

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



The 15th General Assembly (GA) of the AFPPD

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - 27 April 2025

The 15th GA brought together parliamentarians and stakeholders to deliberate key challenges under the four pillars: 1. Active Ageing, 2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, 3. Climate Change and Green Economy, and 4. Investing in Youth.

The Assembly commenced with addresses from Mr. Pio Smith (United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA), Hon. Kamikawa Yoko (Japan), and Hon. Alexander Nanta Linggi (Malaysia), who collectively highlighted urgent regional priorities. Malaysia also announced its election to the UN Commission on Population and Development (2026–2030).

Overview of AFPPD's Strategic Plan (2023 – 2025)

The session, chaired by Hon. Howard Lee, featured a presentation by Dr. Farrukh Usmonov, Interim Executive Director of AFPPD. He reported on the implementation of the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan. Key progress included capacity-building across 30 member states, participation in major global forums, and strengthened regional partnerships. AFPPD has also expanded collaboration with UNFPA, IPPF and other civil society organisations. There have also been improvements in governance, new partnerships formed and successful resource mobilisation supported by the Japan Trust Fund.



The agenda for the 15th GA included:

- Nominations for the new location of the AFPPD Secretariat
- Election of new AFPPD Executive Committee
- Forming Standing Committees corresponding to the four strategic pillars
- Election of chairs of the Standing Committees

All outcomes of the above are referred to in this newsletter and detailed in the GA report.

Member states addresses

National statements reflected tailored responses to pressing demographic issues. Indonesia presented a five-pillar strategy to address the needs of its ageing population. Nepal emphasised youth empowerment through skills development and innovation. New Zealand discussed climate resilience and its path to net-zero emissions. Tajikistan focused on gender equality reforms as well as increasing women's representation.

Partner session

UNFPA, Parliamentary Centre of Asia (PCAsia), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), FP2030 and other organisations outlined ongoing partnerships with AFPPD, reaffirming their support for regional collaboration and shared goals.

Closing remarks

Hon. Dr. Noraini Ahmad, Deputy Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, concluded the Assembly by reaffirming Malaysia's leadership in regional and global population issues. She urged parliamentarians to continue championing inclusive policies and holding governments accountable. Gratitude was extended to all for their contributions to the GA's success.

98th AFPPD Executive Committee meeting

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - 27 April 2025

The 98th ExCom included representation from Cambodia, China, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand, Tonga and Vietnam; Australia, India and the Philippines were absent, delegating limited power of attorney to the AFPPD Chair. Observers included parliamentary officers from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan (Asian Population and Development Assoc. - APDA) and the Philippines.

Through a video message, AFPPD Chair Prof. Keizo Takemi, welcomed members and expressed gratitude to Cambodia and Malaysia for making enormous efforts to potentially accommodate the Secretariat of AFPPD in their respective countries. He also discussed how during his 12 years as chair, AFPPD's internal reforms, events conducted that committed to the ICPD Programme of Action (PoA), and supported parliamentarians to become agents of change.

Prof. Takemi introduced his successor, Hon. Kamikawa Yoko, MP Japan, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and former Minister of Justice of Japan. She then presided, welcoming participants to the 98th ExCom.

Dr. Farrukh Usmonov presented the minutes and updated the ExCom on activities implemented during the period October 2024 to April 2025. The key discussion of the meeting then occurred, namely the process of selecting the new AFPPD Secretariat host between the two country candidates, Cambodia and Malaysia.

Delegates from Cambodia and Malaysia presented proposals to host the Secretariat. The ballots were given to delegates and voting occurred. After counting the ballots in front of ExCom members, Malaysia received more votes and elected to be the new host of AFPPD Secretariat.

99th AFPPD Executive Committee meeting

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - 27 April 2025

After the GA, a quorum of newly elected members of the ExCom gathered: Cambodia, China, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Thailand, and Vietnam. ExCom members from India, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, and the Philippines did not attend, though observers from the national committees were present, as well as MPs from Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal and Tajikistan who are chairs of the standing committees.

Hon. Kamikawa Yoko welcomed the newly elected ExCom members and Chairpersons of the Standing Committees, reiterating that this is a new chapter of the AFPPD and invited the members to be more committed to and play an active role in developing and implementing the AFPPD's programs. Dr. Farrukh Usmonov was appointed full-time Executive Director of AFPPD.

