Background

The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD) is a network of 29 National Committees of Parliamentarians from Asia-Pacific. AFPPD promotes advocacy and parliamentary actions on population and development issues at the national, regional and global levels. For the past 35 years, AFPPD has played a crucial role in engaging parliamentarians across the region in a wide variety of issues related to population and development. AFPPD’s current model for change aims at educating and motivating parliamentarians to take up the challenge of bringing about legislative reforms and drive change on population and development issues in their respective countries.

To accomplish this, National Committees consisting of parliamentarians from across party and political lines are set up at the country level. Each National Committee nominates its member parliamentarians to AFPPD’s three Standing Committees that address specifically active ageing, investing in youth, and gender equality and women’s empowerment. Under the current AFPPD Strategic Framework (2016-19), AFPPD National Committees have engaged and sustained parliamentarian champions around these three thematic areas, making a steady progress in advancing the common agenda at the national, regional and global levels.

In Sri Lanka, AFPPD’s efforts have centered on re-establishing a National Committee on Population and Development since early 2016, by identifying dedicated Members of Parliament to AFPPD's activities. The Ministry of Social Empowerment & Welfare and the National Secretariat for Elders in Sri Lanka took the initiative to call an inter-ministerial meeting to form a parliamentarian's forum at the national level. As a result, the Sri Lanka Forum for Parliamentarians on Population and Sustainable Development (SLPPD) was established in the Parliament on 5 October 2016. The SLPPD appointed Hon. Mr. S. B. Dissanayake, Minister of Social Empowerment & Welfare, as Chair, and nominated him to the AFPPD Standing Committee on Active Ageing.

Building on the momentum gained in 2016, AFPPD and SLPPD will co-organize a two-day workshop to formally launch SLPPD's national-level activities. In close cooperation with strategic partners such as UNFPA, HelpAge International, and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the workshop will prioritize and strategize advocacy for AFPPD-SLPPD activities for AFPPD's remaining Strategic Cycle. The Workshop will roll out user-friendly
advocacy tools developed by AFPPD, such as *Briefing Cards for Parliamentarians (2016)*. These resources are intended to enable SLPPD to collectively advocate and influence for population and health agenda, while enhancing each SLPPD member parliamentarian’s capacity to effectively conduct national legislation work through tailor-made advocacy.

**Purpose of the workshop**

The overall purpose of this two-day workshop is to provide participating parliamentarians with a platform for discussing and exploring opportunities that AFPPD-SLPPD should draw on in advocating and influencing peer parliamentarians at the national, regional and global levels. The workshop will first focus on ensuring that SLPPD member parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and select stakeholders understand the roles and responsibilities of the SLPPD as a member of AFPPD. It will then provide the opportunity to examine and prioritize the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD PoA) in the national planning and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, the workshop aims to help strengthening parliamentarians’ advocacy skills and capacities to address AFPPD Standing Committees’ strategic priority issues, to hold the government accountable for its global and regional commitments, and to allocate national budgets in accordance with their commitments in the area of ICPD PoA and the SDGs.

**Expected results**

1) Increased understanding by SLPPD members on the role of AFPPD, focusing on AFPPD-SLPPD synergies and opportunities.

2) Increased awareness by SLPPD members on AFPPD's strategic issues (women and girls, youth, and ageing populations) in the context of specific Sri Lankan situations.

3) Identified priority issues for SLPPD to work on within AFPPD’s Strategic Framework for the period of 2017-2019.

4) Development of a cohesive set of advocacy action plan for SLPPD members to act as champion policy advocates on prioritizing ICPD issues in the national planning and implementation of the SDGs.

**Target audience/Participants**: 40 participants (SLPPSD members, representatives of government institutions, UNFPA, HelpAge International, IPPF and other national and international experts).

**Date and Venue**: 16-17 February 2017, Negombo, Sri Lanka