFPA University of Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) estimated that both physical and sexual violence could increase by 15%. Looking at actual numbers accumulates to almost 235,000 women and girls who were put at risk of experiencing violence and women during the lockdown.

The study from UNFPA University of Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) estimated that both physical and sexual violence could increase by 15%. Looking at actual numbers accumulates to almost 235,000 women and girls who were put at risk of experiencing violence and women during the lockdown. The Philippines have documented a significant drop in service utilization or case reports, and UNFPA has analyzed that this is likely due to due to access and mobility issues faced by survivors in addition to COVID-19. Even before the pandemic, according to the 2017 NDHS, only 34% of survivors sought help, while 25% told someone about the abuse but did not actually seek help from institutions or authorities.



UNFPA's steps taken during pandemic





UNFPA ensured digitalization of the services to ensure access to services by survivors and generally women and girls with its partners to develop new platforms for reaching women and girls and also gender-based violence survivors and expanding their access to safety and very specific mental health and psychosocial support services. UNFPA also has supported the development and continuation of the rhcare.info website, which has reached 14 million people as of September this year of September 2022 in addition to giving productive health information is also giving information about gender-based violence and referral linkages.



UNFPA acknowledges the fact that many women and girls will not have online access. They use traditional methods and very innovative ways of reaching women and girls so that they feel safe, stay connected to their communities and get the information including lifesaving information.



UNFPA and partners recognize further that the loss of livelihoods does increase the risk of violence in homes it increases the risk of gender-based violence for women, specifically.

UNFPA engaged with women in various socioeconomic activities to protect them by providing stability economic stability during the lockdown. UNFPA has done this by providing livelihood seed capital and training packages for internally displaced women and girls during the COVID, and we've also engaged commute woman from the community as social worker aids community-based gender-based violence monitors as women-friendly space facilitators and they have all been provided with cash flow.

The Speaker as a representative of UNFPA provided the following recommendation to policymakers to reduce the impact on women and girls.

1

Government agencies, political leaders, and lawmakers should address structural inequalities and discriminatory gender and social norms that perpetuate gender-based violence in any society in their societies.

Policymakers need to promote, advocate and implement policies to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in communities.

2

Push to Improve access, quality and quantity of services for women and girls, especially those who are the most vulnerable such as internally displaced persons, indigenous people in our countries, and also persons with disabilities.. Policymakers should and must ensure by leaving no one behind in the services that we provide.

3

Develop and implement gender-responsive policies and legal frameworks where required that are inclusive and culturally sensitive leading to a resilient and conflict-free community.

4

Continue to adapt to changes that are currently there are happening and that will be coming. Policymakers must need to respond to challenges and focus their efforts on key agents of change





# Session 3

## Addressing gender gaps in labor and economic participation

Chair of Session: Hon. Angela Warren-Clark, MP New Zealand, Co-Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee

Hon. Sutihar Sakal Deo, MP Nepal

Hon. Lork Kheng, MP Cambodia

Hon. Lisa Chesters, MP Australia

Ms. Lot Felizco, Country Director, Oxfam Pilipinas



First Speaker : Hon. Sutihar Sakal Deo, MP Nepal



The speaker addressed the situation of Nepal, which is going through rapid demographic changes in population. The projection shows that Nepal's demographic window of opportunity will last for a total of 55 years it began in 1992 and will start to close around 2047 or another 25 years. Nepal will be at its peak productivity page the increased productivity of this demographic change can result in the accelerated economic growth of Nepal and capitalize on this demographic window of opportunity in the economic appropriate and timely policy interventions are essential.

## Key Points presented by Speaker:

Women are underrepresented despite their higher percentage in the working age group. According to the National Labor survey, in terms of unpaid work such as domestic care, unpaid household cares, and services provided for the children and elderly, only 47.2% of working-age males were involved well 90.7% of females were involved in such activities.

Females had a share of only 13.2% in managerial positions compared to 86.8% of males this shows the huge general gap in labor participation in Nepal.

Nepal had allocated at least 33% seats or own hand in all states mechanism from federal to local which has increased the political participation of women in parliament, but the presence of women at high-ranking positions such as minister secretary leader of political party head of government projects and organization is still lacking.

In Nepal evidences shows that women interpreters have much lower revenue and profits compared to their male counterparts. Women-led enterprises struggle to survive and often end up close due to a variety of reasons including competition from large and international companies, access to finance, political instability inadequate training and education and limited intrapreneurial capacity among the workforce.

Data shows only 26% of women have access to property rights, thus due to this, women lack collateral access. Gender bias still remains a major issue for women interpreters as raising capital for their businesses, women entrepreneurs face rejection well applying for loans from banks, and financial institutions are hesitant to lend to women men just because of their gender.

