



#OrangeTheWorld

25 November: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) is one with the rest of the world in celebrating the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**. True to the theme of this year's celebration, **"Leave No One Behind: End Violence Against Women and Girls,"** the AFPPD parliamentarians, national committees, Secretariat and partners are committed to supporting the *Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.*

For this year, our female champions for gender equality and women's empowerment—one of the three main pillars of AFPPD work—share their views on the current status of legislations related to this issue, as well as their thoughts on the way forward.

AFPPD will continue to [#OrangeTheWorld](#) towards a brighter future for women and girls.



"The Cambodian Constitution enshrines the right of all Cambodians to life, personal freedom and security, and guarantees there shall be no physical abuse of any individual. Cambodia has developed the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims, which forms the responsibility of the local authorities to take intervention measures. Sexual harassment and indecent behaviour in the workplace are strictly prohibited under the Cambodian Labour Law. The Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation establishes the law against kidnapping persons for labour or sexual exploitation. Last but not least, the Safe Village Sangkat Policy designates rape, domestic violence and anti-trafficking as priority areas for community, municipal, district and provincial councils to address. Parliamentarians play a very important role to advocate local authority to have in-depth understanding on all forms of violence against women to ensure effective law enforcement."

- Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng, MP, Cambodia
Treasurer, AFPPD

"Part of our journey to women's empowerment in developing nations is to reduce child marriages and domestic violence, as these actions all too often reduce the future economic contribution a girl or woman can make. Domestic violence around the world is objectionable, whether directed to a woman, a man or a child. It is wrong, and we need to help all those who suffer at the hands of someone they once cared for and once were a part of the family or other support system."

- Hon. Mrs. Ann Sudmalis, MP, Australia
Vice Chairperson, AFPPD





“In Nepal, we are suffering from different kinds of violence against women, including domestic violence and child marriage. We are trying to stop them by 2030 through actions in the parliament and by advocating against them. Some men think that women are their property whom they can use however they like. We need to change the mindset of the men first, and from this, I hope we can change that of the society as a whole.”

- Hon. Ms. Mahalaxmi Dina Upadhyay, MP, Nepal
Co-Chairperson, AFPPD Standing Committee
on Investing in Youth

“Violence against women is a common phenomenon in the Asian region. This has a negative impact on women’s full participation in the development of a country, both economically and socially. Therefore, countries have to give priority to preventing violence against women by enacting and enforcing legislation; thereby allowing women to contribute optimally to their families, societies and countries.”

- Hon. Dr. Sudarshani Fernandopulle, MP, Sri Lanka



“Violence against women still persists in many countries in the Asian region because of the absence of or inadequate legal frameworks and measures clearly prohibiting and penalizing this crime against humanity. Impunity still persists and is intricately connected with women's economic dependency and unjustifiable excuses of tradition and culture. Adopting and enforcing robust legislation and the related implementation is the first step towards ensuring girls and women thrive and live lives in dignity and free from violence and fear.”

- Ms. Senait Gebregziabher Bayessa, Regional Director
Asia Regional Office, Plan International

“While there are relevant laws addressing gender violence, what is equally important is to empower women to use those laws to protect themselves. What is also needed is to educate the society to accept and address the issue of violence against women, including sexual harassment.”

- Ms. Tracy Huang
Associate Director, C&M International



“The way forward is to invest in research, and especially for MPs to ensure that research is funded to understand the root causes of violence against women in their communities, and that tested and proven solutions are incorporated into legislation and policies. This will require collaboration with researchers and experts, as well as advocacy to other MPs to support more progressive violence against women legislation, as long as it is evidence-based.”

- Ms. Hadley Rose, Consultant, AFPPD