Dr. Usmonov provided an update on activities for 2025, confirming that the next AFPPD Annual Regional Conference and 100th ExCom will be in the Philippines on 3-5 September 2025.



He reiterated AFPPD is open to MOUs with partners, and all members can submit program proposals for 2026-2027 by mid-July 2025 for ExCom members to discuss/approve on 3 September in the Philippines.

Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali, MP Nepal, and Hon. Lork Kheng, MP Cambodia, also reported on recent national activities.

Study visit for State Members

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - 28 April 2025

On Day 2 of the AFPPD GA, delegates had the opportunity to explore key institutions in Malaysia that are at the forefront of addressing population, family development, and ageing issues. The study visit sought to provide a deeper understanding of Malaysia's efforts in these critical areas and offer valuable insights into their ongoing work and initiatives.

National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN)

LPPKN plays a crucial role in promoting population and family development in Malaysia. The visit provided delegates with insights into the board's various programmes that aim to improve family wellbeing, enhance reproductive health, and promote sustainable population policies. LPPKN's Subfertility Clinic offered delegates insight into services available for individuals and couples experiencing fertility issues. The visit to LPPKN concluded with a tour of the Mamacare SPA and Café, which supports maternal health through wellness services and a space for mothers.

Ti-Ratana Welfare Society

The Ti-Ratana Welfare Society is committed to provide welfare services to vulnerable groups, including children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. This organisation's community-focused approach was explored, highlighting its significant impact on social care and inclusion efforts within Malaysia.

Malaysia Research Institute on Ageing (MyAgeing)

MyAgeing is dedicated to research on ageing and the development of policies that address the needs of the ageing population in Malaysia. The visit showcased the research, policy engagement and service development of the Institute, all of which is aimed at enhancing the quality of life for older persons. Delegates gained valuable insights into Malaysia's approach to ageing, particularly in relation to healthcare, social inclusion, and the economic participation of older individuals.

Overall, the study visit allowed delegates to engage with leading organisations tackling some of the most pressing demographic and social challenges in Malaysia, while also sharing best practices and experiences for potential regional cooperation.



Demographic changes and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs): Policy responses to challenges for the active population and youth



Phnom Penh, Cambodia - 31 March 2025

A high-level regional seminar was convened due to the rising burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Southeast Asia, particularly among the active and youth populations.

The seminar convened leaders from Cambodia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam's parliaments to share national efforts, challenges, and policy strategies in combating the escalating burden of NCDs. The seminar aimed to foster dialogue among experts, youth representatives from the ASEAN InterParliamentary Assemblies (AIPA) and parliamentarians.

Organized by Cambodian National Assembly's Commission on Public Health, Social Affairs, Veterans, Youth Rehabilitation, Labor, Vocational Training and Women's Affairs (Commission 8) and Cambodian Women Parliamentarians Caucus, in partnership with CAPPD, and supported by the Parliamentary Centre of Asia (PCAsia) and AFPPD.

The event was presided over by Samdech Maha Rathsapheathika Thipadei Khuon Sudary, President of the National Assembly of Cambodia, with addresses from Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng, Chairwoman of Commission 8; Mr. Yi Chanprasnar (PCAsia), Dr. Marianna Trias (WHO) and Dr. Farrukh Usmonov (AFPPD). The keynote was delivered by H.E. Prof. Chheang Ra, Minister of Health.



Samdech Maha Rathsapheathika Thipadei Khuon Sudary stressed the need for a "whole-of-society approach". She recognized the important role of parliamentarians in shaping legislation, promoting health education, and allocating resources to prevention. The President commended regional cooperation and reaffirmed Cambodia's political commitment to regional frameworks, especially those aligned with SDG 3.4: Reducing premature mortality from NCDs by one-third by 2030.

The full report of the proceedings is available to read at the AFPPD website.

High-level dialogue on responding to demographic shifts

Phnom Penh, Cambodia - 12 May 2025

The National Assembly of Cambodia, in partnership with CAPPD, UNFPA and AFPPD, and the Ministry of Planning with its Special Committee of 22 ministries, convened a high-level policy seminar to reaffirm Cambodia's unwavering commitment to the ICPD PoA. The seminar also served to align this global commitment with the Cambodia Strategic Framework on Population and Development (CSF) 2024–2030, ensuring policy coherence, national ownership, and long-term demographic resilience.

