

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



Gender equality policy in Tajikistan: Achievements and challenges

Dushanbe, Tajikistan - 12 February 2026

The AFPPD supported the national-level workshop in Tajikistan hosted by the Majlisi Namoyandagon of Majlisi Oli of Tajikistan, on Achievements and Challenges in the Implementation of Gender Equality Policy in Tajikistan. The event brought together members of the upper and lower chambers of the Parliament of Tajikistan, representatives of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Tajikistan, heads of relevant ministries and agencies, the Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Tajikistan, representatives of international organizations—including the UNFPA Tajikistan—as well as civil society representatives, national experts, and media representatives.

Parliamentarians from the Philippines, Indonesia, and North Macedonia, along with representatives of Pathfinder International, joined the discussions online, sharing best practices in implementing national programs and legislative initiatives in the field of gender equality.

At the meeting, participants exchanged experiences on addressing policies to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. The meeting focused on comprehensive approaches for advancing gender equality amid global socio-economic and environmental challenges, covering five thematic sessions aimed at exchanging experience, analyzing national practices, and formulating recommendations for the further improvement of policy and legislation.

Central to the discussions were the principles of AFPPD's Strategic Plan and values promoted under the United Nations agenda—such as inclusivity, non-

discrimination, participation, and accountability—which serve as the foundation for sustainable development and social justice. Particular attention was given to the role of parliamentary engagement and international cooperation in reinforcing partnerships for addressing these issues.

Recommendations were formulated to improve national policy and legislation, enhance inter-parliamentary and international cooperation, increase women's participation in decision-making, and develop human capital.

They reaffirmed their readiness to further strengthen commitment to AFPPD's agenda and make efforts to advance gender equality, develop the capacity of women and youth, and reinforce inter-parliamentary and international initiatives.

The full meeting report is available to read here: https://afppd.net/event/tajikistan_12feb_2026



Empowering Youth, Women and Family in the Maldives

Gulhi, Maldives - 12 February 2026

In association with the AFPPD, the Maldives Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (MPGPD) and other relevant partners held the national-level workshop on Empower Youth, Women and Family. Attended by national parliamentarians, community leaders, experts and academia, the workshop focused on various topics supporting women and youth, including women's financial and legal empowerment and entrepreneurship, family conflict resolution and unity.

The one-day workshop addressed critical challenges in the Maldives, including high NEET (not in education, employment and training) rates, gender disparities, and family communication barriers. Through focused skill-building sessions, policy discussions, and cultural activities, the organizers equipped participants with practical tools for personal and community resilience in a powerful, single-day format.

In her opening remarks, Hon. MP Dr. Anara Naeem extended a warm welcome to all attendees, with special recognition for the Chief Guest, Ms. Aiminath Ismail. She emphasized that the Deputy Minister's presence signified the health sector's strong commitment to the critical issues of population and development. Dr. Naeem expressed profound gratitude to the AFPPD, particularly acknowledging the strategic vision and personal counsel of the AFPPD Chair and Executive Director. She noted his thoughtful guidance led to the submission of the workshop proposal, resulting in this first-of-its-kind gathering.

While AFPPD leadership could not be physically present, Dr. Naeem assured attendees that their support remained unwavering. She also thanked the People's Majlis for its steadfast partnership and active participation.

Deputy Minister Ms. Aiminath Ismail delivered an opening address, underscoring the importance of workshops such as this in addressing contemporary societal challenges.

The Deputy Minister highlighted pressing challenges facing the Maldives, particularly the inequality of women in leadership positions and broader social issues affecting communities. She called for collective action to tackle these obstacles, emphasizing the need for inclusive policies and sustained advocacy.



Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy

A key session addressed the urgent need for AI literacy as a fundamental workplace skill. Presenter Ahmed Shiyaz, leveraging his legal and corporate expertise, demonstrated that AI is transforming the global workforce, with 86% of employers predicting business changes by 2030. He emphasized that while 92 million jobs may be displaced, 170 million new roles requiring digital fluency will emerge.

The session provided hands-on training using free tools like Gemini, teaching participants how to generate business plans, conduct market research, and build websites from their phones. Attendees learned that AI literacy is the new computer literacy, essential for staying competitive. The session concluded with a strong call to action: embrace these tools immediately to bridge the widening skills gap.

The full meeting report is available to read here:
https://afppd.net/event/maldives_13feb_2026/

Parliamentarians discuss ageing and fertility decline: Call for national commission

New Delhi, India - 16 December 2025

The Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD) convened a meeting of its Standing Committee Members in New Delhi to deliberate on “India’s Rapidly Ageing Population and Declining Fertility — Role of Parliamentarians.” The meeting brought together Members of Parliament from different parties along with leading population experts.

Presiding over the meeting, Prof. P. J. Kurien, former Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and Chairman, IAPPD, highlighted that India is witnessing rising life expectancy and declining fertility, resulting in a rapidly growing elderly population. Shri Harivansh Narayan Singh, Hon. Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, attended as Chief Guest and emphasized the need for forward-looking public policies and sustained parliamentary engagement. Members of Parliament actively and prominently participated in the deliberations.

Some members stressed the importance of family- and community-based elder care and advocated the establishment of a Commission for Senior Citizens.

Experts from the International Institute for Population Sciences presented projections showing that nearly one in five Indians will be elderly by 2050, underscoring the urgency of strengthening healthcare, long-term care, and social security systems.

The Standing Committee unanimously endorsed the proposal to establish a National Commission for the Elderly and resolved to enhance parliamentary advocacy, policy oversight, and grassroots awareness to safeguard the dignity and well-being of senior citizens.