A civil court will 2017 of Nepal ensures equal property rights from parents to sons and daughters, but in reality, this is not exercised because it would have meant breaching consolidated traditional relations.

Ministry of industry commerce and supply, which was established in 2015 to improve the excess of finance women entrepreneurs by providing collateral at a 6% rate, women entrepreneurs are entitled to a long up to Nepalese rupees 500,000 without any collateral under this policy.

COVID-19 has presented how unstable foreign employment can be one foreign migrant has to be repatriated back into the country, remittance alone accounts for more than 25 percent of the GDP in Nepal. Also, only 5 percent of migrant workers from Nepal are women.

Development banks and financial institutions in Nepal are required to mobilize 20% and 15%, respectively of their total credit portfolio to the micro cottage and small-scale industries for the next 5 years. Also, the 2021-22 budget has also included various tax exemptions and incentives for COVID-19 affected businesses.

Government of Nepal introduce micro enterprise development for poverty alleviation with a motive to encourage micro business development through inter-partnership training to increase employment opportunities and income levels of for individuals who are below the poverty line. This policy is gender sensitive with special focus on micro enterprises rooted in traditional knowledge and their skill. it outlines ensuring meaningful representation and participation of women at various levels of the decision making process

The speaker focused on establishment of Women Think tank as well as creating environment for women in all countries where they can access loans and innitate the business.

### MICRO ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (MED) MODEL







### Second Speaker: Hon. Lork Kheng, MP Cambodia

The speaker presented an overview of the labour market in Cambodia which we have seen solid economic growth averaging 7.4% over the last decade as well as a considerable increase in social development, which is one of the region's highest rates of Human Development Index. Also, the speaker mentioned that in Cambodia, taking the COVID-19 crisis into consideration the minimum wage is increased from 160 USD to 194 USD in 2022, and in 2023 the minimum increase to 200 USD per month.

Women's labour involvement has also increased significantly in Cambodia. The female labour force participation rate was 84% in 2019 and 77.5% in 2014, and 80.1% person in 2017. Similarly, from 2017 to 2019, the proportion of women working as unpaid family caregivers increase from 4.7% to more than 20.3%, while males increased from 4% to 9.3%. Also, women civil servants has increased significantly from 25% to 41% within the decade.



Cambodia's Parliamentary Woman Caucus has lunch the 'girl2leader' campaign at the local level to advocate and promote parliamentary roles and women in leadership to young girls and inspire them to dream big to be a leader in the future. The government has promoted and invested in installing a solid health system that can protect people from COVID-19 and another pandemic that could emerge in future. Various other policies and data were shared by the speaker showing the commitment of the Government on Gender issues. As a conclusion, she mentioned that the Royal Government of Cambodia recognize that woman is the backbone of economic development, gender equality and women empowerment.

Some existing policies were also highlighted by the speaker such as the Cambodia's National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2019-2023 is playing key role on addressing the development agenda as well as issues such as Violence Against Women, Trafficking, and discrimination against women. Cambodian parliament has been working to promote and develop a government governance system that recognizes the skill and talent of women and empowers women to realize their potential and promote equal opportunity. The parliament had an objective vision and mission to eliminate discrimination in the workplace and in society.



### Third Speaker: Hon. Lisa Chesters, MP Australia

The speaker focused that despite increased discussion and a policy agenda that aims to address and identify inequality, there still remains a tremendous amount of work to be done to close the gender gap both within Australia and countries across our region. In Australia, then a significant contributor to the gender pay gap is that mothers spend more time adding the quote for was doing unpaid care work associated with raising children. Men mostly continue in full-time work getting their promotion as well mothers typically reenter on the same or near the same run that of their career ladder as when they stepped off to have children.

Australia ranked 16th amongst OECT countries, with a gap of more than 10% between the participation rates of men and women. In Australia, women substantially spent more time in unpaid work than men impacting their ability to participate more freely in paid opportunities. Some of the other facts provided by the speaker were:

Australia is estimated to be \$650 billion, equivalent of 50% country's GDP.

Studies found that the pandemic was that, Australian fathers did step up to do more childcare and housework, however, it does not contribute to the gender pay gap.

Remote learning meant that mothers became the teachers as well as the caretakers and not the father. It impacted their ability to do more work at home because they were responsible in large part for educating children at home.

Prior to the pandemic, women were twice as likely to request flexible arrangements than men after a child was born as there are difficulties for many men accessing flexibility, so even if they want is there that, culture does not exist in Australian workplaces to encourage and support men into more flexible work arrangements.

Australia has one of the most expensive formal childcare costs in the OECD, and women weren't taking up full time work because they couldn't afford it.

For parents with children under the age of 6, almost 60% of mothers work part-time compared to less than 8% of employed fathers.

