ABOUT THE COVER

(Photos reflecting AFPPD's Key Achievements, see page 5)

(1) **Expanding parliamentarian community in support of the ICPD agenda.** Speaker of the Parliament of Bhutan, Hon. Jigme Zangpo and AFPPD Chair Hon. Prof. Keizo Takemi, MP, Japan, during the warm welcome of Bhutan as the newest member of AFPPD.

(2) **Increased political support for and commitment to reproductive health and gender issues.** Hon. Mr. Shukrojon Zhuhurov, Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament in Tajikistan, welcomes Dr. Mika Marumoto, Executive Director of AFPPD.

(3) **MPs have increased knowledge and understanding of ICPD issues.** Hon. Ms. Upadhyay Malaxmi Dina, MP, Nepal, during AFPPD’s workshop of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff on prioritizing ICPDs into the SDGs.

(4) **Improved linkages between UNFPA and AFPPD at the national and regional levels.** Hon. Mme. Aitkul Samakova, MP, Kazakhstan, and Mr. Nikolai Botev, Director of Sub-regional Office for UNFPA Central Asia, during the Workshop on Legislating for the Full Achievement of the SDG/ICPD Goals and Targets.

(5) **Increased visibility of parliamentarian advocacy at the national level.** Hon. Dr. Jtn Sirathranont, MP, Thailand and AFPPD initiated a series of consultation meetings to push the "Adolescent Pregnancy Bill."

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## AFPPD OFFICE BEARERS

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>VICE-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Dr. Sharman Stone</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Australia</td>
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<td>VICE-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Professor Wang Longde</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, China</td>
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<td>VICE-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Professor P.J. Kurien</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, India</td>
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<td>VICE-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Mme. Aitkul Samakova</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Kazakhstan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SECRETARY-GENERAL</td>
<td>Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Thailand</td>
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<td>TREASURER</td>
<td>Hon. Mrs. Lork Kheng</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Cambodia</td>
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<td>MEMBER</td>
<td>Hon. Dr. Mansour Arami</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Iran</td>
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<td>MEMBER</td>
<td>Hon. Dr. Nguyen Van Tien</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Vietnam</td>
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### STANDING COMMITTEES

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<tr>
<td>Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment</td>
<td>CO-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Mrs. Barbara Kuriger</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing in Youth</td>
<td>CO-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Lord Fusitu’a</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Tonga</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active Ageing</td>
<td>CO-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Ms. Upadhyay Mahalaxmi Dina</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Nepal</td>
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<td>VICE-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Mrs. Khayriniso Yusufi</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Tajikistan</td>
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<td>VICE-CHAIRPERSON</td>
<td>Hon. Professor Keizo Takemi</td>
<td>Member of Parliament, Japan</td>
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### SECRETARIAT

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<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</td>
<td>Ms. Mika Marumoto</td>
<td>Ph.D., Japan</td>
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A message from the AFPPD Chair

2015 marked a critical transition year for the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population & Development (AFPPD). As we counted down to the end of the Millennium Development Goals era (MDGs) and looked forward to contributing to the new post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), AFPPD remained committed throughout the year to improving ourselves and redefining our role as the oldest regional parliamentarian network, putting renewed focus on the health and wellbeing of people in Asia and the Pacific.

We started 2015 with our annual National Committee planning session to strengthen our partnerships and ensure consolidated effort toward the further implementation of the 1994 International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD) as expressed in the post-2015 development framework. We also launched a task force on transparency, accountability and governance to ensure that AFPPD will successfully transform itself into a well-governed, accountable and transparent organization to effectively implement our programmes.

Our activities culminated in the 11th General Assembly, where Asia-Pacific parliamentarians and our partner organizations had extensive discussions on ways to mainstream the ICPD issues in the new agenda aimed at 2030. We developed and approved a new Strategic Plan for 2016-2019 and established three new standing committees, one on gender equality and women’s empowerment, one on investing in youth and one on active ageing. We also amended our Constitution and elected new office bearers, who will serve during the first four years of the SDG era to collectively set AFPPD’s strategic direction.

In 2015, AFPPD also conducted advocacy workshops for National Committees at the country and regional levels. Major accomplishments included the establishment of a new National Committee in Bhutan as we officially welcomed that country at the 11th General Assembly. At the global level, our prominent fellow parliamentary members from Australia, Thailand and Japan made major contributions to influence the G7 leadership through the G7 Parliamentarians’ Conference in Berlin in April 2015. The baton has been passed on to us, and AFPPD will organize the G7 Global Parliamentarians on Population & Development in preparation for the 2016 G7 Ise-Shima Summit in Japan.

I hope that this Annual Report for 2015 will offer a glimpse of AFPPD’s achievements in 2015 as well as demonstrate our commitment as parliamentarians to holding our governments accountable for ensuring a society with “no one left behind.” AFPPD is committed to intensifying its efforts to make this historically significant regional non-governmental organization a truly parliamentarian-driven platform for mutual learning and knowledge sharing, serving our peoples globally, regionally and nationally.

Keizo Takemi, MP Japan
Chairperson, AFPPD
A message from the
AFPPD Executive Director

On behalf of the Secretariat of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population & Development, I am pleased to share with you this 2015 Annual Report. The past year saw numerous challenges, along with important accomplishments.

For most of 2015, I served AFPPD as Special Advisor for Governance and Management, supporting AFPPD’s task force on transparency, accountability and governance. That work mainly involved working with internal stakeholders to improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the organization’s programmes. I contributed to amending AFPPD’s Constitution and to clarification of the roles and obligations of internal stakeholders, especially the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. We revised key operational manuals to strengthen AFPPD’s governance mechanisms as well as its operational transparency and accountability.

Since taking the Executive Director’s position in November 2015, I have worked with Secretariat staff to solidify and institutionalize the progress led by the AFPPD Executive Committee. We have implemented two national level multi-stakeholder advocacy workshops in Central Asia to increase our political impact. We have also embarked on formulating an implementation plan for the newly adopted AFPPD Strategic Plan for 2016-2019, along with a monitoring and evaluation framework to document expected and actual results.

Looking forward, I feel honoured to have this opportunity to continue to collaborate with National Committees and partner organizations to make AFPPD an effective parliamentary network working toward the 2030 SDGs. Significant progress has been made in our region in achieving the MDGs, for instance, in the decrease of maternal mortality. Yet even that example of progress reveals our challenge: a pregnant woman or girl still dies every two minutes somewhere in the world. And while that may be an improvement from one death every minute, as things stood 20 years ago, our task is far from complete and requires concerted strategic action.

As newly elected Executive Director, I would also like to take this opportunity to share with you the personal story behind my decision to work with parliamentarians who can have impact on people’s lives. Aside from being a licensed non-profit and strategy consultant, development practitioner, researcher and educator, I am a wife, daughter, mother of three adult children and survivor of disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC). Twenty years ago, my son and I were very nearly added to the 1995 infant and maternal mortality statistics, and would have died without proper medical care in Japan, supported through universal health coverage and quality emergency care including safe blood transfusions. It is this culture of excellence in maternal health and all other public services related to population & development that AFPPD works toward. And on the occasion of this report I ask that we all remember the specific impact that this organization, working in collaboration with its partners, can have on the lives of so many people.

Mika Marumoto
AFPPD Executive Director
Mission, Objective, and Activities

AFPPD’s mission is to encourage and promote parliamentary and related activities to obtain government and public support in facilitating population & development policies and legislation on (1) ensuring healthy lives and human well-being and (2) eradicating poverty in the Asia-Pacific region, with a view to contributing to the achievement of equitable and sustainable development and lasting world peace.

The objective of the organization is to strengthen the regional network of parliamentarians who are committed to full implementation of the population & development agenda, especially the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD PoA) and the Sustainable Development Goals. AFPPD aims to achieve this through capacity building for parliamentarians and National Committees.

