



Newsletter

Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on
Population and Development

Second Quarter: April - June 2017

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NZPPD Hosted Sustainable Development Goals Forum in New Zealand Parliament

On April 7, the New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population and Development (NZPPD) hosted a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) forum held at the New Zealand Parliament, focusing on SDG 3 and SDG 5. **Page 3**



The First Lao PDR National Parliamentary Workshop with AFPPD Successfully Concluded in Vientiane

On May 30-31, AFPPD and its member National Committee, the Lao Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (LAPPD), successfully organized its first national parliamentary workshop in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic. **Page 8**



AFPPD Central Asian Sub-Regional Conference Concluded with Parliamentary Advocacy Plans for Sustainable Development

On June 28-29, more than 60 parliamentarians, ministers and government representatives from Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe, attended the AFPPD Central Asian Sub-Regional Conference. **Page 12**



Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of UNFPA, and Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi, AFPPD Chairperson and MP Japan, opened the G7 Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in April 2016 in Tokyo, Japan.

June 5, 2017

The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) is deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and a global health champion who stood for the empowerment of women and girls everywhere. AFPPD has worked closely with UNFPA since its establishment in 1981.

Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi, Chairperson of AFPPD and Member of the House of Councillors of Japan, shared his condolences on behalf of AFPPD and its member National Committees of Parliamentarians on Population and Development:

"I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of the Executive Director of UNFPA, Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin. On behalf of AFPPD, I offer my heartfelt condolences to his family members and friends, the people of Nigeria, and members of the United Nations family, especially UNFPA. All AFPPD member national committees and parliamentarians in over 30 Asia-Pacific countries also join me in conveying this message.

Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin has been a champion in transforming the lives of the vulnerable, especially women and young girls. His enormous contribution to family planning, women's education, and children's health all around the world will be eternally remembered and cherished, and his legacy will live on in our hearts.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, the people of Nigeria, and members of the United Nations at this difficult time."



Member National Committee
Highlight: New Zealand

NZPPD Hosted Sustainable Development Goals Forum in New Zealand Parliament



The forum hosted by NZPPD at the New Zealand Parliament engaged representatives on issues related to gender inequality and health on April 7, 2017 in Wellington, New Zealand. (Photo: NZPPD)

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND – On April 7, the New Zealand Parliamentarians’ Group on Population and Development (NZPPD) hosted a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) forum held at the New Zealand Parliament. The forum focused on the cross cutting themes of health and gender, specifically SDG 3 (health and wellbeing) and SDG 5 (gender equality) within the context of the broader SDG framework.

Representatives from the New Zealand Treasury, Family Planning New Zealand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), and Hui E! presented in the forum. These agencies outlined their roles in advancing the SDGs. Family Planning New Zealand discussed issues around health inequity and efforts to address this issue in New Zealand and the Pacific. A representative from the Treasury spoke about how international frameworks can be applied at the policy level. MFAT shared their efforts to tackle gender equality and explained sexual and reproductive health initiatives in the Pacific. Hui E! discussed how community organizations are working together on issues related to the SDGs. The Hui E! Spokesperson also reported that Statistics New Zealand has developed a framework for measuring New Zealand’s progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Presentations were followed by a general discussion on how New Zealand can fulfill its commitments to the SDGs. In total, 13 participants attended the forum including seven NZPPD members, five representatives from government agencies and non-government organizations and Secretariat staff.

NZPPD is the member National Committee of AFPPD in New Zealand.



Member National Committee
Highlight: India

National Safe Motherhood Day Commemorated by IAPPD



IAPPD commemorated National Safe Motherhood Day with the White Ribbon Alliance on April 10, 2017 in New Delhi, India. (Photo: IAPPD)

NEW DELHI, INDIA – On April 10, the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) organized a commemorative event for Safe Motherhood Day with the White Ribbon Alliance (WRAI). **Hon. Mrs. Viplove Thakur**, Member of Parliament, presided over the function. Attendees included government officials, including The Union Health Minister, Shri J.P. Nadda, parliamentarians, WRAI Executive Director, and women activists. *The Report of Content Analysis of the Parliament Questions on Population and Health With Special Emphasis on Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)* was well-received by the Health Minister. This study was partly funded by AFPPD’s Small Grant Programme.

IAPPD is the member National Committee of AFPPD in India.