As a positive aspect, the new Australian government has introduced new laws which will help cut the out-of-pocket expenses for children attending early childhood education and care. These new laws mean that around sixty 96% of families with children in childcare will be better off.

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The government has announced an extra six weeks of paid parental leave for families. This means the total payable is up to 26 weeks. This is a government entitlement based on the minimum wage in the country.

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Access to contraception is one of the reproductive health care access issues that are integral to women's increased economic opportunity. Modern contraception could deliver long-term health and economic benefits through \$120 for every dollar invested.

These benefits of contraception also include reducing the number of unintended pregnancies and infant and maternal mortality and improving their health and well being will help increase the education attainment for women and children and greater female workforce participation

There is a need to achieve cultural change at the government level policy. Governments must introduce policies that encourage gender equality in the home in the workplace and in society.



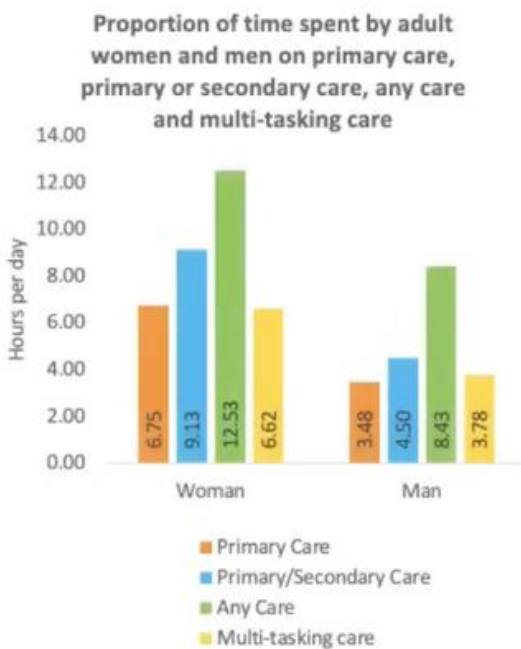
#### Fourth Speaker: Ms. Lot Felizco, Oxfam Pilipinas

The speaker started with the background of the organization and how they had been working in the country by keeping gender justice at the center of their work. She shared the data from an Oxfam global study which shows women enter their peak productive and reproductive years, and their likelihood of suffering more from extreme poverty than men increases from 4 to 22% mainly due to unequal childcare responsibilities.

Globally 42% of women of working age compared with only 6% of men said they were outside of the paid labour force primarily because of unpaid care responsibilities. Unequal carriers possibly set in from an early age because of gender norms leading to higher school dropout rates for girls and for boys among others.

Similarly, Oxfam Philippines 2017 household care survey showed that, women and girls spent significantly more time on care work than men and boys. The average is 4.5 to 6.5 hours a day reaching up to 11 to 12 hours a day when there is childcare.

Girls who undertake a large amount of unpaid care work have lower rates of school attendance than other girls.



Also, the survey showed that 18% of men reported no time at all spent on any care activity the day before the survey however, three in four men approved that men should do care work. Similarly, the data showed 1/3 of women reported experiencing an injury, illness, disability, or other harm from their care work in the past six months, with the top three injuries or illnesses reported as backaches, muscle, or joint aches.

The speaker also shared the initiatives that Oxfam was doing at the ground level and how initiatives were helping overall well-being of the women on the ground.

28 local government units have enacted ordinances on unpaid care as of March 2021. This woman's economic empowerment and care ordinances passed by the local governments formally recognized the public responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work through investment in infrastructure investment in care services, and the ordinances highlight that unpaid care work is both an indispensable factor contributing to the health and well-being of women and girls families and societies as well as an essential aspect of economic activity.

## Campaigning for UCDW Social norms change

- Care sessions in communities
- I Laba Yu campaign (2018-2019)
- How I Care campaign (2020)
- Shifting social norms sessions for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs/inmates) in partnerships with BuCor-Leyte Regional Prison (2020-2021)
- Flex your Husband/Alagang Tatay Campaign (2020-2021)
- Influencing Gender Norms campaign in time of COVID-19 for Women Economic Empowerment in partnership with Investing in Women (2021-2022)

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT  
AND CARE (WE-CARE)