AFPPD’s activities include the following:

1. To establish and promote collaboration among parliamentarians and other elected legislative representatives, the associates of those representatives and institutions in all Asia-Pacific countries for the development, utilization and sharing of data, information, research findings, expertise and experience pertaining to population & development issues;

2. To facilitate the dissemination and utilization of information and research, including through print and online resources, to promote policy solutions to population & development issues;

3. To facilitate, support and organize events for parliamentarians in order to promote and encourage their involvement in addressing population & development issues;

4. To generate and mobilize resources needed to render AFPPD capable of fulfilling its functions and responsibilities on a sustainable basis; and

5. To encourage and promote the formation of National Committees of parliamentarians to address population & development issues where these bodies are not yet in existence.
Results in 2015

- Number of National Committees (including one in formation) that prepared an annual work plan in the beginning of 2015: 23
- Number of national-level workshops organized by AFPPD: 4
- Total number of MPs, government representatives and civil society organizations (CSOs) trained: 113
- Number of small grants provided to National Committees: 5
- Technical support provided to Thailand

Key Achievements

**Expanding parliamentarian community in support of the ICPD agenda:**
In 2015, AFPPD added one new National Committee (Bhutan) and increased the number of member MPs of National Committees in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Fiji.

**Increased political support for and commitment to reproductive health and gender issues:** High-level political leaders were engaged in national level activities in Bhutan, Thailand, AFPPD Central Asia member states and the Pacific Island countries. All of them have re-confirmed commitment to sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR), gender equality and youth issues including teenage pregnancy and others;

**MPs have increased knowledge and understanding of ICPD issues** through in-country workshops and locally produced advocacy materials;

**Improved linkages between UNFPA and AFPPD at the national and regional levels:** The AFPPD annual planning session with National Committees and UNFPA Country Offices resulted in a strengthened relationship between the AFPPD Secretariat, National Committee Secretariats and UNFPA Country Offices; and

**Increased visibility of parliamentarian advocacy at the national level:** In-country workshops and activities organized by National Committees through small grants attracted the attention of national media.
SECTION I: What AFPPD did in 2015 to strengthen National Committees on Population & Development

1.1. Strengthening capacity of National Committees to advocate for the ICPD POA

National Committees are the basic platform for parliamentary advocacy and policy dialogue at the country level. Active and well-functioning National Committees, supported by capable secretariats, contribute to the success of AFPPD’s work. In 2015, AFPPD contributed to strengthening the capacity of National Committees to advocate for the ICPD POA through (1) supporting the development of work plans, (2) networking with key stakeholders including UNFPA and CSOs, (3) holding national workshops, (4) sensitizing Members of Parliaments (MPs), and (5) training National Committee secretariat staff. Direct technical support was provided in several cases. In addition, AFPPD continued to implement a programme offering small grants that enable National Committees to strengthen their in-country advocacy efforts.

The 4th Annual AFPPD National Committees - UNFPA Advocacy Planning Session

This collaborative planning session is organized to coordinate the plans of national committees and UNFPA Country Offices with that of AFPPD in order to align and synergize national and regional advocacy plans to advance the ICPD agenda. It provides an opportunity to strengthen coordination and communication at the country and regional levels in order to achieve better policy results.

The planning session was held 28-29 January in Bangkok. There were six strategic sessions that included sharing of learning and best practices on ICPD and the MDGs, as well as workshops on stakeholder analysis, messaging & communications, sub-regional planning and monitoring & evaluation (M&E). The objectives of the sharing sessions were: to create a shared understanding of the need to integrate ICPD into the post-2015 agenda; to share common and best advocacy practices and learning; and to foster stronger relationships between national committees and representatives of UNFPA Country Offices.

Results:

At the end of the planning session, key recommendations were made to strengthen the relationship and the advocacy work of the national committees and UNFPA Country Offices:

0 For AFPPD to create a knowledge management system that would facilitate sharing of information among and between the National Committees and UNFPA Country Offices. This knowledge management system requires situational analysis and needs assessment of countries.

0 To increase the capacity of National Committees and to bridge the knowledge gap of moving from the MDGs to the SDGs. National Committees need to be able to access, interpret and use data. Recommendations included the need to strengthen the implementation of a bottom-up budgeting approach that addresses the realities and challenges.

Based on the recommendations received, AFPPD has developed its first knowledge management database, which was launched in August 2015. It contains past AFPPD meeting documents as well as external resource materials on ICPD, the MDGs and the SDGs to enable parliamentarians and National Committees to easily access AFPPD’s resource materials.

Additionally, in responding to the second recommendation, AFPPD organized two regional trainings for parliamentarians and National Committees on advocacy, and four national-level workshops on prioritizing the ICPD agenda in the SDGs in 2015. More details can be found below and in Section 2.
1.2. Country-level workshops and consultations

**Workshop on Population & Development Priorities for Fiji Parliamentarians, 13 March 2015, Suva, Fiji**

This workshop aimed to strengthen capacity of Fiji’s newly elected parliamentarians and their secretariats on ICPD by (1) increasing their awareness, knowledge and understanding of SRHR and population & development issues, and (2) by enhancing their capacity to integrate these issues into national and sectoral policies, plans and laws. The workshop was attended by 28 parliamentarians plus representatives of IPPF, the UN and CSOs.

Hon. Dr. Jiko Luveni, Speaker of the Fijian Parliament, expressed Fiji’s commitment to advancing the ICPD agenda: “As we say farewell to the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, we prepare to welcome and adjust to the new Sustainable Development Goals being adopted by the UN in September. That meeting will mandate all nations to establish their own SDG national plans. Our role as champions of ICPD is to make sure that SRHR, gender and other important ICPD issues feature prominently in Fiji’s National Plan.”

**Results:**

The workshop was covered by the Fiji Times Online, the Fiji Sun and the World Family Organization. It provided AFPPD the opportunity to galvanize parliamentary support for, and commitment to, advancing SRHR and gender issues, building on support from President Ratu Epeli Nailatikau, former AFPPD Vice-Chair.

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**Workshop on Population & Development Priorities for Bhutan Parliamentarians, 10 April 2015, Thimphu, Bhutan**

This was the first parliamentarian workshop conducted in Bhutan since the country embraced democracy in 2008. Capacity building and knowledge enhancement of parliamentarians are among the Parliament’s top priorities in this young democracy. This made the workshop timely and relevant particularly in raising awareness on the importance of SRHR and gender issues in post-2015 national priorities.

About 30 participants attended in total, including the Speaker of the Bhutan Parliament, Hon. Jigme Zangpo, 10 members of parliament, the standing committee chief of staff, and representatives from the National Assembly Secretariat. Also in attendance were representatives from: the International Planned Parenthood Federation South Asia Regional Office (IPPF SARO); Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women (RENEW); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); UNFPA; and the South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC).

**Results:**

The workshop resulted in the setting of some new priorities for the National Assembly of Bhutan, as well as generating recommendations for working in parliamentarian advocacy. Parliamentarians led by the Honourable Speaker nominated a committee on Bhutan becoming an official member of AFPPD, and in October Bhutan officially became AFPPD’s 29th member. Feedback from this workshop was positive and constructive.

“I feel MPs should work with civil society organizations through exchange programs, sharing feedback and having very effective interactive communication like today, so that we can equally build our capacities to drive our performance at the national and regional levels.”

-Workshop participant
Workshop on Legislating for the Full Achievement of the SDG/ICPD Goals and Targets, 12-13 November 2015, Almaty, Kazakhstan

This workshop was co-hosted by the Social Council under the Nur Otan Party in the Kazakhstan Lower House of Parliament. The Social Council is chaired by Hon. Mme. Aitkul Samakova, MP, who is also a Vice-Chair of AFPPD. The main goal was to better inform MPs on the SDGs and the ICPD agenda, focusing on national priorities. In total, 26 participants attended the workshop, including 13 MPs, 5 government officials, 3 parliament staff and 2 CSO representatives, as well as representatives form UNFPA and UNESCO. In her opening speech, Mme. Samakova discussed maternal health in Kazakhstan, saying:

“Kazakhstan has reformed health care programs, including maternal health care. Maternal mortality rate decreased from 55 per 100,000 live births in 1999 to 11.8 in 2015. Further decreases in maternal and infant mortality rates, reduction in age gap (life expectancy) between men and women, and protection of family are among our future priorities.”