Speaker of the Cook Islands Represented AFPPD at Global Parliamentary Conference 2017 in Washington DC



The Global Parliamentary Conference engaged over 160 parliamentarians from 66 countries on pressing global development issues on April 17-18, 2017, in Washington, DC. (Photo: Parliamentary Network on the WB and IMF)

WASHINGTON DC, UNITED STATES – On April 17-18, the Parliamentary Network (PN) on the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) held the Global Parliamentary Conference in Washington D.C. The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) participated in this conference with a delegation consisting of **Hon. Mrs. Niki Rattle**, Speaker of the Parliament of Cook Islands, **Mr. Tangata Vainerere**, Executive Director of the Pacific Legislatures for Population and Governance of Cook Islands, and **Ms. Seema Gaikwad**, AFPPD Policy Research and Advocacy Advisor. The IMF Managing Director, Ms. Christine Lagarde, and the World Bank President, Dr. Jim Yong Kim, addressed over 160 parliamentarians from 66 countries who joined in discussions on pressing global development issues.

Hon. Speaker Niki Rattle addressed the gathering and spoke of the influencing work of AFPPD. She made special reference to the successful integration of the recommendations made by AFPPD on active ageing, climate change and universal health coverage into the G7 Ise-Shima Summit Leaders' Declaration in 2016. She further highlighted the

participation of AFPPD Executive Committee Members and Standing Committee Co-Chairs in the International G7/20 Parliamentarians Conference in Italy and the need to address the nexus between migration, trafficking and climate change.

Hon. Speaker Rattle also spoke of the need for parliamentarians to gather momentum in pushing forward and transforming the movement on ageing into an international convention such as a Convention for the Rights of Older Persons during the upcoming review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA). Introducing examples of innovations and strategies undertaken by the Parliament of the Cook Islands, she spoke of Women's Practice Parliaments to increase women's representation in the parliament. Hon. Speaker Rattle also stressed the role of women in business, youth parliaments and leadership development. She highlighted the Cook Islands Parliament's efforts to address these issues through a parliamentarian workshop on the Sustainable Development Goals as well as national consultative processes on the HIV Prevention and Support Bill, and the new Family Law Bill.

Rome Parliamentarians' Appeal Adopted at International G7/20 Parliamentarians' Conference and Delivered to Italian G7 Presidency



An AFPPD delegation comprised of Executive Committee members and Standing Committee co-chairs participated in the International G7/20 Parliamentarians' Conference on May 4-5, 2017 in the Chamber of Deputies in Rome, Italy. (Photo: AFPPD)

ROME, ITALY – On May 4-5, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) participated in the International G7/20 Parliamentarians' Conference, under the theme of *The Challenges of a World on the Move: Migration and Gender Equality, Women's Agency and Sustainable Development* in Rome, Italy. Under the overarching theme of migration, participants engaged in discussions related to the security and safety of migrants, refugees and displaced people through a gender lens, women's empowerment in relation to sustainable development, and health care including sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

The Conference was co-organized by the European Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (EPF), the Italian All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Global Health and Women's Rights, and Associazione Italiana Donne Per Lo Sviluppo (AIDOS) with support from the Italian Chamber of Deputies and Senate, and United Nations agencies. Opening speeches were delivered by three Italian dignitaries: **Hon. Ms. Laura Boldrini**, MP Italy and President of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy; **Senator Linda Lanzillotta**, First Vice President of the Senate of Italy; and **H.E. Paolo Gentiloni**, Prime Minister of

Italy. **H.E. Aung San Suu Kyi**, State Counsellor of Myanmar, delivered a special inaugural speech.

Attendees were 89 participants from 57 countries including parliamentarians from all regions, observers and representatives from governments, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and the media. The AFPPD delegation was comprised of 13 Members of Parliament. They are AFPPD Executive Committee members and Standing Committee co-chairs from Japan, India, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Thailand, Tonga, Vietnam, Nepal, New Zealand and Tajikistan.

Hon. Dr. Toshiko Abe, MP Japan, presented the outcomes of the 2016 G7 Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (GCPPD) on behalf of AFPPD Chairperson, **Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi**, on the first day. **Hon. Minister Saia Mau Piukala**, Minister of Health of Tonga, was among the panelists in Session 2, shedding light on the situation of youths in the Pacific region. **Hon. Ms. Joanne Hayes**, MP New Zealand and Co-Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, co-chaired a session on the role of parliamentarians.