The seminar placed strong emphasis on Cambodia's national commitment to the global Three Zeros targets by 2030, which are vital to Cambodia's demographic dividend, gender equity and inclusive development trajectory:

- Zero unmet need for family planning
- Zero preventable maternal deaths
- Zero gender-based violence & harmful practices.

Key messages and outcomes of the seminar were:

- **Political Commitment:** The seminar highlighted the will and institutional mechanisms already in place to accelerate progress on the ICPD;
- **Policy Integration:** The Three Zeros embedded in Cambodia's national strategy, with a focus on youth, gender, data, and health;
- **Data and Budgeting:** Emphasis on evidence-based policymaking and gender-responsive budgeting, investing in human capital and health services.

Study tour on gender equality and women's empowerment in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina - 29-30 May 2025



Numerous challenges persist across Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA), particularly in the realms of gender-based violence, economic empowerment, and political representation. These issues demand coordinated, context-specific responses grounded in policy and legislative reform.

Recognizing this, UNFPA with AFPPD organized a Study Tour on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The visit brought together a diverse group of parliamentarians, researchers, and gender experts from EECA countries, aiming to facilitate peer learning, knowledge exchange, and capacity building.

BiH was selected as the host due to its rich and complex experience in institutionalizing gender equality. With its layered governance system and established legal frameworks, such as the Law on Gender Equality and entity-level gender mechanisms, BiH is a valuable reference for countries seeking to implement gender-responsive legislation.

The comprehensive study tour aimed to:

- Enhance understanding of BiH's legal and institutional gender equality structures;
- Share good practices and challenges across EECA countries;
- Explore gender mainstreaming approaches, particularly in sexual and reproductive health, violence prevention, mental health, family policies, and labor laws;
- Strengthen inter-parliamentary and civil society collaboration on gender equality.

Representatives of UNFPA Bosnia and Herzegovina, underlined UNFPA's central role in promoting gender equality and expressed gratitude to the Government of Japan for supporting the initiative. H.E. Toshihiro Aiki, Ambassador of Japan to BiH, emphasized Japan's commitment to international cooperation, particularly in humanitarian aid, SRH, maternal health, and Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

AFPPD representatives highlighted the Japan Trust Fund's strategic support for parliamentarians' capacity-building locally, regionally and globally.

The full report of the study tour is available from the AFPPD.

JPFP General Assembly and project team meeting

Tokyo, Japan - 18 April 2025

On April 18, the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP) convened its General Assembly, moderated by Hon. Kikawada Hitoshi, Secretary-General of JPFP. The first item on the agenda was the proposal for new executive members, which was presented and unanimously approved.

As the next agenda item, Hon. Kamikawa Yoko, Chair of JPFP, proposed the establishment of a new project team (PT) aimed at deepening understanding of "life safety education" from an international perspective. With the approval of the attending members, it was decided that Hon. Abe Toshiko would serve as Chair and Hon. Horiuchi Noriko as Acting Chair of the PT on Life Safety Education.

Following the General Assembly, the first meeting of the newly established Life Safety Education PT was held, facilitated by Hon. Horiuchi Noriko in her capacity as Acting Chair. In her opening remarks, Hon. Abe Toshiko emphasized the importance of life safety education, stressing the need for society as a whole to address the issue after carefully assessing what can be done.

Prof. Asai Haruo, Professor Emeritus at Rikkyo University, served as the inaugural lecturer and delivered a presentation on the current situation and challenges surrounding life safety education. Prof. Asai explained that life safety education involves understanding the dignity of life and developing the ability to respect both oneself and others. He further emphasized the importance of understanding the beginning of life, building healthy interpersonal relationships to prevent both the perpetration and victimization of sexual violence, and addressing human rights issues related to sexuality.

In closing, Hon. Kamikawa expressed her expectations that the PT would continue to deepen discussions on life safety education from multiple viewpoints, identify and address issues necessary for implementation in schools, and advance the initiative toward national rollout under the leadership of Hon. Abe.



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and Co-chair: Hon. 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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