AFPPD representatives also discussed linkages between SRHR, gender and youth policies. They discussed active ageing as well, a topic in which Kazakhstan MPs showed keen interest. Discussion also touched on how strong gender-sensitive policies with access to family planning at the core could enable Kazakhstan to achieve desired fertility rates and desirable population growth.

To address the country’s challenges related to adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH), AFPPD and UNFPA also advocated for comprehensive sexuality education. “I was very skeptical about the benefits of offering reproductive health education at school,” said Hon. Ms. Gulmira Issinbayeva after the workshop. “But now, I have a different view about comprehensive sexuality education. It may work, and be beneficial as long as the curriculum is properly developed and teachers are well-trained. Medical experts should also be invited to speak to students.”

Results:

The workshop produced a set of recommendations for Kazakhstan's national plan of action as well. Among the priority topics were (1) increasing access to reproductive health services and information among young people, (2) developing healthy ageing policies, and (3) enabling policymakers to access reliable demographic data for effective policy implementation and monitoring. These recommendations will be presented to the Deputy Prime Minister on Social Affairs and the Presidential Administration.
Workshop on Legislating for the Full Achievement of the SDG/ICPD Goals and Targets, 3-4 December 2015, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

This workshop brought together representatives from 29 stakeholders, including 14 MPs, 7 representatives from the Government of Tajikistan, three parliamentary staff, representatives from two CSOs and three representatives from the UNFPA Country Office. It was hosted by the National Committee of Tajikistan on Population & Development, headed by Hon. Mrs. Khayriniso Yusufi, MP, Vice-Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament of Tajikistan.

Hon. Mrs. Yusufi brought together MPs from different Standing Committees, including those on social issues and healthcare, education and science, economics and finance, and legislation and human rights. In 2014, Hon. Mrs. Yusufi had initiated the National Committee on Population & Development as a platform for multi-sectorial dialogue, and she has since been successful in mobilizing not only MPs but also government representatives to become members of the National Committee. These include: Ms. Lola Bobohodjieva, First Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection; Mr. Emin Sanginzoda, First Deputy Minister of Labour, Migration and Employment; Mrs. Tojiniso Mahmadova, Deputy Minister of Education and Science; and Mrs. Gulnora Hasanova, Director of the National Statistics Agency. All attended the workshop together with other government officials.

At the workshop, AFPPD presented and discussed the newly adopted SDGs and also presented international policy practices in gender, family planning and youth reproductive health. Transparency and accountability were particularly emphasized both as practices among the 17 SDGs and as a means for achieving them. Discussions centred on how to collect accurate data and gather reliable evidence for policy monitoring.

Tajikistan has made significant progress toward the MDGs and ICPD goals, and according to the World Bank, the poverty rate in the country has dropped from about 70% to 30% over the past 20 years. Tajikistan has achieved a significant decrease in maternal and infant mortality rates as well, and has demonstrated a new approach to legislation and policy-making in accordance with international norms and standards. Legislation portfolios on reproductive health, gender and youth have expanded for the last 10 years. However, policy implementation and monitoring remain a huge challenge.

Results:

All participants agreed that the workshop was timely and had a significant impact on their future work. They also called on AFPPD to conduct more national-level activities.
Political Influence

**AFPPD meeting with the Speaker of Parliament, Tajikistan**

On 3 December 2015, Dr. Mika Marumoto, AFPPD Executive Director, met with Hon. Mr. Shukrojon Zhuhurov, Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament of Tajikistan, who thanked AFPPD for its years of collaboration. Tajikistan became a member of the organization in 2001 and Speaker Zhuhurov highlighted the accomplishments of Tajikistan in implementation of the MDGs, including poverty reduction, increased access to reproductive health services and the improved status of women (including their political participation). He also highlighted AFPPD's support for the establishment of the new policy dialogue platform, the National Committee of Tajikistan on Population & Development, initiated by Hon. Mrs. Khayriniso Yusufi.

Dr. Marumoto congratulated Tajikistan on its achievements of key MDGs and particularly commended Tajikistan’s National Committee on Population & Development for establishing a committee that brings together different stakeholders, including MPs, government representatives, CSOs and media. By creating such a multi-sectorial platform, said Dr. Marumoto, “Tajikistan has already met one of the pre-requisites for successfully embarking on formulating implementation plans to achieve the 2030 development goals.”

**AFPPD support to the National Committee of Thailand on the “Adolescent Pregnancy Bill”**

AFPPD also supported a consultation meeting on the proposed draft “Adolescent Pregnancy Bill”, held on 18 August 2015. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, Secretary-General of AFPPD and Chair of the Thai Standing Committee on Public Health, and attended by the AFPPD Executive Director. Other co-organizers included representatives of the UNFPA Thailand Country Office and the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) of Thailand. The meeting solicited ideas from over 40 participants to further improve the draft bill in order to respond to and help curb the high incidence of adolescent pregnancy in Thailand. (Note: On February 4 2016, the NLA approved the bill and it is officially titled “Prevention and Remedial Measures for Adolescent Pregnancy,” as released by the NLA as of 8 March 2016).
1.3. The AFPPD Small Grants Programme

AFPPD continued to implement its Small Grants Programme in 2015. This is one of the organization’s key strategies to address critical capacity and financial gaps of the National Committees. It is made possible by AFPPD’s long-standing partner, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) Central Office in London. The grant program is in line with IPPF’s “Vision 2020”, particularly, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls and to recognize sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

In 2015, AFPPD allocated five small grants to country-specific projects in Bhutan, Fiji, Kyrgyzstan, PNG and the Philippines. In Bhutan and Fiji, the small grants enabled parliamentarians to conduct national level workshops (see section on country-level workshops and consultations).

In Kyrgyzstan, AFPPD small grants contributed to the implementation of the Action Plan for Advancement of the Reproductive Rights Bill. This bill aims to strengthen the notion of sexual and reproductive rights as human rights as well as mandating compulsory sexuality education at secondary schools to strengthen the rights of adolescents on access to SRH information. On 15 April 2015, 75 Kyrgyz parliamentarians supported the passing of the bill, entitled “Reproductive Rights and State Guarantees of their Realization,” during its second hearing in Parliament. Only 10 MPs contested the passing of the bill. This was a remarkable achievement compared to the previous hearing in 2014, when the bill didn’t pass and was sent to be “refined.” AFPPD’s small grant enabled advocacy that contributed to the overall success of the bill. In July 2014, the bill became a new law expanding the reproductive rights of people in Kyrgyzstan.

In PNG, AFPPD provided a small grant to support the work of the Safe Motherhood Alliance PNG, which serves as Secretariat to the Papua New Guinea Parliamentary Group on Population and Sustainable Development. The grant was used to expand its existing project by adding another activity to raise awareness among parliamentarians on adolescent sexual and reproductive health issues, with a special emphasis on prevention of teenage pregnancy. One of the results was a reaffirmed commitment by high-level decision-makers. The Prime Minister of PNG personally affirmed his support for educating young people, specifically identifying young girls, to make better life decisions.

The other result was increased awareness and visibility of teenage pregnancy, achieved through organizing an art exhibition “Blooming Teens” within the project. The exhibition was attended by 54 MPs, including the Prime Minister, several cabinet members and several governors. The advocacy goal of the small grants project was to increase resource allocation for sexual and reproductive health.