## THE 2021 NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD CARE SURVEY



### CARE WORK IN THE TIME OF COVID-19:

Addressing Gender Norms  
in the Philippine BPO Industry

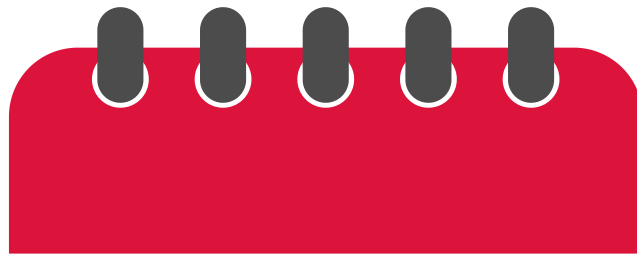
BASELINE REPORT



INVESTING IN WOMEN  
SMALL BUSINESS  
AN INITIATIVE OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT







**Day**

**2**

# Session 4

## Financing for women's rights and gender equality toward building back better

Chair of Session: Hon. Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Pakistan

Mr. Davide De Beni, UNFPA APRO

Hon. Dilrabo Mansuri, Deputy Speaker, Tajikistan



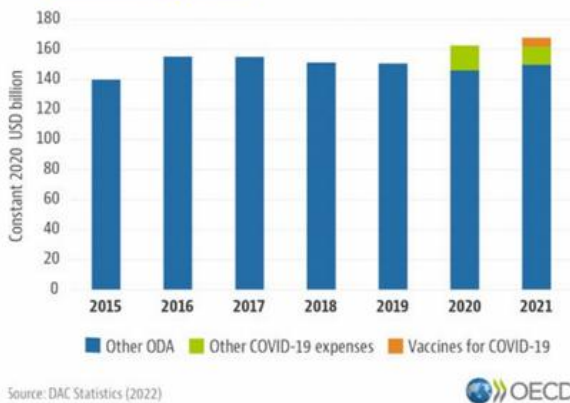
### First Speaker: Mr. Davide De Beni, UNFPA APRO



The Speaker started with the facts and figures of how everyone must be involved in the development. The speaker focused on the private sector, which is playing a key role and could play crucial roles. He further focused on the three key targets of UNFPA, which speakers from day 1 highlighted. The speaker provided data of the financial assistance to developing countries and the percentage of the assistance provided to developing countries despite of recession. The example of SriLanka economic crisis, war in eastern Europe, and China's zero covid policy was also presented as an example by the speaker



## COVID-19 assistance to developing countries lifts foreign aid in 2021



that halted the progress of Universal Health Coverage in those and other countries.

The out-of-pocket expenses from the families, especially the poor families, were the next highlight of the presentation. The families had no options to use out-of-pocket expenses in most countries for their health as most countries do not provide Universal Health Coverage.

The speaker also recommended on key issues which were:

- 1 The Government should prioritize in the health sector and social sector in budget allocation
- 2 Improve the efficiency of the public finance management and equity of health spending
- 3 Keep Human Capital Development as an essential element of recovery and inequality reduction

The presentation of UNFPA's analysis estimates that there is approximately \$8 in benefit for every \$1 invested in family planning and maternal health. The other benefits in return on investing in SRHR services were also presented. Which were :

1. Benefits coming from Education

2 Benefits coming from Social Benefits

3. Benefits coming from working life

The Speaker concluded his presentation with Quote 'Financing is not only a technical topic, it's about political decisions, priorities and leadership.



**\$79 billion**

additional investment (2022-2030)



### AVERTS:

- **400 million** unplanned pregnancies
- **1 million** maternal deaths
- **6 million** stillbirths
- **4 million** newborn deaths



**\$660 billion**

in economic benefits (2020-2050)

Second Speaker: Hon. Dilrabo Mansuri, Deputy Speaker, Tajikistan

The speaker started with the statement, 'Today, women's lifestyle is represented in a limited manner, often dictated by the formal rules of etiquette as well as unspoken rules. Women, restricted by these limitations, are forced to compete with men. Since there are no compromises in this game, women mimic men's behaviour: they act tough, strong-willed, and energetic. Such qualities, especially in the contemporary context, are valued more and more'.



The speaker further mentioned that Women's logic and intuition provide females with such features as creative thinking, diplomatic attitude and conflict-solving skills. She further highlighted mentioning Equality between men and women is a foundational right of any human being and is a critical factor of stable development and fact that improving women's status worldwide and providing them with equal opportunities are the necessary prerequisites for the economic growth of nations and regions around the world.

The speaker presented the positive aspects of women's empowerment in the country, highlighting the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, which had created a certain political mechanism to improve the social status of women.

The fact was presented where 2015-2020, the lower house of parliament - the Majlisi namoyandagon was represented by 15 women, which accounted for 23.8% of the total number of deputies, and the upper chamber - Majlisi milli was represented by 6 women, which accounted for 17.6%, today, the lower chamber is represented by 17 women, which is 27% of the total number of deputies, and the upper chamber is represented by 8 women or 24.2%. As of today, 4,485 women or 23.4%, work in the civil service in the Republic of Tajikistan, and more than 18 percentage of them hold leadership positions. In key social areas such as education, more than 73% of employees are women; in science, the percentage is 26.5%; in health and social security - 68% and in cultural and entertainment services, the number reaches 51%.