The Rome Parliamentarians' Appeal was adopted by participants from 45 parliaments on May 5, 2017 in the Chamber of Deputies in Rome, Italy. (Photo: EPF)

The International G7/20 Parliamentarians' Conference concluded with the Rome Parliamentarians' Appeal, adopted by the participating parliamentarians from 45 countries on May 5, 2017. Among various action points, the Appeal urged world leaders to provide comprehensive sexuality education and establish a health system focusing on universal access to full sexual and reproductive health services, adopt policies that embrace migrants' contributions, and promote, protect and fulfill the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, especially those of women and children. The Appeal was handed to the Italian Government's Secretary of the Council of Ministers, **Hon. Maria Elena Boschi**, to be delivered to the Italian G7 Presidency.

AFPPD Held 82nd Executive Committee Meeting to Discuss Operational Progress and Challenges



AFPPD held its 82nd Executive Committee Meeting to discuss the operational progress and AFPPD activities on May 6, 2017, in Rome, Italy. (Photo: AFPPD)

ROME, ITALY – On May 6, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) convened the 82nd Executive Committee Meeting in Rome, Italy, following the International G7/20 Parliamentarians' Conference under the theme of *The Challenges of a World on the Move: Migration and Gender Equality, Women's Agency and Sustainable Development*. The AFPPD delegation was comprised of AFPPD Executive Committee Members and Standing Committees Co-Chairs.

The 82nd Executive Committee Meeting resulted in the unanimous endorsement of the AFPPD Statement of Support to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), following the decision of the Government of the United States to withhold funding to UNFPA.

This de-funding is expected to amount to a loss of roughly \$71 million in the fiscal year 2017 alone for UNFPA. This could have devastating effects on the health of vulnerable women and girls and their families, hitting the poorest countries, including AFPPD member states.

The Executive Committee members also approved the venue of the 12th AFPPD General Assembly to be Sri Lanka, proposed by **Hon. S.B. Dissanayake**, Sri Lankan Minister of Social Empowerment and Welfare and Chairperson of the newly reactivated Sri Lankan Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, SLPPD.

AFPPD Executive Director Participated in APEC's Workshop on "Healthy Women, Healthy Economies"



AFPPD Executive Director was among the 46 participants at the APEC "Healthy Women, Healthy Economies" Workshop held on May 10-12, 2017, in Hanoi, Viet Nam. (Photo: Nathan Associates)

HANOI, VIET NAM – On May 10-12, AFPPD Executive Director, **Dr. Mika Marumoto**, attended the 3rd Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) "Healthy Women, Healthy Economies (HWHE)" Workshop in Hanoi, Viet Nam. The workshop convened during the period of the APEC Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) 2, and intended to share experiences and good practices as well as monitor the implementation of the *HWHE Toolkit* by each APEC Member Economy.

Dr. Marumoto moderated the session titled "Measuring Impact and Sharing Implementation Experience," in which three presenters shared their country implementation status of the *HWHE Toolkit*: **Dr. Lynda Sirigoi**, President of the Women Doctors Association (WDA) of Papua New Guinea; **Dr. Sandra Bucio-Escobedo**, Deputy Director General for Financing Policies of the Ministry of Health of Mexico; and **Dr. Nguyen Duc Vinh**, a medical doctor and reproductive health expert and Director General of Maternal and Child Health Department at the Ministry of Health of Viet Nam.

The *HWHE Toolkit* consists of five thematic areas: workplace health and safety; health access and awareness; gender-based violence; sexual and reproductive health; and work life balance. AFPPD was one of the Expert Group invitees to the inaugural workshop held in Manila, Philippines, in 2015, contributing to the finalization of the *HWHE Toolkit*.

AFPPD Participated in UN Youth, Peace and Security Regional Consultation



The UN Youth, Peace and Security Regional Consultation, held on May 16-19, 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand, engaged youth delegates from over 22 countries. (Photo: Youth4Peace)

BANGKOK, THAILAND – On May 18, AFPPD participated in the UN Youth, Peace and Security Regional Consultation (Asia-Pacific). It was formed as part of the Progress Study for UN Security Council Resolution 2250 adopted in 2015. It was the first of its kind to recognize positive youth roles in conflict prevention, prevention of violent extremism and peace-building. The Consultation aimed at consulting youth on peace and security issues and creating an action plan for Asia-Pacific, the region currently hosting half of the world's refugee population and accounting for 60% of the world's youth.

