

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



## **Parliamentary Forum at Women Deliver 2026**

*Melbourne, Australia - 27 April 2026*

The High-Level Ministerial and Parliamentary Forum on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights: Driving Equality, Ensuring Justice was an integral part of the Women Deliver 2026 proceedings and pre-conference program. It brought together more than a hundred participants - including heads of government, ministers, parliamentarians, international organizations and civil society representatives - to exchange experiences, advance evidence-based policymaking, and strengthen commitments to gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

Organized by the Australian Parliamentary Friends of Population and Development (APGPD) and AFPPD, with support from UNFPA and Japan Trust Fund (JTF), the meeting was a platform for high-level dialogue, recognising the essential role of parliamentarians in advancing rights-based and gender-responsive policies and to galvanise commitments that accelerate progress on gender equality and SRHR in their countries.

The sessions focused on the central role of parliamentarians in advancing SRHR as a foundation of gender equality and development justice.

Moreover, it explored multilateral and regional parliamentary cooperation as a tool to advance SRHR in the face of evolving global dynamics, and how parliamentary networks can reinforce global commitments, shape shared narratives, and support the translation of international agreements into concrete national legislative and policy action.

A special session dedicated to ministerial dialogue provided a space to reflect on how commitments on SRHR are being translated into coherent policy, sustained investment and measurable outcomes. Whole-of-government approaches strengthen health systems, improve alignment across portfolios, and advance gender equality and SRHR across the life course.

Ministers shared concrete domestic policy examples demonstrating implementation of the ICPD PoA, including efforts to reduce regulatory, financial and service-delivery barriers; expand access to contraception and sexual and reproductive health services; strengthen preventive and primary care; and improve responses to family, domestic and sexual violence.

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## Inter-parliamentary dialogue on gender equality and gender-based violence (GBV)

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan - 26-27 March 2026

Parliamentarians from the Eastern Europe and Central Asian region met to discuss strengthening legislative frameworks to progress gender equality and address gender-based violence. In attendance at the high-level meeting were national lawmakers and experts from international organizations. The Speaker of Mejlis, H.E. Donyagozel Gulmanova, spoke at the opening session about Turkmenistan's policies protecting women's and girls' right. The inter-parliamentary dialogue was organised by AFPPD and hosted by the Mejlis of Turkmenistan.

The discussion underscored that law-makers must act as "watchdogs" to ensure evidence-based, gender-responsive legislation reaches the most vulnerable. To this end, comprehensive reviews will enact new laws and amend existing legislation - including Electoral, Labor, Criminal, Civil and Administrative Codes - to advance gender equality.



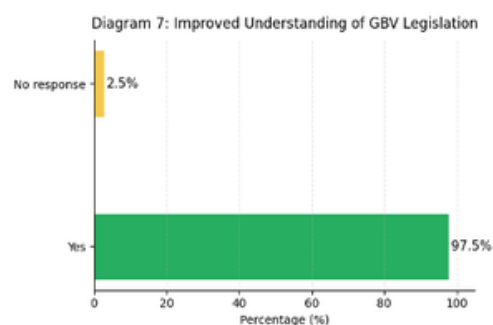
Parliamentarians were invited to develop responses to GBV to ensure it remains a priority, as it is fundamental that all forms of GBV are criminalised. Legislative provisions can address harmful practices such as early and forced marriages and technology-facilitated GBV. Nationwide consultation processes and inter-agency cooperation must be in place to implement and monitor the legal frameworks.

Ongoing collaboration between government and parliaments, international organizations, civil society, whether formal or informal, have been effective in numerous countries. This includes with women-led and women-only bodies, highlighting the importance of increasing the number of women in politics and decision-making positions.

An important outcome of the session was also highlighting the need to increase resources for women and girls to access education and entrepreneurship skills, which can reduce poverty and inequality. Access to family support centers and centers for the rehabilitation of women supporting survivors of GBV should be ensured at all levels. Government support of women-led organizations promotes gender equality.

A special focus was on the necessity of accurate data and statistics, for both drafting evidence-based legislation and monitoring progress. Research and surveys are instrumental to obtain more data for evidence-informed policymaking to improve women's and girls' lives.

The post-meeting survey indicated the majority of respondents stated the meeting improved their understanding of legislative approaches to GBV:



The parliamentarians agreed on AFPPD's mandate that interparliamentary cooperation provides a unique opportunity to develop steps for coordinated actions. Regular meetings can be instrumental to exchange ideas, share best practices and foster a strong, collaborative culture.