The speaker also mentioned that The Parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan values the Declaration of Sustainable Development Goals and achieving the Goals (SDGs) is of great strategic importance for the country. Tajikistan also ratified the main international human rights acts, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). In fulfillment of international obligations, the country adopted the National Development strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030. Also, in accordance with the National Development Strategy and the Sustainable Development Goals, in October 2021, under the Parliament of the country, the "Alliance of Women Parliamentarians of the Republic of Tajikistan" was created.



**THE GLOBAL GOALS**





## NATIONAL REPORT

on Implementation of Strategic Documents  
of the Country in the context  
of the Sustainable Development Goals



in order to implement the provision of women's rights, the government of the Republic of Tajikistan adopted the "National Strategy for Enhancing the Role of Women in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030 and the implementation plan for this strategy for 2021-2025. It was also highlighted that the Tajikistan Government's long-term goal is to achieve indicators of the development of women's entrepreneurship that would equal 50% of the total number of businesses and share of all entrepreneurial entities in all areas of the national economy. Also, to support entrepreneurship and involve more women and girls in training in professions, and create new jobs, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan established Presidential grants and allocated 2.5 million units of the local currency, "somon" annually from 2006 to 2025. For the period from 2006 to 2021, 21 million 300 thousand somonis was allocated for these purposes.

Allocation of loans is one of the tools effective for improving economic conditions for women and families thus, in 2020, loans amounting to 2 billion 100 million were allocated to women and girls entrepreneurs in the country. Also, "the Entrepreneurship Support Fund had implemented 196 business projects amounting to 298 million somonis. This includes 33 business projects of women entrepreneurs in the amount of 22.5 million somonis, which fall in remote regions of the republic and in such industries as beekeeping and clothing production. Over the past five years alone, banks and credit organizations have allocated loans in the amount of more than 8 billion dollars to support women's entrepreneurship.

The number of women entrepreneurs in the country is 77331 units, or 23% of entrepreneurial entities in the country. Including 44992 units, or 22.6%, are individual female entrepreneurs operating on the basis of a certificate and 28901 units, or 27.4% on the basis of a patent. The speaker concluded with the statement that this meeting will give a further opportunity to share achievements and experiences, as well as plans for financing the rights and opportunities of women, ensuring gender equality and contributing to the development of agreements on global issues related to the position of women in society.

# Session 5

## Women, peace, and security in fragile contexts: Women's role in peacebuilding

Chair of Session: Hon. Dashdondog Ganbat, MP Mongolia

Hon. Laisa M. Alamia, Deputy Parliament Speaker, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Philippines

Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP, Sri Lanka

Ms. Rochelle Angela Yu, UNFPA Philippines



First Speaker: Hon. Laisa M. Alamia, Deputy Parliament Speaker, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Philippines

The speaker started with the history of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and The Peace Project & the women of Bangsamoro. The speaker also mentioned that more males are in managerial positions in the BARMM, and they are paid higher than women for similar work.



# BARMM: A Region in Transition

Several Barriers still exist in BARMM, which include male leadership dominance, women are not aware of their rights, existing stigma and discrimination, corruption, and several other issues. Also, looking at the positive side, several key roles are and were taken by the women in the region.

Women are also front liners, such as community workers, healthcare workers, teachers, and nurses, even during and after the war. This also includes the time of the pandemic when women took vital roles in planning, implementation and monitoring during a pandemic.

2014

The Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro was signed by the GPH & MILF

2018

The Bangsamoro Organic Law was signed into law by President Duterte.

2019

The BOL was ratified through a plebiscite, and the Bangsamoro Transition Authority was established .

2021

RA No. 11593 was enacted, extending the transition period and resetting BARMM elections to 2025.

2022

The 2nd BTA Parliament was constituted. It held its inaugural session in September 2022.

2025

The first parliamentary elections will be conducted, and a possible exit agreement will be deliberated and approved.

The speaker further shared the positive aspect and positive changes in the policy level, which includes Article IX, section 4, and section 14 on the law. The further positive aspects of the region were also shared, which include:

- ➔ Creation of the Bangsamoro Women Commission
- ➔ Increase in the number of women in the BTA
- ➔ Expansion of social services and budgets for women empowerment and GAD
- ➔ Prioritization of the Gender and Development Code
- ➔ Formulation and localization of the Bangsamoro Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (1st & 2nd)

In Regard to Normalization, GPH-MILF Peace Process, the speaker shared that the 20% quota for women recruits in the Philippines National Police- PNP (combatants from the Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade or BIWAB). Also

Inclusion of BIWAB members in mechanisms such as the Joint Peace and Security Teams under the security component of Normalization. Similarly, the Construction of Rural Health Units with birthing facilities under the socio-economic development component.

