



AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth

AFPPD's Sub-Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting

Youth Empowerment for Inclusive Growth

4–5 June 2026

Vientiane, Lao PDR

Report

Organised by:

The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)

The Lao Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (LAPPD)

The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)

National Assembly of Lao PDR

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Executive Summary

The AFPPD Sub Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting on "Youth Empowerment for Inclusive Growth" was convened by the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 4–5 June 2026. The meeting was co hosted by the National Assembly of the Lao PDR and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) through the Japan Trust Fund (JTF) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

The meeting brought together more than 60 participants from parliaments, government agencies, international organizations, NGOs, youth organizations and academia, involving 10 countries Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the host country Lao PDR to share and discuss good practices in policies, legislation and programmes on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a focus on investing in youth.

Over the course of two days, participants engaged in four thematic sessions addressing: (1) Demographic Trends and Youth Investment; (2) Education, Skills Development and School to Work Transition; (3) Youth Employment, Migration and Inclusive Economic Growth; and (4) Health, Rights and Well being of Youth.

Opening Remarks

The Opening Session featured addresses by H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng (Chairperson of the Cultural Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee, National Assembly of Lao PDR), Dr. Usmanov Farrukh (Executive Director of AFPPD), Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov (UNFPA Lao PDR Representative), H.E. Koizumi Tsutomu (Japanese Ambassador to Lao PDR), and H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong (Vice President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR).

Key Outcomes

The meeting adopted a joint Statement containing 10 key commitments, including: reaffirming youth as vital forces for national development; pledging to champion young parliamentarians; committing to enact policies and allocate adequate resources for youth empowerment; supporting legislative reform for investing in youth; and recognizing AFPPD's role as a key regional partner. The participants expressed gratitude to the Japan Trust Fund and UNFPA for their continued support.

On Day 2, delegates visited the Lao Youth Union headquarters and the National Assembly of the Lao PDR, observing practical measures and institutional frameworks for youth empowerment.

Opening ceremony



Group photo at the Opening Ceremony, AFPPD Sub-Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting on Youth Empowerment for Inclusive Growth, 4 June 2026, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The Opening Session commenced at Lanexang 1 Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Vientiane. The session was moderated by Ms. Douangthip Boupha, official staff of the Inter Parliamentary Relations Department of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR.

Address by H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng



H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng delivers the opening address.

H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng, Chairperson of the Cultural Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee of the National Assembly of Lao PDR, welcomed delegates and highlighted the host country's commitment to youth development and the importance of parliamentary cooperation in advancing youth centered policies.

H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng expressed her great honour to welcome delegates from AFPPD, international organizations, and distinguished guests to the meeting in Vientiane. She noted that the meeting takes place amid rapid regional and global changes, including armed conflicts, climate change, socio economic disparities, and rapid technological transformation. At the same time, she highlighted that Asia's youth population accounting for 60–70% of the total population represents a critical force for driving innovation, new ideas, and new skills into socio economic development.

She emphasized that youth have always been a vital resource for each country's development. In the Lao PDR, the young population continues to grow and has become a critical driving force contributing to the country's development over the past 50 years. The Government and the National Assembly have prioritized policy formulation and budget allocation for investment in citizens, particularly in public health, education, employment creation, and social welfare, to build a solid foundation for sustainable youth development.

H.E. Amphaivone highlighted the Lao PDR's legislative framework for youth, including the Law on the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union, the Law on Adolescents, the Youth Development Strategy 2021–2030, and other legal instruments. She noted the Government's efforts to promote regional and international exchange programmes to enhance the capacity of Lao youth in economic, socio cultural, and IT skills, and to develop them as cultural diplomats and future leaders.

In the legislative domain, she reported that the number of young parliamentarians has been increasing. In the elections for the 10th National Assembly and 5th Provincial People's Assemblies held in February 2026, young MPs numbered 19 out of 175 total National Assembly members (10.85%), and 265 out of 745 Provincial People's Assembly members (35.57%) demonstrating the Government's attention to youth participation in national development.

Address by Dr. Usmanov Farrukh, Executive Director of AFPPD



Dr. Usmanov Farrukh, Executive Director of AFPPD, delivers his address.

Dr. Usmanov Farrukh affirmed AFPPD's collective commitment to ensuring women and girls have equal access to education and leadership opportunities, which is essential to building peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable societies. He noted that while progress has been made, it has been uneven, and in some places young people continue to face structural inequalities.

He highlighted the contrasting demographic realities across the region: countries in South Asia and parts of Southeast Asia continue to experience a youth bulge, representing a powerful but time bound opportunity to harness the demographic dividend. Yet many young people face structural barriers to education, decent employment, political participation, and mental health support with young women and gender diverse youth often facing compounded forms of exclusion.

Dr. Farrukh emphasized the key role of parliamentarians in translating youth aspirations into policy by supporting employment schemes, allocating adequate budgets, investing in sexual and reproductive health services, and safeguarding digital civic spaces. He also addressed migration as a defining demographic force in the region, noting that national policies and legal frameworks have not kept pace with labour migration and climate induced displacement. He called on parliamentarians to lead in updating migration laws, ensuring the protection of migrant rights, and preparing for new forms of displacement.

He situated AFPPD's work within the Strategic Plan 2026–2029, equipping parliamentarians to navigate competing needs across generations, sectors, and geographies. He concluded by expressing gratitude to UNFPA, the Japan Trust Fund, and the National Assembly of Lao PDR for hosting the meeting.

Address by Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov, Representative for UNFPA Lao PDR



Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov, Representative for UNFPA Lao PDR, delivers his address.

Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov opened his address with a powerful message: "Investing in young people really means giving a young person a chance and it's also about what that young person can then give back to society." He illustrated this through the story of a supported young woman from an ethnic community who became not only a service provider but a leader and a bridge to essential services.