Key action plans proposed by youth participants to UN agencies included: (i) to establish a Youth Peace and Security Fund; (ii) to set national strategies to promote social media groups and freedom of speech; (iii) to work towards a National Action Plan and Regional Framework for UN Resolution 2250; (iv) to increase youth participation in decision-making process; and (v) to establish a Peace Curriculum.

Key findings of this consultation were shared at AFPPD's 3rd meeting of the Standing Committee on Investing in Youth in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on June 30. The outcomes of the Consultation resulted in a broader understanding of (i) ways to facilitate youth dialogues and identify youth contributions through data; (ii) the ability of youth to assist in reconciliation by providing unbiased opinions; and (iii) the Youth as Agents of Behavioral Change Program (hosted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies). Youth delegates from over 22 participating countries also drafted an integrated national and local-level plan of action.

The First Lao PDR National Parliamentary Workshop with AFPPD Successfully Concluded in Vientiane



The AFPPD-LAPPD Parliamentarians Workshop engaged over 25 Lao Members of Parliament and Vice-Ministers in discussions on gender equality and women's empowerment, investing in youth, and active ageing on May 30-31, 2017, in Vientiane, Lao PDR. (Photo: AFPPD)

VIENTIANE, LAO PDR - On May 30-31, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and its member National Committee, the Lao Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (LAPPD), successfully organized its first national parliamentary workshop in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR). The AFPPD-LAPPD Parliamentarians Workshop saw over 25 Lao Members of Parliament and Vice-Ministers committing themselves to intensify their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Throughout the workshop, participating parliamentarians and government representatives highlighted major challenges in implementing legislation and policies related to gender equality and women's empowerment, investing in youth, and active ageing. "Legislation and budget allocation are crucial to addressing issues of women and girls. However, we must work harder to make people understand the root causes of the issues such as gender-based violence and gender inequality in order to change their behaviors," said **Hon. Mr. Savanhkhone Lasamonti**, Member of the National Assembly of Lao PDR.

Ms. Frederika Meijer, UNFPA Lao Country Office Representative, acknowledged Lao PDR's

development efforts over the last decades. She reiterated, however, that investing further in education and health, including ensuring sexual reproductive health and rights for adolescent girls, is among the keys to achieving sustainable development in Lao PDR. She introduced the [Noi campaign](#) which addresses the need to invest more in adolescent girls. Noi is one of the most popular names for girls in Lao PDR. The country has the earliest age of marriage and the highest adolescent birth rate in the region.

Introducing the voices of adolescent girls and parents who married off their daughters at the age of 14-15, **Ms. Mona Girgis**, Country Director of Plan International Lao PDR, warned that some deep-rooted cultural barriers often push ill-informed girls to opt for early marriage themselves. She reminded the parliamentarians of the need for evidence-based urgent actions and the importance of targeted advocacy work to prevent early, child and forced marriage.

The workshop concluded successfully with the launch of the Lao version of AFPPD's Briefing Cards for Parliamentarians and all parliamentary participants sharing their action plans to conduct advocacy to address gender equality and women's empowerment, child marriage, investing in youth, and healthy and active ageing.



Advocates Called for Full Implementation of Reproductive Health Law in the Philippines



Advocates in the Philippines renewed their call for the full implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law in a press conference under the Purple Ribbon for Reproductive Health. (Photo: PLCPD)

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES – On June 1, advocates of reproductive health in the Philippines united under the banner of Purple Ribbon for Reproductive Health, in which the Philippine Legislators’ Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD) serves as its secretariat. The advocates renewed the call for full implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health (RPRH) Law.

The call is made amidst the recent ruling of Supreme Court of the Philippines to retain a temporary restraining order (TRO) on public promotion, procurement, and distribution of select modern family planning supplies. The Supreme Court ruling in April 2017 retains the TRO but clarified that only two hormonal implant products (Implanon and Implanon NXT) are covered by the TRO. The TRO is deemed lifted as soon as the Court instructions are followed by the Department of Health to develop procedures for procurement, and the Food and Drug Administration to develop procedures for due process in issuing certificates of product registration. The advocates welcomed this decision as a step closer to the meaningful implementation of the law.