In the Philippines, AFPPD provided a small grant to support the work of the Philippine Legislators’ Committee on Population & Development Foundation, Inc. (PLCPD). The grant was used to produce information and education materials for legislators on ageing and human rights of older persons including their reproductive rights, in order to increase awareness and commitment of legislators to new policies that will protect and advance human rights of older persons in the 17th Congress (2016-2019).

In previous years, the Philippine Congress has enacted laws to provide enabling mechanisms for older persons to have better quality of life. However, there are reports of inconsistencies in the delivery of services for older persons. Studies have shown the need for additional laws that will address current issues and needs of senior citizens in the Philippines. Through AFPPD small grants, PLCPD developed a 12-page factsheet on ageing and human rights of older persons in the Philippines to serve as reference material for national and local legislators, to enable them to discern and advocate these issues at the national and local levels. PLCPD produced 3,500 copies to be able to reach MPs and priority local government units at the national level and in 15 provinces.
SECTION II: AFPPD engaging parliamentarians to advance ICPD at the regional and international levels

In 2015, AFPPD conducted numerous activities to: (1) enhance the capacity of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to implement ICPD beyond 2014; and (2) to influence the regional and global political/development agendas. These include holding two policy advocacy workshops, mobilization of MPs to attend regional and international conferences, and production and dissemination of policy advocacy and knowledge sharing resources.

2.1. Policy Advocacy Training Workshops

AFPPD offered its Training Workshop for Parliamentarians and Parliamentary Staff on Prioritizing ICPD in the SDGs, first 27-28 August 2015 in Bangkok, and again 30 November to 1 December in New Delhi. These workshops were supported by UNFPA and attended by a total 38 members of parliament and parliamentary staff from 10 countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Philippines, Timor-Leste) and representatives from UNFPA, UNAIDS and IPPF.

The trainings were intended to strengthen parliamentarians’ advocacy skills and capacity to address ICPD issues within the new development agenda. They used two packages of materials that offer key messages and information to advocate for ICPD in the national SDG planning process. These were (1) the Parliamentarian Resource Kit on SRHR and Population & Development Links in Asia and (2) the Pacific and the Advocacy Manual for Asia-Pacific Parliamentarians Advancing Population & Development Issues beyond 2015.

Overall the workshops highlighted the importance of raising the visibility of issues pertaining to the ICPD agenda as well as ways of messaging and of using evidence in their own national contexts for advocacy. The workshops succeeded in increasing knowledge and understanding of parliamentarians and national committees on the linkages of ICPD and the post-2015 development agenda, and have provided take-away messages that participants can use to strengthen their advocacy work to ensure that national SDG plans and monitoring frameworks are strong and inclusive.

2.2. Mobilization of Parliamentarians

International G7 Parliamentarians’ Conference, “She Matters: Empowering women and girls to lead self-determined, healthy and productive lives”

In 2015, AFPPD mobilized parliamentarians from the region to attend the G7 Parliamentarians’ Conference, held 16-17 April in Berlin, Germany. This conference built on the themes of the 2015 G7 summit, namely economic empowerment of women and the post-2015 agenda. It aimed to create support among parliamentarians and encourage them to press for increased G7 commitment to international development cooperation and global health, in particular on issues where progress to date has been disappointing, such as gender equality and SRHR.

The parliamentarians that AFPPD sent to the conference were given the opportunity to advocate to their peers on SRHR issues relevant to the work of AFPPD. In addition, two parliamentarians were asked to make the closing speech and to open Session 3, on the role of parliamentarians and how they can help solve population issues through promoting women’s empowerment, realizing universal health coverage and ensuring universal access to reproductive health services that include family planning.

From 11-12 May, UNFPA, the European Parliamentarian Forum on Population & Development (EPF) and the Government of Moldova co-hosted a regional conference for young leaders. Two young MPs from Kyrgyzstan participated in this, and represented AFPPD. More than 50 young parliamentarians, government officials, private sector representatives, civil society activists and journalists from 27 countries across Europe and Central Asia attended the conference to discuss how a new generation of leaders can best make their contribution to addressing the pressing population & development challenges that the region is facing.

UNFPA EECARO Regional Conference: “Promoting Health and Rights, Reducing Inequalities: Toward better sexual and reproductive health outcomes in Eastern Europe and Central Asia”

This conference took place 27-29 May in Sofia, Bulgaria. It was jointly hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, the Ministry of Health of Bulgaria and the UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECARO). It gathered 150 ministers and government officials, parliamentarians, civil society leaders, youth activists and experts for discussions on investing in SRH as part of efforts to address health inequalities and contribute to the SDGs. Participants discussed how integrated SRH services, in the context of universal health coverage, health promotion and disease prevention, will pave the way to wellbeing for communities. MPs from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan played key roles at the conference by chairing plenary sessions and group discussions. The resulting document can be accessed at the UNFPA EECARO website.

The One-Day Regional Parliamentary Consultation: “Enhancing Legal Frameworks toward Better Sexual and Reproductive Health Outcomes”

This regional parliamentary consultation was held on 26 May, co-organized by AFPPD and EPF with support from UNFPA. It brought together 10 MPs plus experts from the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region. Attendees discussed the enhancement of legal frameworks to ensure rights-based and human-centred policies and to remove economic, financial and social barriers to full realization of the ICPD POA in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. Hon. Mrs. Irina Aronova, MP Kazakhstan, underlined the importance of working with CSOs and shared the experience of Kazakhstan in this area. Hon. Mrs. Hilolbi Qurbonzoda, MP Tajikistan, presented the recent legislation that increased access to SRHR for Tajik youth. Hon. Mrs. Nadira Narmatova, MP Kyrgyzstan, Vice-Speaker, also shared a success story on the adoption of the Reproductive Rights Law in Kyrgyzstan. MPs from Albania, Macedonia, Ukraine and other Eastern European countries discussed their achievements and challenges as well. Young activists from youth organizations in the region also joined parliamentarians in the last session and shared their opinions, experiences and aspirations.
2.3. Research Materials and Publications

AFPPD also facilitated information sharing in 2015 to enhance capacity of Parliamentarians and National Committees for regional policy development through information dissemination via its website, policy round-ups, newsletters and other publications. These publications aim to raise awareness and increase parliamentarians’ knowledge of the policy issues related to population & development and its implications for economic and social development in the region. They also aim to provide parliamentarians and other policy makers with evidence-based advocacy entry points.

In 2015, AFPPD produced 24 bi-monthly policy roundups and 5 newsletters as well, which have been sent out to over 6,000 recipients on the AFPPD email list. Additionally, AFPPD produced several policy advocacy products including: a policy series on population dynamics; a parliamentarian resource kit on SRHR and population & development links in Asia and the Pacific; and a policy advocacy manual for Asia-Pacific parliamentarians pushing population & development issues beyond 2015.

In addition to policy materials, AFPPD also produced “good practice documents,” which aim to promote the documentation and sharing of good practices in the area of population & development among its national committees and parliamentarians across the Asia-Pacific region. This is part of the organization’s knowledge management function and these documents are a collection of good practices from AFPPD’s National Committees, all available on the website.
Within the Central Asia Project in 2015, AFPPD produced 12 monthly e-Newsletters and two newsletters in Russian, which were sent out to approximately 300 recipients from Central Asia. AFPPD also conducted a compliance review of legislation in the key ICPD areas (SRHR; excluding HIV; gender equality and women’s empowerment; youth; ageing) for three countries – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. To conduct this review, AFPPD identified 23 international norms related to the ICPD agenda based on the ICPD PoA, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and other international legal documents. AFPPD analyzed 27 national laws and 13 policy documents in three countries, and the percentage of national norms that fully or partially comply with the international standards was identified: the next step will be to engage legal experts and national stakeholders.