Philippines a step closer to universal birth registration

In February 2026, the House of Representatives and the Senate respectively deliberated on the bills seeking to strengthen the Philippines’ Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system by making it more comprehensive, inclusive, and responsive to current and future needs.

During the hearings, the Philippine Legislators’ Committee on Population and Development expressed its full support for the measure and presented key recommendations to ensure that no Filipino is left without a birth certificate.

This 20th Congress (2025-2028), the CRVS bill is a priority measure of both the executive and legislative branches of the Philippine government. Its enactment will strengthen the country’s CRVS system, making birth registration more accessible and unlocking access to essential services and protection.

Currently, there are around 3.7 million Filipinos whose births remain unregistered. Enactment of the CRVS bill will close this gap in civil registration.



Humanitarian efforts to alleviate hardship

Cambodia - December 2025

I. The Cambodian Association of Parliamentarians for Population and Development and Parliamentary Women Caucus, led a delegation to Kampong Thom on behalf of the Speaker, H.E. Khuon Sudary. There, she met with displaced families from Preah Vihear and Oddar Meanchey who had sought safety in five districts. More than 900 households received essential aid—food, clothing, and financial support—alongside words of encouragement, safety precaution and solidarity. Just days later, in January 2026, another mission reached Preah Vihear, where 500 families were provided with households, protective masks, and other necessities.



II. CAPPD together with the Commission on Public Health discussed with WHO Cambodia for the preparation toward the 9th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum on Global Health (APPF-GH), which will be held in August 2026. This forum will bring together parliamentarians and global health leaders to discuss pressing challenges: the rise of non-communicable diseases such as heart disease and diabetes, growing mental health concerns, humanitarian crises, infectious diseases, and the impacts of climate change. The WHO Representative in Cambodia will provide technical expertise to work with the National Assembly's working group to organize this important forum in response to the goals of Universal Health Coverage and Sustainable Development Goals.

The APPF-GH will provide new insights and insights to improve the effectiveness of the response to prevent non-communicable diseases, promote mental health, and respond to emerging infectious diseases. Regarding the digital transformation in the health sector, international partners also announced their support for Cambodia in demonstrating the role of parliament in promoting the use of digital technologies to build resilient and equitable health systems.

Hon. Lork Kheng, MP Cambodia, stated that the APPF-GH is not only a forum for exchanging ideas among parliamentarians in the region, but also a golden opportunity for Cambodia to demonstrate its leadership and mobilize international resources to address common challenges caused by climate change and humanitarian crises. It is also worth noting that the APPF-GH is an influential parliamentary network, aiming to strengthen the capacity of parliamentarians to draft laws and approve budgets in support of global health.

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

Islamabad, Pakistan - 9 December 2025

A Parliamentary Dialogue was held at the National Assembly Secretariat in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and World Health Organization. Organized as part of the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, the Dialogue focused on the alarming rise of Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV).

Parliamentarians urged all stakeholders—government institutions, legislators, UN partners, civil society, technology companies, and communities, to work collectively to ensure that digital spaces are safe, inclusive, and free from violence.

Members of Parliament expressed grave concern over the rising incidents of online harassment, cyberstalking, doxing, non-consensual sharing of intimate

images, and other forms of digital abuse.

They stressed that TFGBV constitutes a serious violation of fundamental human rights and gravely undermines women's dignity, security, and participation in public life. Participants stressed the need for broad-based awareness campaigns, enhanced digital-literacy initiatives, creation of safe online environments, and robust survivor-centred support services.



Expansion of the Global Gag Rule

Canberra, Australia - 26 February 2025

The Parliamentary Friends of Population and Development (APGPD) hosted an urgent online briefing on the expansion of the Global Gag Rule, also known as the Mexico City Policy. Beth Schlachter, Global Senior Director for External Relations and Advocacy at MSI Reproductive Choices, outlined how new United States policies and bilateral 'global health compacts' are driving sweeping restrictions across global health, including HIV treatment, supply chains, humanitarian response and sexual and reproductive health services and education programs.

Participants heard that these developments are creating significant confusion, secrecy and risks for partner governments and civil society, including in the Asia-Pacific. Governments invited to sign these compacts will need to carefully investigate the terms and the likely impacts on their citizens as they may pose a significant risk of restricting rights and declining health outcomes, such as increased rates of HIV transmission (including in newborns), a rise in poor reproductive and maternal health indicators and limitations in humanitarian and development assistance. The session generated strong interest from parliamentarians and advisers in understanding the implications for Australia's regional partnerships and how existing investments can support affected partners.

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Production staff

Editor

Dr. Usmonov Farrukh,
Executive Director of AFPPD

Assistant Editor & Layout Design

Dr. Sheila Ngoc Pham



ASIAN FORUM OF
PARLIAMENTARIANS ON POPULATION
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Women Deliver
2026 Conference

Ministerial & Parliamentary Forum

*“Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights:
Driving Equality, Ensuring Justice*

27-28 April 2026 | Melbourne, Australia

You are invited to the **Women Deliver 2026 Ministerial & Parliamentary Forum**. This landmark event will bring together parliamentarians and ministers from across the Asia Pacific and beyond to advance **gender equality** and **sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)**.

Held for the first time in the Oceanic Pacific, the Forum offers a dedicated space for political leaders to share insights, explore policy opportunities, and strengthen accountability for this vital agenda.

Please RSVP to apgpd@fpnsw.org.au; afppd@afppd.net

Logos at the bottom: AFPPD, Parliamentary Friends of Population and Development, UNFPA, and Japan The People of Japan.