This renewed call brings back serious reproductive health concerns into the attention of policymakers at all levels of governance, including the executive and legislative branches. At present, the Philippines has one of the highest rates of increasing teenage pregnancies in the region, with 24 babies being born to teen mothers every hour and about 14 percent of girls 15-19 years old having begun childbearing. HIV has been declared a “youth epidemic” with 62% of newly diagnosed cases belonging to young people aged 15-24 years old, and 85% belonging to those aged 15-30 years old. Meanwhile, a key provision of the RPRH Law remains to be implemented, which is mandatory sexual and reproductive health education to youth.

Advocates also highlighted budgets as critical for the full implementation of the RPRH Law. 2017 is an important year as the Philippine Congress will embark on a formal review of the Law since it was enacted. Advocates are gearing up to contribute to the review by identifying policy and implementation gaps.

PLCPD is the member National Committee of AFPPD in the Philippines.



Member National Committee Highlight: Australia

Australian Government Reported on Commission on the Status of Women



The Australian government report on Commission on the Status of Women was briefed in a session hosted by the Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development on June 22, 2017. (Photo: APGPD)

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA – On June 22, the Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (APGPD) hosted the Australian Minister for Women, **Senator Michaelia Cash**, to launch the official government delegation report on Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 61. The CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Every March, governments and civil society representatives meet at the United Nations in New York to discuss progress and setbacks for women globally. Minister Cash was joined by **Ms. Kate Jenkins**, Sex Discrimination Commissioner; **Ms. Lin Hatfield-Dodds**, Deputy Secretary for Social Policy with Prime Minister and Cabinet; and civil society representatives, **Ms. Elizabeth Shaw** and **Ms. Leann Wilson**.

In its 61 years, CSW has contributed to significant progress for women. CSW is where conventions and guidelines to protect the political, social and economic rights of women were adopted, such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. For a number of years, APGPD has hosted a government report back from CSW. This is the only formal setting for parliamentarians and the public to hear from the official delegation and the impact of Australia's participation on the global stage. [Click here](#) to download the full report of the Australian delegation.

APGPD is the member National Committee of AFPPD in Australia.



Member National Committee Highlight: India

Family Planning and Population Stabilization in India Discussed in IAPPD Meeting



IAPPD Technical Advisory Committee Members met with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India on June 7, 2017 in New Delhi, India. (Photo: IAPPD)

NEW DELHI, INDIA – On June 7, **Hon. Professor P.J. Kurien**, Member of Parliament of India, Chairman of the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) and Vice-Chairperson of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), chaired an in-house meeting with IAPPD Technical Advisory Committee Members and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The meeting was conducted to discuss issues related to family planning and population stabilization in India.

IAPPD is the member National Committee of AFPPD in India.

AFPPD Participated in MIPAA Review Process Preparatory Meeting in Bangkok



More than 45 participants from governments in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as think tanks, academic institutions, civil society, older persons organizations, UN organizations, and independent experts attended the Preparatory Regional Expert Meeting: Third Regional Review of MIPAA on June 14-15, 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. (Photo: UNESCAP)

BANGKOK, THAILAND – On June 14-15, the Second Preparatory Regional Expert Meeting of the Third Regional Review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) was organized by United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok, Thailand. More than 45 participants from governments in the Asia-Pacific region attended the meeting, as well as think tanks, academic institutions, civil society, older persons organizations, UN organizations, specialized agencies, sustainable development practitioners, and independent experts. AFPPD was represented by **Ms. Seema Gaikwad**, Policy Research and Advocacy Advisor.

The experts presented the future of population ageing in the Asia-Pacific region, stressing the human rights of the older persons and discussing the draft outcome document of the Regional Review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. **Mr. Rio Hada**, from Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), presented the progress and challenges in strengthening the protection of human rights of older persons, focusing

on UN Human rights mechanisms' uneven attention to human rights of older persons, the lack of dedicated international legal instruments and agreed international standards, lack of disaggregated data, and a weak accountability system. The impact of demographic change on labour supply and economic growth was also on the agenda. **Dr. John Piggott**, an expert from CEPAR Australia, introduced the 3 P's (Population, Participation, Productivity) as essential for higher economic growth.