In addition to the legislation analysis, AFPPD examined the means of particular implementation norms through mapping out national programmes, ministerial guidelines and other “under-law” documents. Where possible, reviewers examined available information on budgets, and with this initial analysis AFPPD plans to engage with the national stakeholders to monitor implementation of existing legislation and policies.
SECTION III: Progress and Achievements in Operational Arrangements

3.1. The 11th General Assembly

AFPPD’s 11th General Assembly brought together representatives of National Committees on Population & Development and other parliamentarians from more than 23 countries in Asia and the Pacific. In total, 104 participants across the region attended, with more than half from parliaments. AFPPD partners including UNFPA, UNAIDS, UN Women, IPPF, HelpAge, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) and ARROW were also present.

The 11th General Assembly took place at a crucial time, right after UN member states adopted the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), on 25 September 2015. AFPPD remains committed to advancing the implementation of the ICPD POA, adopted at the ICPD (1994) and the subsequent Framework of Action beyond 2014 in the post-2015 framework. The General Assembly also provided an opportunity for parliamentarians and stakeholders to look back on their achievements thus far and at the challenges they face, re-strategizing future approaches under the new framework of sustainable development (Plenary Session).

The 11th General Assembly further focused on three themes, gender equality and women’s empowerment, investing in youth and active ageing. These thematic sessions were followed by further sessions where operational and financial reports were approved, the Constitution was amended and a new strategy for 2016-2019 adopted. Both the constitutional amendment and the new Strategic Plan are intended to ensure that AFPPD is positioning itself strategically to make meaningful contributions to realizing equitable, sustainable development in an accountable and transparent manner within the new development framework at the national, regional and global levels.

The 11th General Assembly also elected a new set of office bearers, including co-chairs of three newly established Standing Committees following the three themes of the agenda, as well as the new Executive Director (See Office Bearers on page 1).

Where previously AFPPD held its General Assembly every three years, it will now be held every two years. This gathering is to review and evaluate the work of AFPPD, providing future direction while electing new office bearers for the coming term. The 11th General Assembly marked the successful conclusion of AFPPD’s 34th year of work on population & development. It was made possible by kind host, the National Legislative Assembly of Thailand, with generous support from UNFPA and the Government of Japan.

(For details, see Report on the 11th General Assembly.)
3.2. Standing Committees

Three new Standing Committees were established at the 11th General Assembly, each expected to meet at least once a year. The agenda of these meetings will be decided by the Co-Chairs of each Standing Committee in consultation with members of the Executive Committee.

**Standing Committee on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment**

The past decades have witnessed a steadily increasing awareness of the need to address the issue of gender equality and women’s empowerment. Measures have been considered and adopted to increase social, economic and political equity, broaden access to fundamental human rights, and improve nutrition, basic health and education. Despite the progress and increasing awareness, inequalities still remain in many societies. Violence against women and girls remains at alarmingly high levels across all regions. Achieving gender equality and women’s rights for all is also a grudgingly slow process, since it challenges one of the most deeply entrenched of all human attitudes. Parliaments and their members are uniquely placed to ensure the enforcement of laws and the allocation of appropriate resources to prevent all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls and ensure the advancement of gender equality and women’s empowerment for equal political, economic and social participation.

The main purpose of the Standing Committee is to share knowledge, to advocate and to exchange experiences among members for advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment across the region. Members of this Standing Committee will be informed of progress made and will provide guidance to future plans and gender related activities of the AFPPD.

**Standing Committee on Investing in Youth**

The Asia-Pacific region represents more than 60 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24 globally. They are (1) a major human resource for development; (2) key agents for social change; and (3) a driving force for economic development and technological innovation. However, the full potential of many young people across the region remains untapped, as many of them still face obstacles in their access to education, health care, employment and civic participation. Many of them are unable to guard against HIV, STIs and unwanted pregnancy, among other SRH challenges. As a result, they are unable to engage in decent work, thus jeopardizing their futures and limiting their ability to contribute to the development of their families, communities and nations.

Members of this Standing Committee examine and advocate on issues that affect young people and share policy options and recommendations with other member countries to achieve sustainable human development. Through this joint action, members of the Standing Committee will therefore highlight parliamentarians’ role and responsibility in safeguarding the rights, needs and aspirations of young people through targeted policies and investments.
Standing Committee on Active Ageing

The Asia-Pacific region is currently home to over half of the world’s elderly population. It is experiencing population ageing at an unprecedented pace, due to the tremendous increases in life expectancy combined with falling fertility rates. The number of older persons in the region is expected to triple, from 438 million in 2010 to more than 1.26 billion by 2050. This demographic transition toward an ageing society has deep social, economic and political implications. Shrinking working-age populations will affect future economic growth. Increasing old-age dependency ratios will also mean fewer people in work will have to support a growing number of older persons. This will also place a significant strain on social security systems, infrastructure and the provision of health care services.

The Standing Committee on Active Ageing was established with an aim to promote healthy and active ageing and protect the rights of older persons through policies and legal frameworks. It is expected to provide guidance and lead advocacy efforts on issues related to older persons, which may include strengthening of social protection, enhancing health care for healthy life expectancy, as well as addressing the specific needs of older women.

3.3. Evaluations

Medium-Term Strategy Evaluation

In order to appraise its own performance over the past three years, AFPPD has commissioned an external evaluation to (1) assess how strategy has guided the work of AFPPD and how AFPPD performed during the period 2013-2015, and (2) document lessons learned and make recommendations for the next strategic plan. The findings from the MTS evaluation were used to inform the next strategic plan.

Evaluation of the AFPPD Project funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia (DFAT)

An evaluation of the AFPPD project, "Mobilizing Parliamentarians for Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), Asia Pacific (2012-2015)" was undertaken in August and September 2015, at the end of the third year of Phase I. This assessed AFPPD’s performance and achievements in mobilizing parliamentarians to end all forms of VAWG in Asia and the Pacific, focusing on two priority thematic areas of action, (1) child marriage in South Asia, and (2) human trafficking in Southeast Asia. The evaluation provided recommendations for the way forward and identified lessons learned for the next project cycle.
3.4. Strategic Planning

In 2015, AFPPD developed a new strategy guiding its operations from 2016 to 2019 based on recommendations made and evaluations conducted in recent years. The Strategic Plan intends to set the direction for the work of AFPPD, present clear goals to achieve and the ways and means to achieve them for the next four years. The strategic plan provides an overall blueprint that connects the work of AFPPD among its members and the Secretariat, and that interlinks with other global and regional development partners and parliamentary networks to achieve the agreed goals. It enables a coherent approach to the advancement of the ICPD commitment and implementation in the region and globally, by prioritizing the work of AFPPD.

In order to be more proactive, innovative, outward-looking and focused, the following 4 strategic goals and 10 strategic paths will be pursued.

NOTE: The new strategy clearly defines a Results Chain and Accountability Framework, and a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework. AFPPD has also developed a preliminary implementation-work plan for the new Strategic Plan (2016-2019) under a comprehensive M&E framework. The implementation plan further defines and clarifies AFPPD's expected outputs and outcome indicators to ensure that they will be tracked and monitored in an objectively verifiable manner.

AFPPD Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Outcome 1. (National Action Focus): National/sub-national and sectoral policies and plans are in line with the Ministerial Declaration of the Asia and Pacific Population Conference, and they incorporate the health and gender goals and targets of the SDGs, and increased national/sub-national budgets are allocated in the health sector, especially in SRH, to enable implementation.

Strategy 1.1. Capacity Development: Strengthen the capacity of National Committees on Population & Development (or equivalent) to advocate/communicate, network and influence national and sub-national policy reviews, policy formulation, annual budget discussions and parliamentary inquiries and debates.

