

THE AFPPD SERVES AS A FORUM WITH THE GOAL OF CREATING A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL HUMAN BEINGS



Women Empowerment and Investment in Young People in South Asia

Malé, Maldives - 24-25 June 2025

The Maldives Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (MPGPD) and the People's Majlis of Maldives in collaboration with the AFPPD hosted a high-level meeting for the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth. Focused on "Women Empowerment and Investment in Young People in South Asia", the session was supported by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Japan Trust Fund (JTF). The meeting brought together more than 40 participants from 15 countries - from parliaments, governments, international organizations, NGOs, youth organizations and academia - to share and discuss good practices in policies, legislation and programs on implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The meeting focused on policies and services that could strengthen investment in youth and eliminate gender inequality, empower women and girls, and engage them in decision-making processes - all of which is aligned with the principles of the AFPPD.

Day 1 featured policy dialogues across four sessions: (1) Women Empowerment and Gender Equality, (2) Youth Education and Employment, (3) Financial Stability and Entrepreneurship for Women/Girls, and (4) Policymakers' Role in Investing in Youth. Key outcomes included an action oriented 'Statement of Commitment' unanimously adopted by the delegates. **Day 2** involved study visits to Maldivian institutions like the Youth Ministry, UN Country Team, and community projects, highlighting practical initiatives for youth and women.

The hybrid format enabled global participation, emphasizing cross-border collaboration to advance gender equality and youth development in the region.

Extract from 'Statement of Commitment'

In line with our role as parliamentarians:

We pledge to champion the advancement, mentorship, and safeguarding of young and newly elected women parliamentarians and political candidates. This commitment entails advocating for the establishment of robust institutional mechanisms to ensure their meaningful participation, prevent Gender Based Violence in public and private areas including discrimination, sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation and promote a political culture rooted in mutual respect, inclusivity, and equal opportunity for all.

We undertake to provide comprehensive technical assistance and resources to facilitate a rigorous, evidence-based study examining the social, cultural, economic, and institutional impediments to women's pursuit of political office and leadership roles in the member-states in Asia, including the Maldives. The outcomes of this research shall serve as a foundation for targeted 35 policy interventions and legislative reforms to enhance women's political engagement.



Population Planning in Pakistan

Islamabad, Pakistan - 2 July 2025

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, chaired a high-level meeting on population management. He termed population management “a matter of national emergency” and urged immediate, coordinated national action.

Highlighting the demographic challenge, the Minister noted that Pakistan is now the fifth most populous country in the world, with 80% of the population under the age of 40 and 66% below 30. “These figures are alarming,” he said, stressing that the federal and provincial governments must work in unison to address the growing crisis.

During his opening remarks, the Minister observed that at the current annual growth rate of 2.55%, Pakistan’s population is projected to exceed 386 million by 2050. He added that while population is a provincial subject, and provinces are responsible for service delivery in family planning and reproductive health, population dynamics affect national priorities.

“Without national coordination and strategic alignment, fragmented efforts will continue to underdeliver,” he said. The Minister highlighted that the population challenge poses numerous problems in the lives of millions of young people entering adulthood “without access to quality education, skills training, or meaningful employment.”



UNFPA’s Dr. Luay Shabaneh called for urgent strengthening of healthcare service provision and alignment of short- and long-term incentives. The UNDP representative highlighted systemic issues; namely a lack of leadership structure and outdated financial incentives under the NFC award, which currently reward population growth.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Secretary, Population Welfare Department, Dr. Aneela Mehfooz Durrani discussed Bangladesh’s successful example of incentivizing clergy to promote population control. Several others called for practical reforms, such as training male healthcare workers, and using PEMRA to coordinate consistent, long-term messaging.

The meeting concluded with consensus on establishing a National Population Commission under the leadership of the Prime Minister, with representation from all four provinces. Minister Ahsan Iqbal instructed that the proposed commission be tasked with setting targets, ensuring accountability, and driving a unified national strategy on population management.

NB. The above information is taken from Pakistan’s Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives website.

AIPA Partnership Building Meeting initiated by the National Assembly of Cambodia

Phnom Penh, Cambodia - 16 July 2025

On a sideline of the 16th AIPA Political Group Meeting, the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) Partnership Building Meeting opened with participation of AIPA members, observer countries and development partners. Views and experiences were exchanged, strengthening cooperation to address common issues regionally and globally.

The Cambodian Parliament delegation to the meeting was led by Hon. Lork Kheng, Chair of the Committee on Health, Social Affairs, Veterans, Youth, Employment, Vocational Training and Women’s Affairs, and Vice-Chair of the Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CAPPD).

NB. The above information is taken from Cambodia’s National Assembly’s website.

The meeting enhanced dialogue and cooperation, strengthening AIPA’s role in advancing parliamentary diplomacy integration to foster understanding and exchange of knowledge, information and best practices. As a platform for political dialogue between AIPA members and observer parliaments, it pools resources, enhances mutual understanding and fosters a greater diversity of voices.



New Zealand Parliamentarians' Group on Population and Development (NZPPD)

Wellington, New Zealand - 25 June 2025

NZPPD held its second quarterly meeting in June, opening with a presentation from a delegation from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade who shared key highlights and trends in the areas of health, development, and Pacific partner engagements. Jackie Edmond, Chief Executive of Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa, also shared insights from her time at the CPD 58 meeting in New York in April 2025.