## Gender Equality, Peacebuilding in the BARMM

### Article IX

Section 4. No person in the BARMM shall be subjected to any form of discrimination on account of creed religion, ethnic origin, parentage, or gender.

### Article IX

Section 14. [The Bangsamoro Government] shall observe, promote, and ensure gender-responsiveness in all aspects of security and peace building, including the participation of women in decision-making.

Bangsamoro Parliamentary Women's Caucus Bill (BTA Bill No. 26) was also shared by the speaker, which was a proposal to create a caucus in the Bangsamoro Parliament as a venue for women leaders to unite and consolidate representation, crossing political divides in order to develop and sharpen an agenda, and build and mobilize political consensus to achieve meaningful progress for women's issues, gender equality, and gender development. It was first filed in 2020, Re-filed and entered its first reading on Sep 28, 2022. The speaker also shared Transitional Justice Legislative Package in the region.

## Transitional Justice Legislative Package

Six (6) initial bills to concretize and particularize the elements of transitional justice, drafted to harmonize with each other to form an integrated system. TJ is anchored on accountability and amelioration, and recognizes the human dignity of every person.

- Protection of the rights of internally displaced persons in BARMM
- Documentation of Bangsamoro mass HR violations and abuses
- Bangsamoro Mujahideen/Mujahidat Benefits System
- Bangsamoro Health Care Subsidy Program
- Social and economic reparation & benefit initiatives for orphans of war
- Regional TJR Commission for the Bangsamoro



### Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP Sri Lanka

The speaker started with the statement that women play key role in each family and community, including every peace process. He further stated Women are still mostly absent from peace processes. Women represented only 23% of delegates in global peace processes however Women's participation in mediation is essential for achieving lasting and positive peace.

In SriLankan context, 52% of the population are women and Sri Lanka gave World's first woman Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Sri Lanka also provides Free Education since 1944, resulting in not only a high average literacy rate of 95.6% by 2012 with 96.8% for males and 94.6% for females but also gender parity in access to education. The speaker shared various initiatives by women during the conflict period in Sri Lanka that includes a signature campaign named as 'women for peace', the formation of - the Association for War Affected Women (AWAW) and 'Women's Peace Alliance'.

In the post-conflict period after 2009, various policies and plans were drafted which included National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (NHRAP) 2011-2016. Civil society, and women groups such as Women's Coalition for Disaster Management (WCDM) were involved in the process.

In terms of the COVID-19 period, the Sri Lankan government acknowledged the importance of strength in the leadership and dictation of women and girls in all decision-makers in addressing the COVID-19 outbreak. The women played a key role the addressing the COVID-19 pandemic as well.



**Sri Lanka**  
**National Action Plan for the Protection**  
**and Promotion of Human Rights**  
**2017 - 2021**

The speaker further shared about the challenges faced by women while working on peace issues :

1. Security risk at the personal and the organizational level

2. No Availability of sufficient funds

3. Lack of previous experiences in many issues

4 Inadequate human resource capabilities due to several challenges

The speaker also share the Initiatives by the government to address the challenges of the women in SriLanka, this includes :

1. Stand-alone Ministry - Ministry of Women and Child Affairs
2. Women Development Officers (WDOs)
3. Gender-Friendly legal framework
4. Reforms on the electoral system - Political participation of women increased by 5.25% at the local, provincial and national levels
6. Women empowerment programs

The speaker concluded with the Quote "empowering women to take the lead in a national reconciliation drive in peace-building efforts and political transformation could prove the key to achieving Sri Lanka's peace ".



**Third Speaker: Ms. Rochelle Angela Yu, UNFPA Philippines**

The speaker focused on the key roles that UNFPA played in the BARMM region. The speaker focused on the fact that fewer women were involved in the process and UNFPA played a key role in Transforming the Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB) through capacity-building, coaching, and mentoring. The speaker further mentioned the strategy (pathways) that was followed in the process :

**Pathway 1:**

Transforming harmful and discriminatory gender norms, linking individual and societal-level changes

**Pathway 2:**

Increasing inclusive access to services among all social groups, especially marginalized and conflict-affected populations

**Pathway 3:**

Strengthening social cohesion within and between communities, and building inclusive coalitions for peace through women-lead and youth-led peace initiatives

**Pathway 4:**

Increasing women and girls' agency and the space for them to engage in decision-making and peacebuilding processes



**BIWAB member conducting information sessions on SRHR, GBV Prevention and Response, and Culture of Peace thru radio programs**



**BIWAB engaging the youth in dialogues on their concerns regarding normalization**



The challenges were also shared by the speaker, which included:

1. Intermittent violence throughout the region escalates with elections
2. The pandemic has deepened existing fissures and political divides
3. Reform initiatives have been met with resistance

The speaker further shared the lesson learned by UNFPA from the region and concluded the presentation by mentioning that Peace and security efforts are more sustainable when women are equal partners in the prevention of violent conflict, the delivery of relief and recovery efforts, and in the forging of lasting peace.