Strategy 1.2. Knowledge Management, Learning and Communication: Strengthen national and regional knowledge bases and regional learning and information sharing to deepen the understanding of parliamentarians and support national advocacy and debates on ICPD issues and their linkages to SDGs in parliamentary debates and public events/discussions and with media. The issues may vary from one country to another, but include the unfinished MDG/ICPD agenda and emerging issues (e.g., family planning, universal health coverage, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, youth, demographic dividend, ageing, migration/urbanization, sex selection at birth, GBV and climate change).

Strategy 1.3. Outreach: Approach non-National Committee members to expand the possibility of influence, including among finance/economics/foreign affairs national committees, speakers of parliaments, influential MPs and advisers to leaders, other eminent persons, young parliamentarians, women parliamentarians, religious leaders/faith-based organizations and media personalities.
Outcome 2. (Regional/Global Advocacy, Outreach and Partnerships): The ICPD regional agreement/commitment is extended to and supported by other parliamentary and civil society groups and mechanisms. Certain topics will be chosen around which specific policy proposals will be made (e.g., toward universal health coverage in light of changing demographics; youth action plan) to garner support from not only within AFPPD but also through other parliamentary networks and CSO networks.

Strategy 2.1. Parliamentary Partnerships: Interact with the existing global/regional/sub-regional parliamentary networks to place issues on their meeting agenda relevant to ICPD beyond-2014/APPD Ministerial Declaration, to deepen their understanding and gain support for national implementation and regional policy advocacy. Also, work collaboratively with sister parliamentary groups on population & development from other regions, especially with the European Parliamentary Forum on Population & Development (EPF) to pursue common global commitment.

Strategy 2.2. CSO Partnerships: Build partnerships with important CSOs and civil society movements to benefit from their platform, technical knowledge & expertise and regional/global advocacy and events (Asia and the Pacific Conference on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Women Deliver, Asian Population Association, International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, etc.)

Outcome 3. (Regional/global political influence): AFPPD influences the regional/global inter-governmental political/development agenda and provides aligned support to its realization in important population & development issues (ESCAP SDG forum, APEC Health Policy Dialogue, ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting, SAARC Youth Action, G7 Summit in May 2016, Partners for Population & Development).

Strategy 3.1. Make policy recommendations and political commitments at regional and global fora for the consideration of political and government leaders as AFPPD and/or as part of national delegations to raise the importance of (1) ICPD beyond 2014 and (2) the APPC Ministerial Declaration, and to accelerate action in general.

Management Output (Organizational focus): Good governance, clear accountability and effective communication are well institutionalized and practiced in AFPPD.

Strategy 4.1. Governance and Accountability: Implement the new governance and accountability mechanisms and systems.

Strategy 4.2. Reorganization: Reorganize the AFPPD Secretariat and make use of UN/CSO partnerships to strengthen technical capacity and knowledge base.

Strategy 4.3. Communication: Implement more proactive communication.

3.5. Executive Committee Meetings

AFPPD’s Executive Committee has played an important role in providing leadership for the organization through its bi-annual meetings. From January 2013 to September 2015, five Executive Committee Meetings took place.

The 77th Executive Committee Meeting, in May 2015, endorsed the appointment of the interim Executive Director. The draft Strategic Plan 2016-2018 was also presented at this meeting. The Executive Committee recommended that the position of Deputy Secretary-General be removed and one more Executive Member be added: a Pacific representative will fill this position. It was also agreed that the term of the Office Bearers would be four years. The meeting also appointed the Secretary-General to temporarily take over the role of the Treasurer. AFPPD’s Constitution was also revised at the meeting, to be submitted to the 11th General Assembly for approval.

The 78th Executive Committee Meeting, in October, was convened prior to the 11th General Assembly and received and endorsed the final outputs of the task force project, including the proposed Constitutional amendment, the final draft manuals after five months of implementation at the secretariat, the knowledge database and the communications strategy and guidelines. The Executive Committee also approved the final draft of the new Strategic Plan 2016-2019. Both documents were presented to the 11th General Assembly.
3.6. Work of the Task Force on Transparency, Accountability and Governance

To enhance institutional capacity, the Executive Committee established a Task Force on Transparency, Accountability and Governance (TAG) in October 2014 to review processes and structures in the Secretariat. The task force, headed by the AFPPD Chair, is comprised of six additional members, the Secretary-General and five Vice-Chairs representing sub-regions, who are all assisted by a consultant, the Special Adviser for Governance and Management, based at the AFPPD Secretariat.

Since the establishment of the TAG, a number of internal policies and processes have been reviewed/revised to strengthen the Secretariat’s governance and administration, thereby improving AFPPD activities. Under TAG initiatives, AFPPD’s governance structure and mechanisms have been overhauled. A revised Constitution (proposed) also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the General Assembly, Executive Committee, Standing Committees, the Secretariat and member National Committees, to make the AFPPD an accountable and transparent organization. Also, the division of responsibilities between the Executive Committee and the Secretariat is clarified in six areas: strategy; governance; finance; performance; risk; and external relations. This framework is now institutionalized so that the Executive Committee comprehensively monitors the Secretariat’s operational efficacy and efficiency.

The TAG has also reviewed and revised the Human Resources Manual, Operations Manual, and Finance Manual, which were presented at the 2nd Task Force meeting and the 77th Executive Committee meeting for approval in May 2015. For the period May through August 2015, the approved manuals were then tested and implemented, and revisited for additional changes and in September 2015. The TAG also developed AFPPD’s Communications Strategy and Guidelines, and embarked on designing and developing AFPPD’s first knowledge management database, which was launched in August 2015.

The knowledge management database contains past AFPPD meeting documents as well as external resource materials on ICPD, the MDGs and the SDGs, to enable parliamentarians and National Committees to easily access the organization’s resource materials.

Also under the TAG, AFPPD renewed its working relationship with the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in April 2015. The Special Advisor also represented the Experts Group meeting at the APEC Health Working Group, which generated the policy toolkit, “Healthy Women, Healthy Economies” in September 2015.

Additionally, as part of the institutional capacity-strengthening plan initiated by the TAG, six staff members received training and professional development in 2015.

At the 3rd task force meeting in October 2015, TAG members confirmed that all activities mandated had been completed ahead of schedule, including constitutional amendments, the drafting and revision of the manuals, and capacity building activities for the secretariat.
SECTION IV: Feature stories from National Committees on Population & Development

National Committees of parliamentarians working on population & development are the core of AFPPD’s network and policy change happens at the national level. While AFPPD is working to support National Committees, it is the parliamentarians who impact the life and wellbeing of the people and who ensure sustainable development for their communities and countries. AFPPD acknowledges the valuable work that National Committees have done in 2015.

The scope of activities and achievements for National Committees varies widely, from trainings and workshops to changing legislation and increasing national budget lines for population issues. Below are some of the activities and accomplishments in the areas of (1) increasing overseas development assistance (ODA), (2) adoption of new legislation and policies, and (3) transitioning to the SDGs.

National Committees work to increase overseas development assistance in 2015

The Australian Parliamentary Group on Population & Development (APGPD)

The Australian Parliamentary Group on Population & Development (APGPD) is an all-party forum with 50 members in the Federal Parliament. It informs and mobilises political action around women’s empowerment, domestic violence eradication, women’s leadership and gender equality and improved SRHR. The APGPD plays a significant role as an advocate for SRHR and gender equality, which is a key pillar of the Australian government’s foreign aid program. The APGPD hosts round-table briefings with members of the international development sector and government departments to engage both parliamentarians and members of civil society.

Hon. Dr. Sharman Stone reported that Australia has now determined that over 80 percent of its aid budget will support the empowerment of women and girls, and that this will further support delivery of the SDGs. Dr. Stone Chairs the APGPD and also chairs the Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs as well as the Subcommittee on Foreign Affairs and the Aid Subcommittee. The APGPD has actively supported and participated in the Pacific Women’s Parliamentary Partnerships Forum, a program to support women’s leadership in the region.