A whole session was devoted to the discussion on the draft outcome document, which will serve as a regional framework of action to support countries to comprehensively address the remaining challenges in effectively implementing MIPAA within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The document will be adopted during the Intergovernmental meeting on the Third Regional Review of the MIPAA to be held on September 12-14, 2017. UNESCAP will share the Outcome Document and the report of the meeting in July.

AFPPD Central Asian Sub-Regional Conference Concluded with Parliamentary Advocacy Plans for Sustainable Development



The AFPPD Central Asian Sub-Regional Conference brought together parliamentarians, and representatives from the government, UN and academia to address the challenges faced by vulnerable populations on June 28-29, 2017 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. (Photo: AFPPD)



Hon. Mr. Osmonbek Artykbayev, MP Kyrgyzstan and NCKPD Chairperson, Mr. Pedro Pablo Villanueva, Representative for UNFPA in Kazakhstan, Ms. Yukie Mokuo, Representative, UNICEF Kyrgyzstan, and Dr. Mika Marumoto, AFPPD Executive Director, showcased AFPPD's flagship knowledge product, the Briefing Cards for Parliamentarians in Russian. (Photo: AFPPD)

BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN – On June 28-29, more than 60 parliamentarians, ministers and government representatives from Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe, attended the AFPPD Central Asian Sub-Regional Conference. The conference was organized by the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) and its member National Committee of Kyrgyzstan on Population and Development (NCKPD), headed by **Hon. Mr. Osmonbek Artykbayev**, Member of Parliament of Kyrgyzstan. The conference aimed at confronting challenges faced by vulnerable populations in Central Asia.

In the opening, **Hon. Mr. Chynybai Tursunbekov**, Speaker of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic, acknowledged the efforts of the government to

address the needs of vulnerable groups, including those living in extreme poverty. “Despite the geopolitical and economic challenges, Central Asian countries have overcome many social barriers in development. However, with new challenges such as population ageing and migration, parliamentarians must play a more active role to ensure that no one is left behind,” he said.

Dr. Talantbek Batyraliev, Minister of Health of Kyrgyzstan, highlighted the need to adopt a holistic approach to social issues. “When addressing healthcare, we must also take into account of other factors such as water sanitation. This is in fact an indicator of public health. Access to drinking water affects child and maternal mortality rate,” he said.



Members of Parliament and Government Representatives from Central Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe, and United Nations representatives participated in the AFPPD Central Asian Sub-Regional Conference on June 28-29, 2017, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. (Photo: AFPPD)



Participants from the AFPPD Central Asian Sub-Regional Conference conducted a study visit to different departments of the Kyrgyz State Technical University on June 29, 2017 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. (Photo: AFPPD)

Dr. Saida Umarzoda, First Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection of Tajikistan, stressed that coordination among parliamentarians, governments and civil society is necessary for the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She highlighted several collaborative initiatives in Tajikistan including capacity-building programs for healthcare professionals in communities on gender sensitive services.

Among the vulnerable groups identified was the elderly. **Mr. Pedro Pablo Villanueva**, Representative for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Kazakhstan, encouraged participants to view ageing from a social and economic perspective in addition to a human rights lens. "We have to look at ageing as a result of improved health system, including reproductive health. Now is the time to create conditions where ageing populations can contribute to the social and economic development of their countries," he said.

Youth issues in Central Asia were also reported encompassing political participation, education and social support for young people. **Mrs. Dilnoza Ahmadzoda**, Vice Chairperson of the Committee on Youth, Sport and Tourism Affairs in Tajikistan, noted the number of young entrepreneurs has increased in Tajikistan thanks to government grants. **Hon. Dastan Bekeshev**, Member of Parliament of Kyrgyzstan, reinforced the need for governments and parliamentarians to support social entrepreneurship and voluntary activities for young people.

The two-day meeting concluded with the participating parliamentarians' developing their respective country advocacy action plans on priority population and development issues. Major issues were identified in the areas of family planning, active ageing, healthcare support, and life skills-based education for youth.