*Consultation on issues faced by Women and Girls with the presence of LGU officials and traditional leaders*



*BIWAB as WFS facilitators discussing harmful beliefs and practices, promoting Gender in Islam*

# Session 6: Talk Show

## Women, peace, and security in fragile contexts: Women's role in peacebuilding

Moderator: Ms. Malou Mangahas, the Philippines

Hon. France L. Castro, MP Philippines

Ms. Maria Kristine Josefina G. Balmes, Philippine Commission on Women

Hon. Jose Manuel F. Alba, MP Philippines



The talk show was conducted in an interactive manner. The intersectionally was discussed among the speakers, and the key takeaway messages and statements from the speakers were as follows :



Women are more affected by climate change. It impacts various aspects such as agriculture, a climate-induced disasters such as typhoons and loss of income.



Women are more in terms of population and more in terms of registered voters but are very less represented in local and national government and women should be increased so that problems such as food security could be addressed well.



Logistics and credits are key factors for farmers. The lack of knowledge of credits and microfinance is also a key issue in terms of knowledge.



Policies should be created to protect women farmers that will encourage the productivity rather than imports. The discrimination should be removed in the farmer sector as women are paid less than men in several cases.



In an informal sector such as agriculture, the sex-disaggregated data is a must and the interest rate should be regulated by the government.



There is a lack of insurance in farming, and there are multiple burdens for women farmers.



The lack of data affects relief works during disasters. Thus the data should be available to the government before disaster such as Typhoon.



Similarly, the connectivity needs to be addressed before the disaster.



People should build their own resistance and personal finance rather than just waiting for the government for the DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction).



The relief works also should focus on nutrition. There are often foods such as noodles for kids during disasters, so nutrition should be considered.



Taxes in the farming sector should be reduced.



Many policies are needed, but there are many existing policies in place to protect women and farmers during disasters. However, there is a lack of oversight of how they function. Thus proper monitoring of the implementation of the policies is needed.



More resources and finance should be allocated for women.



More than 5% of the budget for DRR (Disaster Risk Reduction) should be implemented at the local level.



More than 5% of the budget for GAD (Gender and Development) should be implemented.

# Session 7:

## Words into action: Planning and commitment setting

Hon. Edcel C. Lagman, Member, MP Philippines



The Session was focused on the statement amends and drafting of the document 'Women at the Center: Prioritising women's rights and empowerment in Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery'. Various participants of the meeting provided the key suggestions and the session was accepted by participants with further changes after corrections.



### Women at the Center:

**Prioritizing women's rights and empowerment in Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery**

22-24 October 2022

Manila, Philippines

Recommendations

The regional meeting (hereafter called the "Meeting") on *Women at the Center: Prioritizing women's rights and empowerment in Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery* was organized in Manila, Republic of the Philippines, on 22-23 October 2022, by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD), supported by the United Nations Fund (UNFPA) through the Japan Trust Fund (JTF).

It brought together more than **70** participants from parliaments, governments, international organizations, youth organizations and academia, involving **18** countries, to share and discuss good practices in policies, legislation and programmes aimed at gender equality and women empowerment.

The Meeting paid special attention to those gender issues, including how to eliminate discrimination and prevent violence against women and girls, empower women and engage them in decision-making policies, fulfil sexual and reproductive health, in the spirit of leaving no one behind.

# Closing Remarks

WE ARE COMMITTED TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS BY 2030 AS WE ALL CONFIRMED DURING THE 2019 NAIROBI SUMMIT WHERE THERE IS NO SDGS WITHOUT ICPD. THERE IS NO BETTER TIME TO START THAN NOW AS WE AIM TO BUILD BETTER AND TO FULFILL OUR COMMITMENT



Dr. Leila Joudane,  
UNFPA Philippines



Ms. Lady Lisondra, IPPF ESRAOR

WE NEED TO TAKE OUR EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC TO BUILD BACK BETTER AND WISER WITH WOMEN AND GIRLS AT THE CENTRE. WE NEED RESPONSIVE AND INCLUSIVE POLICIES WE NEED ADAPTIVE AND STRONG POLICYMAKERS LIKE YOU TO INVEST IN WOMEN AND GIRLS. WE ALSO SHOULD TAKE BOLDER STEPS TOWARDS MEETING THE COMMITMENT MADE BY THE ICPD PROGRAM OF ACTION AND BEIJING PLATFORM OF ACTION.