In 2016, a focus of the APGPD will be eradicating Fetal Alcohol Syndrome both at home and in the region, as well as eradicating domestic violence and supporting the achievement of the SDGs in the region.
The Japan Parliamentarians’ Federation for Population (JPFP)

The Japan Parliamentarians’ Federation for Population (JPFP) was established more than 40 years ago, in 1974. It is the world’s first non-partisan parliamentary group working on population & development. Chaired and directed by JPFP parliamentarians, the Asian Population & Development Association acts as a Secretariat for JPFP, working toward social development, economic progress and the enhancement of welfare and peace in the world through research on population & development issues in Asia and beyond.

Through close collaboration with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, JPFP contributed to Japan’s increased funding to the population field in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

From 1-3 October 2015, JPFP Secretariat organized a conference in Nairobi, Kenya, the ‘Asian and African Parliamentarians’ Meeting and Study Visit on Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in the Interlinkage between Population Issues and the Post-2015 Development Agenda’. This project provided Japanese parliamentarians with an opportunity to learn first-hand how Japan’s ODA makes a difference in the lives of people in Kenya, thereby convincing peer MPs to support ODA for population & development. The project prompted the Kenyan Parliament to introduce a motion to deliberate the legislation that would contribute to improving Kenya’s accountability for, and transparency in, the implementation of ODA projects.

The New Zealand Parliamentarians’ Group on Population & Development (NZPPD)

The New Zealand Parliamentarians’ Group on Population & Development (NZPPD) provides a forum for New Zealand parliamentarians to engage and act on international population & development issues. It is a cross-party group made up of about 30 to 40 per cent of all New Zealand MPs.

NZPPD is key to ensuring that New Zealand remains a strong partner and donor on SRHR, gender and population issues in the Pacific, as well as a strong advocate at the international level.

Advocacy actions include raising awareness among parliamentarians and other policy makers. For example, in 2014 NZPPD sent a letter to the New Zealand Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) to alert the Minister to the findings of the cost-benefit analysis from Kiribati. The analysis illustrated how investing in family planning saves both lives and money. The letter also advocated for increased investment in family planning in the wider Pacific.

In 2015, NZPPD continued to make the case for investing in SRHR in the Pacific region and beyond, and in June they hosted a day-long open hearing, “Engaging Boys and Men in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs)”.

Eleven organizations made presentations on the topic, and following the open hearing, NZPPD organized a round table that brought together MPs from New Zealand and the Pacific. The round table discussed key learning from the open hearings and developed key recommendations. A report collating discussions and recommendations will be formally launched at the New Zealand Parliament on 17 February 2016.
National Committees achieving policy change in 2015

The Nepal National Forum for Parliamentarians on Population & Development (NFPPD)

Nepal experienced two earthquakes in 2015, one in April and another in May. The first one killed over 8,000 people and injured more than 21,000. Thousands were left homeless. During the second earthquake, 153 people were killed and more than 3,200 people were injured. Between the two quakes, 95% of the houses in the area were destroyed. The international community has supported Nepal in the recovery and NFPPD was involved in the earthquake relief measures. UNFPA Nepal and the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPF) supported NFPPD to work for the earthquake victims, and UNFPA especially supported birth centres with tents and accessories. JPFJ also provided monetary contributions to support minority Chepang children in Makawanpur District, who were provided with school bags and stationery.

Despite these natural disasters, the Parliament of Nepal continued to work, and on 20 September 2015 Nepalese MPs promulgated a new constitution. (The Parliament has been working to achieve consensus on a constitution since 2008, and a new Constitution, above all, provided a strong basis for women’s rights in Nepal.)

NFPPD organized several meetings for this work, with the help of UNFPA and other organizations, to sensitize the parliamentarians on gender issues. As a result, MPs have incorporated fundamental rights for women and other essential legislation into the Constitution. For example, mothers can now pass on citizenship to their children. Women’s participation in decision-making is also ensured by the new Constitution and the law states that legislative and executive bodies at the central level be 33% women and legislative and executive bodies at the local level be 40% women.

National Committee of Kyrgyzstan on Population & Development (NCKPD)

In 2015, the Kyrgyz Parliament adopted a new Law on “Reproductive Rights and State Guarantees of their Realization.” This law increases access to sexual and reproductive health education and services, particularly for young people. The adoption of the new law, with extended rights, was a long advocacy journey for the National Committee of Kyrgyzstan on Population & Development (NCKPD) and its supporters.

In 2010, the NCKPD initiated monitoring the implementation of the Law “On Reproductive Rights.” Research had found shortcomings in the existing law and the Committee decided to draft a new one with a more clear definition of sexual and reproductive rights and prominent state obligations. Once the new law was introduced to the Parliament, it faced strong opposition. Several heated discussions were initiated by opponents appealing to “traditional” and “Islamic” norms and objecting to sexual and reproductive health education and modern reproductive technologies. Supporters of the bill, however, strongly believed that, if adopted, the bill would contribute to a decrease in adolescent abortions by promoting young people’s responsible sexual behaviour through offering reproductive health services.

After almost two years of debates, in 2015 the NCKPD was able to mobilize all stakeholders, including CSOs and youth groups. In April, the “Bill on Reproductive Rights and State Guarantees of their Realization,” which had been presented by Hon. Nadira Narmatova, Vice-Speaker of the Parliament and an active member of AFPPD, successfully passed the second hearing in the Kyrgyz Parliament, receiving 75 out of 120 votes. The third hearings were held in May, and in July the bill was signed by the President of Kyrgyzstan.
National Committee of Tajikistan on Population & Development (NCTPD)

In 2015 the National Committee of Tajikistan on Population & Development (NCTPD) amended the Law on Reproductive Rights to ensure better access to reproductive health education and services for young people. According to the new amendment, reproductive health education will now be compulsory for students in 10th and 11th grade.

Reproductive health education is a sensitive issue for the Islamic society of Tajikistan, yet parliamentarians and government officials recognize its importance. "We need to pay special attention to reproductive health education in order to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies among adolescents," said Deputy Head of the Ministry of Health, Mr. Naseem Olimov, during parliamentary debates.

In 2015, the National Committee on Population & Development also held a special session to discuss inclusion of a budget line for contraceptives in the national budget, and as a result of this session, the Government of Tajikistan has agreed to create a special budget line for purchasing contraceptives. Previously, all contraceptive supplies were being purchased for Tajikistan, by UNFPA. However, starting in 2016, UNFPA will no longer be able to provide this. Today, Tajikistan's unmet need for contraception is 23%, according to the World Bank.

The Thailand Committee on Public Health

Working in close cooperation with UNFPA Thailand and the National Legislative Assembly’s (NLA) Committee on Public Health, AFPPD has initiated a project to support Thailand’s Members of Parliament to address reproductive health policy issues, such as high teenage pregnancy rates, and to engage parliamentarians in evidence-based, best-practice policy solutions. Two consultations were conducted under this project with members of the NLA, CSOs and youth groups, to support the Adolescent Pregnancy Bill (now the draft “Prevention and Remedial Measures for Adolescent Pregnancy”).

The consultation with members of the NLA brought together 50 participants including two NLA Standing Committee Chairs, the Director of the Bureau of Reproductive Health, representatives of the Ministry of Public Health, representatives of UNFPA Thailand and speakers from CSOs and youth groups. The consultation provided a good opportunity for different stakeholders to share their views on the issue and provide comments to strengthen the political commitment and improve the proposed bill.

Following the first consultation, a second one was organized, on youth. The meeting brought together 42 participants including representatives from youth organizations, from UNFPA, from the Children and Youth Council and from Ubonratchathani University. It aimed to enhance the draft adolescent pregnancy bill by incorporating the views of young people, particularly on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), health care access and proper measures to prevent teenage pregnancy.