Education and Youth Issues Discussed in AFPPD's 3rd Standing Committee on Investing in Youth



AFPPD convened its 3rd Standing Committee Meeting on Investing in Youth under the theme "Education for Employment, Education to Employment" on June 30, 2017 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. (Photo: AFPPD)

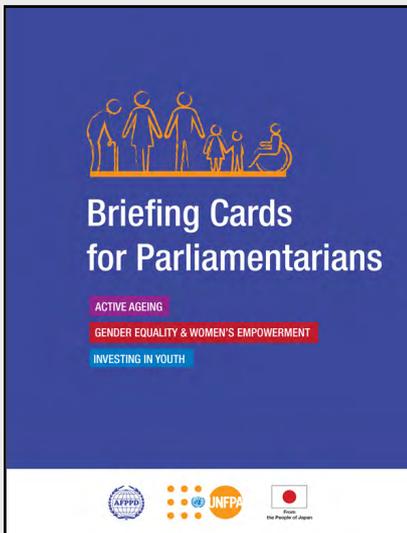
BISHKEK, KYRGYZSTAN – On June 30, AFPPD convened its third Standing Committee Meeting on Investing in Youth, under the theme of *Education for Employment, Education to Employment* with 19 participating parliamentarians and government representatives, and UN experts including the keynote speaker, **Mr. Naoki Nihei**, Peace and Development Advisor at UN Kyrgyzstan. Mr. Nihei made a presentation on youth education and employment in Central Asia.

AFPPD Executive Director, **Dr. Mika Marumoto**, recalled the recommendations from previous Standing Committees for youth development, including mock parliaments for youth, improved youth education and media utilization, and strengthened inter-sub regional knowledge sharing. Referring to McKinsey & Company's recent survey on education to employment analyzing over 100 initiatives from 25 countries, Dr. Marumoto shared several major findings and lessons learned. For example, more direct and hands-on engagement among key stakeholders, namely students, education providers and employers, is expected to contribute greatly to smooth transition from education to related employment. Such engagement includes but not limited to joint curriculum development between employers and education providers, and customized apprenticeships supported by technology.

As AFPPD's new attempts to involve youth in its activities, AFPPD Secretariat designated young staff members to report to the Standing Committee members. Topics covered included the outcomes of the Regional Consultation from the Youth, Peace and Security in Asia-Pacific, and the 21st century skill gaps, analyzed in the World Economic Forum's 2016 New Vision for Education Report.

The Standing Committee meeting was co-chaired by **Hon. Ms. Dina Mahalaxmi Upadhyay**, Member of Parliament of Nepal, Chairperson of the National Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development of Nepal (NFPPD), and Co-Chair of AFPPD's Standing Committee on Investing in Youth, and **Hon. Mr. Osmonbek Artykbayev**, Member of Parliament of Kyrgyzstan and Chairperson of the National Committee of Kyrgyzstan on Population and Development (NCKPD). Several recommendations were made at the meeting, which will be further deliberated by AFPPD's Executive Committee: launching national initiatives on employment opportunities for youth, such as job fairs, undertaking national-level surveys on education to employment, improving the quality of vocational training, and organizing mock parliaments to encourage youth involvement in politics.

PUBLICATION CORNER



Briefing Cards for Parliamentarians

The briefing cards highlight evidence-based good policy practices and legislation, and support data and statistics, on issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment, investing in youth and active ageing.

Final copies: distributed to 29 National Committees and 3 Associate Members.

Language: English, Russian and Lao



Regional Parliamentarians' Conference on Combatting Human Trafficking March 21-22, Bangkok, Thailand

PARTICIPANT STATISTICS
Total: 106

Members of Parliament: 39
Male: 17
Female: 22

Parliamentary Staff and Government: 16
Resource Persons: 24
Observers: 14
SAIEVAC Staff: 3
AFPPD Staff: 10



AFPPD-LAPPD Parliamentarians Workshop May 30-31, Vientiane, Lao PDR

PARTICIPANT STATISTICS
Total: 92

Members of Parliament: 28

Resource Persons: 5
Government: 25
Other: 19

LAPPD Secretariat: 8
AFPPD Staff: 7

AFPPD's UPCOMING EVENTS

Multistakeholder Forum (toward APEC)
15-16 August, 2017, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

AFPPD 2nd Meeting of the Standing Committee on Active Ageing
17 August, 2017, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam



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