## Advancing gender equality in Central Asia and ensuring women's empowerment

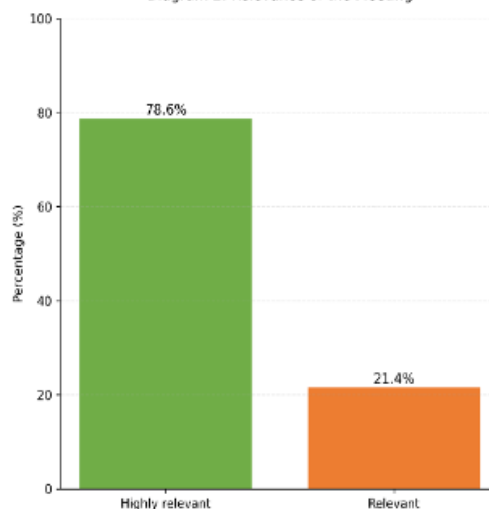
*Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic - 21 May 2026*

The sub-regional meeting was organized by AFPPD and hosted by the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic, with support from JTF. The gathering aimed to strengthen regional cooperation among parliamentarians and key stakeholders in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across Central Asia. Discussions focused on regional perspectives on gender equality, national legislative approaches to eliminating gender-based violence, addressing online harassment and cyberbullying against women and girls, and the role of parliamentarians in promoting women's empowerment. The Meeting brought together members of parliaments from Central Asia and the Caucuses, government institutions, international organizations, experts, and civil society organizations. Participants exchanged experiences and good practices, discussed legislative challenges and opportunities, and explored ways to strengthen cooperation in protecting women's and girls' rights.

The parliamentarians who attended the meeting were delegated by their parliaments based on their dedication to the issues of women and girls. The post-meeting evaluation showed that participants highly evaluated topics and meeting's relevance to their work as indicated in the graph.



Diagram 2: Relevance of the Meeting



## 101th AFPPD Executive Committee meeting

*Melbourne, Australia - 27 April 2026*

The Executive Committee (ExCom) of AFPPD met in Melbourne and discussed the agenda of the Forum. They were briefed on activities conducted since October 2025, and upcoming events in 2026.

The meeting was led by Chair Kamikawa Yoko, who expressed her appreciation to all members for their active participation and commitments. There was a discussion on preparations for the new office, which will operate in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Hon. Howard Lee How, MP Malaysia and Secretary-General of AFPPD, reassured members that the office will be operational starting from July, as the renovation of the building has been completed.

It was agreed that during AFPPD's Annual Conference in Kuala Lumpur in early September, participants will be invited to the inauguration of the new office.

## AFPPD and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Asia-Pacific Regional Office (APRO) sign Implementing Partnership Agreement for 2026-2029

On 12 May 2026, the AFPPD and UNFPA APRO signed an Implementing Partnership Agreement, renewing the partnership between two organizations and enabling the parties to conduct various programs in the region. The AFPPD's role as a solid parliamentary network has been growing and the partnership with UNFPA will further strengthen the network, as well as capacity-building programs for parliamentarians and policymakers.

### Key activities ahead for 2026

- 1) AFPPD Standing Committee Meeting on Investing in Youth, 4-5 June 2026, Vientiane Lao PDR
- 2) AFPPD Annual Conference, 3-4 September 2026, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 3) AFPPD Standing Committee meeting on Climate Change, Nepal (October/November TBC)
- 4) AFPPD Standing Committee on Active Ageing: Study Visit program to Indonesia (November, TBC)

## Women Deliver 2026 parliamentary forum

*Continued from page 1...*

Grounded in practical policy experience, the Forum generated actionable insights and transferable lessons for governments seeking effective, scalable approaches to advancing SRHR in an uneven global context. In her speech, Hon Kamikawa Yoko, MP Japan and Chair of AFPPD stated that as womens' and girls' issues are fundamental to the well-being of individuals, families and communities, the AFPPD understands that partnerships grounded in respect, evidence, and accountability are essential to advancing this agenda. She continued by stating that parliamentarians, as policymakers and decision-makers, should continue to ensure access to accurate information, particularly for young people, and uphold policies and legal frameworks that protect autonomy, dignity, and equality for all.

The High-Level Forum adopted the Melbourne Parliamentary Call to Action, a statement of commitment by all participants on achieving demographic resilience by ensuring universal access to SRHR, gender equality and justice for all.



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#### Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment:

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#### Climate Change & Green Economy:

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#### Investing in Youth:

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Co-chair: Hon. Dr. Kolakanh Phommvong,

MP Lao PDR

## Production staff

### Editor

Dr. Usmonov Farrukh,

Executive Director of AFPPD

### Assistant Editor & Layout Design

Dr. Sheila Ngoc Pham



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