(Note: On 4 February 2016, the NLA approved a bill to address the adolescent pregnancy problem that is prevalent in Thailand. This was in accordance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (interim), B.E. 2557, Section 14, which allows 25 members of the NLA to introduce a bill. The bill has officially been translated into English as “Prevention and Remedial Measures for Adolescent Pregnancy” (March 8, 2016). Consisting of 23 sections, it stipulates that young people aged 10-19 must be given access to reproductive health information and services. Schools must offer comprehensive sexuality education, provide consultations on pregnancy prevention and allow teenage mothers to continue their studies at school until graduation.)
National Committees work toward transitioning to SDG implementation

The Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population & Development (IAPPD)

On 26 February 2015, the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population & Development (IAPPD) held its “Interface Meeting with Parliamentarians on Strengthening MDG 5A and 5B in South Asia” entitled “Creating Champions and Garnering support for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.” Parliamentarians from different political parties shared their views and committed to raise the issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights in Parliament, and also in their respective constituencies at the grassroots level.

IAPPD also held consultations on the Post-2015 Agenda with parliamentarians and key stakeholders on 9 June in New Delhi, 24 June in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, and 26th June in Chandigarh, Haryana. These were held in partnership with the Family Planning Association of India (FPAI), and resulted in recommendations to include the unfinished MDG agenda and SRHR issues into the post-2015 development agenda.

IAPPD has also continued to carry out its research on “Content Analysis of the Questions raised by Parliamentarians during Different Sessions 2009-2015.” A brief report was prepared and released by IAPPD on the occasion of World Population Day, 11 July 2015.

The Bangladesh Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (BAPPD)

The Bangladesh Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (BAPPD) was formed under the chairmanship of the Speaker of the Bangladesh National Parliament. As part of policy advocacy, BAPPD has developed an advocacy plan with the technical assistance of UNFPA and AFPPD. It includes three priority policy advocacy issues: (1) improving maternal health through ensuring safe delivery; (2) eliminating child marriage; and (3) ensuring young people’s development.

On 17 June 2015, the first meeting of the Subcommittee on Improving Maternal Health through Ensuring Safe Delivery was held, resulting in decisions to advocate for increased funding and to organize awareness building campaigns, meetings and consultation workshops at both national and local levels.

The Subcommittee on Eliminating Child Marriage also met in 2015, which resulted in an agreement to amend the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1980 along with the Early Marriage Restraint Act of 1929. Participants discussed other necessary measures as well, such as ensuring a mandatory 12 years of education for female students and adopting a “Child-Marriage-Free” model at the upazila (district) level.

The Subcommittee on Youth Development also met 18 August, deciding to review current youth policy and to make necessary amendments based on evidence, and also to organize consultation meetings with the Standing Committee on Education for quality and technical/vocational education. The Subcommittee met with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare as well, to ensure reproductive health services for youth, and with the Ministry of Finance on increasing funding.
The Philippine Legislators’ Committee on Population & Development (PLCPD)

In 2015, the Philippine Legislators’ Committee on Population & Development (PLCPD) partnered with the House of Representatives’ Congressional Affairs Department and the Special Committee on the MDGs to facilitate a strategy development workshop for offices, both congressional and legislative, whose mandates cover the SDG targets. The activity, which was held 28 and 29 October, presented the processes and content of the Philippines’ journey toward sustainable development and highlighted the challenges encountered and lessons learned from the MDGs. It also afforded an opportunity to discuss and identify priority legislative agenda items on the SDGs for the 17th Congress and beyond. Other items were: (1) to determine roles of congressional and legislative staff as well as of civil society organizations, and solicit their commitments to working to achieve the SDGs; and (2) to formulate strategies and craft an advocacy plan for the SDG agenda in Congress. For setting the priorities of the legislative agenda participants were grouped among four areas pertinent to the SDGs, “social”, “economic”, “governance” and “environment”. The legislative agendas were presented to the Hon. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Feliciano R. Belmonte, during a ceremonial handover, which was attended by the United Nations Resident Coordinator.

Beyond its work on the SDGs, PLCPD is part of the National Implementation Team (NIT), which is a multi-sectoral mechanism organized by the Department of Health to ensure meaningful implementation of the Reproductive Health (RH) Law. PLCPD provides technical assistance for Regional Implementation Teams and conducts monthly coordination meetings. With support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, PLCPD implements capacity building activities and organizes local legislators on implementation of RH law and resource mobilization in five provinces.

In addition, PLCPD is conducting baseline studies and analysis of the policy environment on disaster risk reduction and food and nutrition security in cooperation with the World Food Program (WFP). Under this baseline study, PLCPD has covered the 10 provinces.

China

In 2015, the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress conducted a nationwide inspection on enforcement of the Elderly Rights Law. It pressed for relevant government departments to work together in a coordinated way on the issue, to strengthen protection of the elderly and of minors, to enforce punishments on crimes against the elderly in accordance with the law and to create an enabling social environment for caring for and protecting both minors and the elderly.

Cook Islands

On 5 March 2015, the Cook Islands Parliamentary Group on Population and Sustainable Development (PGPSD-CI) participated in the National Women’s Mock Parliament to debate Section 6 of the Family Law Bill. From 18-19 March, PGPSD-CI also participated in the Parliamentarians’ Briefing on Sexual & Reproductive Health and Rights, on Gender Development and on the Family Law Bill.
Laos
At the end of 2015, MPs in the Lao Association of Parliamentarians on Population & Development (LAPPD) went to the south of the country to oversee a social protection project that provides support to vulnerable people, especially women, children and older persons. The MPs also joined two sessions of the National Assembly to consider and adopt laws, many articles of which relate to population & development issues.

The Maldives
In 2015, the Maldives Parliament passed its Bill on Health Services, designed to establish a national mechanism for health services. The aim of the bill is to ensure that both private and public health services operate in accordance with standardized quality criteria and are safe and accessible for all.

Timor-Leste
In March 2015, the Women’s Group of Parliamentarians - Timor-Leste Caucus (GMPTL) conducted activities in five municipal districts to commemorate International Women’s Day. The topic of the activities was “Socialization of the Domestic Violence Law.” In October and November, GMPTL also conducted a seminar and a media campaign on HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and nutrition.

Tonga
In March 2015, the Tonga Minister of Health, Hon. Saia Piukala, introduced a motion in the Legislative Assembly to establish a select committee on population & development. This motion was immediately approved and the committee’s mandate includes (1) supporting and proposing new bills relating to population & development and (2) supporting improvements to the existing legal framework on population & development.

Papua New Guinea
On 28 May 2015, the Papua New Guinea Parliamentary Group for Population and Sustainable Development (PNG PGPSD) held a Briefing Forum on ASRH to build on the information session of the previous year. The 15 MPs present were encouraged to support ASRH services within their electorates. Among other activities in 2015 were (1) the Blooming Teens Project Parliamentary Art Exhibition to advocate on teenage pregnancy issues, (2) the Briefing Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals and (specifically to advocate for prioritization of ASRH into national policies).

Number of countries AFPPD worked with in 2015
24

Number of events organized by AFPPD
8

Total number of MPs AFPPD engaged with
125

Total number of female MPs
46

Total number of male MPs
79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor(s)</th>
<th>Annual Income ($)</th>
<th>Annual Expenditure ($)</th>
<th>Fund Balance ($)</th>
<th>Activity Implementation Rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - DFAT *</td>
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<td>UNFPA THAI</td>
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<td><strong>$1,117,244.19</strong></td>
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* Calculated by taking a simple annual average of the total multi-year project cost.

** The balance indicates the planned activity under implementation of the 2nd year.

*** The ICAAP was cancelled.

### Sources of Income

- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - DFAT *
- IPPF LONDON (Balance 2014-2015)
- IPPF SARO
- UNFPA APRO
- Japan Trust Fund-UNFPA APRO
- UNFPA EECARO
- Japan Trust Fund-UNFPA EECARO
- UNAIDS
- UNFPA THAI

### Income & Expenditure (US$)

![Graph showing income and expenditure](chart.png)