First meeting a call to action

Canberra, Australia - 29 July 2025

The Australian Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (APGPD) conducted its inaugural meeting for the 48th Australian parliament. New Co-Chair, Dr. Carina Garland, Federal Member for Chisholm was introduced while Senator Mehreen Faruqi continues as Co-Chair.

Some members brought a powerful voice to the event as long-term advocates for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, speaking to the urgent need for coordinated parliamentary action to protect these rights, particularly for women and girls. With international cooperation, it was affirmed that engaging more with parliamentary champions and women MPs in the Pacific and Southeast Asia will be crucial. Their leadership and regional insight are essential to advancing SRHR. Strengthening these connections, through dialogue, collaboration, and shared advocacy, will help build resilient, inclusive systems that reflect the needs and values of local communities. The commitment is strong, but the challenges are growing. Advancing SRHR will require coordinated, whole-of-society action.



The Ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD9)

Tokyo, Japan - 21 August 2025

Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), Secretariat of Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP), together with FPA and Forum of Arab Parliamentarians on Population and Development (FAPPD), held a TICAD9 thematic event entitled, "Let's Discuss the Future of Africa Together with Members of Parliament!" at Pacifico Yokohama.



In the opening remarks, Hon. Aisawa Ichiro, Senior Vice-Chair of JPFP, highlighted the disparity between over-nutrition and food insecurity in developed and developing countries (particularly in Africa), respectively.

He pointed out that Africa's rapidly growing population could present both opportunities and risks, depending on progress in education and economic development. He also shared Japan's experience as an aging society and called for stronger international cooperation for Africa to achieve a sustainable future.



Following this, Mr. Nakamura Ryo, Director-General for Global Issues of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, emphasized Japan's longstanding commitment to addressing population and development issues through cooperation with UNFPA and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). Finally, JPFP Chair Hon. Yoko Kamikawa delivered closing remarks, reaffirming the strong partnership between Japan and Africa in the field of population and development. She highlighted the contributions of JTF and the critical role of parliamentarians, expressed gratitude to UNFPA and IPPF, and called for further collaboration toward peace, health, equity, and sustainable development.

Philippines set to sign landmark National Action Plan to End Child, Early, Forced Marriages and Unions in October



Multisectoral National Validation Workshop on the NAP-ECEFMU, August 2025, Manila



Signing of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 11596, December 2022, Manila

Manila, The Philippines - 18 August 2025

The Philippines is set to sign the National Action Plan to End Child, Early, Forced Marriages and Unions (NAP-ECEFMU) in October 2025, in time for the celebration of the International Day of the Girl.

The National Action Plan is being adopted in pursuit of the implementation of Republic Act 11596 or the Prohibition of Child Marriage Law of 2021, a landmark law championed by the late Representative Edcel C. Lagman, Sen. Risa Hontiveros, and other members of the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD). The law seeks to protect all Filipino children from the negative impact of child marriages and unions. As part of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the law, the Philippine government committed to ensuring a multisectoral, collaborative and inclusive process to localize policies and programs to end the harmful practice.

The National Action Plan is set to be adopted by government implementers: the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and Council for the Welfare of Children. The National Action Plan aims to contribute to ending child, early, and forced marriages and unions in the Philippines by 2030 in line with target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Its four pillars—empowerment of children, shifting sociocultural norms, strengthening supportive services and systems, supportive policy and governance—were developed to aid communities to have a better appreciation of child protection and respect for a person's autonomy and right to choose. PLCPD was also among the group of organizations that facilitated the development of the law's Implementing Rules and Regulations as well as the National Action Plan that will be launched in October.

Request for more support from Japan

Hon. Kamikawa Yoko, MP Japan, Chair of Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP) and Chair of AFPPD, together with several other members of JPFP, met with the State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Takuma Miyaji. They hand him a letter entitled, "Request for Support to Increase Contributions to the Population Field in FY2026".



Reaping the Demographic Dividend in Indonesia

Jakarta, Indonesia - 17 July 2025

A meeting at the Indonesian Parliament discussed the Grand Design of Population Development 2025-2045, including how to reap the demographic dividend in Indonesia, where the total working population of 15-64 years is in excess of the non-working population age 10-14 and 64+. In attendance at the meeting was the Indonesian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IFPPD) Chairperson, the Hon Dr. Dede Yusuf and IFPPD Secretary Ms. Ermalena Muslim Hasbullah; they met with Secretary of Ministry of Population and Family Development, Prof Dr. Budi Setiyono as well as other Deputy Ministers.

As a result of this discussion, the Ministry of Population and Family Development and IFPPD agreed to make preparations for the development of an academic manuscript for future enactment of a bill on reaping the demographic dividend in Indonesia.



Strategic Meeting on Academic Engagement and Collaboration between the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) and Institute of Economic Growth (IEG)

New Delhi, India - 19 August 2025

A meeting was convened with the faculty of the IEG, Delhi University, in line with IAPPD's mission to actively engage the younger generation in relation to health, family welfare, and the environment. IAPPD firmly believes their participation will not only enrich the discourse, but also ensure that the memorial lecture inspires future leaders, researchers and practitioners in these critical fields.

The deliberations were highly constructive, with all participants expressing strong support for organizing the upcoming Sat Paul Mittal Memorial Lecture by Prof. Judd Walson of the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, United States. It was agreed the collaboration between IAPPD and IEG will provide a valuable platform for students, faculty, and experts to engage with cutting-edge research in health and development. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to mobilize faculty and students from Delhi University and other colleges, thereby ensuring wide participation and the success of this prestigious event.



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