# Closing Remarks



THANK EVERYONE FOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESOLUTION AS AN OUTCOME AND FOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEETING.

Dr. Kiyoko Ikegami,  
Executive Director and Secretary-General, APDA

THE MEETING WAS IMPORTANT TO LEARN THE ISSUE OF WOMAN DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND OTHER TOPICS DISCUSSED IN LAST TWO DAYS.



Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont,  
MP Thailand, AFPPD Secretary General

# Annex I

## Copy of Adopted Resolution

## **Women at the Center:**

### **Prioritizing women's rights and empowerment in Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery**

**22-24 October 2022**

**Manila, Philippines**

#### **Recommendations**

The regional meeting (hereafter called the "Meeting") on *Women at the Center: Prioritizing women's rights and empowerment in Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery* was organized in Manila, Republic of the Philippines, on 22-23 October 2022, by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD), supported by the United Nations Fund (UNFPA) through the Japan Trust Fund (JTF).

It brought together more than **70** participants from parliaments, governments, international organizations, youth organizations and academia, involving **18** countries, to share and discuss good practices in policies, legislation and programmes aimed at gender equality and women empowerment.

The Meeting paid special attention to those gender issues, including how to eliminate discrimination and prevent violence against women and girls, empower women and engage them in decision-making policies, fulfil sexual and reproductive health, in the spirit of leaving no one behind.

Taking into account the outcomes of discussions and interventions that took place during the working sessions, we, the parliamentarians of the Meeting, came to the following recommendations:

1. Prioritize women's and girls' concerns and putting women and girls at the center of efforts in pandemic recovery
2. Commit to eliminate gender discrimination and ensure equal opportunity for women, particularly young women, and promote ways to keep women and adolescent girls in school even after pregnancy and childbirth.
3. Continue our advocacy to accelerate progress towards the three zeros: zero preventable maternal deaths; zero unmet needs for family planning; and, zero Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) and harmful practices, so people, in particular young people, can live healthy and productive lives;
4. Improve people's health by integrating comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services into Primary Health Care (PHC) and expanding PHC as a crucial component of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for accelerating progress towards ICPD25 commitments to 2030 Agenda;



5. Ensure stronger political commitments, including follow-up on the Universal Periodic review (UPR) recommendations and use our role as parliamentarians to craft policies that end gender inequality;
6. Ensure the collection of reliable and timely data to guide implementation for addressing maternal mortality and morbidity and provide training, capacity-building and infrastructure for skilled birth attendants and to ensure that 'road maps' and national action plans reflect the commitment to achieving zero preventable maternal deaths
7. Empower young women and girls through raising their awareness of and facilitating their access to available support and services in education, skills training, health care, employment and social activities.
8. Recognize that the promotion of socio-economic development and environmental protection can create a favorable condition for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for all;
9. Make an active investment in girls' education and training with the acceptable global standards to involve them in social and economic development;
10. Promote domestic entrepreneurship in order to provide employment opportunities to women and girls, which will require innovative and need-based skill improvement and credit facilities;
11. Address gender inequalities in unpaid care work by recognizing the unpaid care work by women, measuring its contribution to society, reducing the burden borne by women, and re-distributing care work between women and men;
12. Actively work with their governments at the national and sub-national levels and develop/adopt the monitoring and evaluation frameworks to secure the necessary budgets and exert efforts to mobilize resources and to ensure the implementation of ICPD25 commitments;
13. Continue our advocacy for the full implementation of the ICPD agenda to provide comprehensive rights-based sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services to all, including provision of comprehensive sexuality education for adolescents as affirmed by the SDGs which is vital for preventing unintended pregnancies;
14. Continue improving the role of women in peacebuilding and security, especially in fragile contexts, by improving all aspects of life, including among others, access to health and social services, economic development, and political and decision-making processes;
15. Apply some lessons learned in prioritizing women's rights and empowerment in Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery to prevent future similar disproportionate impacts of calamity for women and girls;
16. Continue to work with UNFPA offices, development partners, civil society organizations and governments to cooperate with national committees and regional fora, such as AFPPD, on population and development to implement the ICPD25 commitments and 2030 Agenda;
17. Pursue the crafting of a model or common proposed legislation placing women at the center with respect to their rights and their empowerment which shall be adopted by member legislators of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.

The report was prepared and designed by Mr. Sangeet Kayastha with the support of AFPPD and other Organisers. The materials of the meeting can be accessed by requesting to AFPPD as well as images and highLights can be read on website and social media of AFPPD. This report is published online and possible corrections can be done by requesting AFPPD.



GROUP PHOTO OF THE MEETING

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