He noted that the Lao PDR is at a defining and historical moment, with one of the youngest populations in the region a strength but also a responsibility. A young population can become a powerful engine for inclusive growth, innovation, and resilience, but this does not happen automatically. It happens when young people can access health information and services without fear, shame, or discrimination; when education and skills match labour market needs; when decent work is available not only across borders

but in their own communities; and when every young person including those often left behind is protected, respected, and given the opportunity to contribute.

Dr. Kadyrov warned that the demographic window of opportunity will not remain open forever. Lao PDR is moving through a rapid demographic transition, and according to different scenarios, the window may close between 2041 and 2052 within less than two decades. He highlighted the Demographic Dividend Roadmap (2025–2030), developed together with the Ministry of Finance and other line ministries, which provides a clear national direction structured around four "E": Education, Employment, Empowerment, and Engagement.

He emphasized the interconnected nature of youth challenges: a girl who leaves school early is more likely to marry young; a young person without access to health information may face lifelong consequences; and when too many young people are left behind, the cost becomes not only personal but a national loss.

Dr. Kadyrov highlighted the diversity across the region from youth bulge countries needing to invest in human capital, to aging societies requiring family friendly policies and intergenerational solidarity while noting that investment in young people is essential in all demographic contexts. He called attention to major regional trends shaping youth futures, including migration, regional connectivity, climate change, AI and future skills, and inequalities.

Marking UNFPA's nearly 50 years of partnership with Lao PDR, he emphasized that the next chapter must focus on scale, quality, and sustainability ensuring population data guides policy decisions, connecting demographic data to budgets and investment, and making the results of the first ever digital census useful for planning. He concluded by affirming parliamentarians' unique role to turn national priorities into laws, budgets, and accountability.

Address by H.E. Koizumi Tsutomu, Japanese Ambassador to Lao PDR

H.E. Koizumi Tsutomu expressed his great honour to speak at the sub-regional parliamentarians' meeting, extending greetings to H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng, Dr. Usmanov Farrukh, Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov, and all distinguished Members of Parliament, AFPPD members, and esteemed guests. He noted that Japan has engaged in international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, including Laos, for many years, wishing to support the efforts of each country to achieve self-reliant development across a wide range of areas including education, health, agriculture, infrastructure, and governance, all underpinned by a common underlying principle: human-centered development.

The Ambassador emphasized Japan's belief that building a society where every individual can pursue his or her potential provides the foundation for true prosperity. He underscored that young people, in particular, are invaluable drivers in building a vibrant society, and that maximizing their potential is essential for achieving sustainable development. He articulated this clearly: investment in youth is the most reliable investment for the future.

He noted that the potential of young people is immeasurable, and that with appropriate support, they can become powerful agents of transformation. In this regard, he clarified that "appropriate support" refers not only to tangible assistance such as skills development and securing employment opportunities, but also to ensuring young people's health and self-determination. Based on this belief, the Government of Japan has been providing contributions to a wide range of initiatives relating to the promotion of health and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of youth, in coordination and cooperation with other governments, international organizations such as UNFPA, and NGOs.

H.E. Koizumi expressed his delight that this sub-regional parliamentarians' meeting, focusing on Youth Empowerment for Inclusive Growth, was being held in Vientiane with funding through the Japan Trust Fund (JTF) established within UNFPA. He described it as an excellent opportunity for parliamentarians from different countries to reaffirm their role in the formation and implementation of youth policies and to share regional best practices, expressing no doubt that the meeting would prove constructive and meaningful for all participants.

He concluded by pledging that Japan will continue to work with AFPPD, UNFPA, and partners in Asian countries to enable young people to forge their future with hope. He closed his remarks with words of appreciation in both English and Lao: “Ko Khop Chai.”



H.E. Koizumi Tsutomu, Ambassador of Japan to Lao PDR, delivers his address at the Opening Ceremony.

Address by H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR



H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR, delivers the keynote address.

H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong delivered the keynote address and officially opened the meeting on behalf of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR.

He noted that the world and the region are currently facing complex, rapid, and unpredictable changes that directly impact socio economic development, the environment, and public health particularly the management and development of youth resources. He emphasized that strengthening cooperation between parliaments and relevant stakeholders is essential and serves as a decisive factor in policy making, legislation, and promoting investment to improve the quality of life for the people.

H.E. Monexay highlighted the significance of the meeting as an excellent opportunity for AFPPD members to exchange knowledge, lessons, and experiences on empowering youth for comprehensive growth. He outlined the four key topics to be discussed: (1) demographic trends and investment in youth; (2) education, skills development, and the school to work transition; (3) youth employment, migration, and inclusive economic growth; and (4) health, rights, and social welfare of youth.

He called upon all participating delegates to dedicate their wisdom and intellect to exchanging views and ideas in a frank, open, and constructive manner. He expressed sincere thanks to Hon. Howard Lee Chuan How, Secretary General of AFPPD, for his online participation, noting that it provided strong encouragement to all delegates and contributed significantly to the success of the meeting.

H.E. Monexay invited all delegates to visit and experience the reality of the Lao PDR, its historical and cultural sites, and the lifestyle of the diverse Lao ethnic groups in Vientiane Capital.

He concluded by officially declaring the meeting open, wishing it a brilliant success.

Session 1: Demographic Trends and Youth Investment: Opportunities and Policy Implications



Session 1 presidium (from left): Mr. Kambiz Kabiri (UNFPA), Hon. Hector Appuhamy (Session Chair, Sri Lanka), and Hon. Mrs. Mina Sivilay (Lao PDR).

Session Chair: Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP Sri Lanka, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee



Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP Sri Lanka, chairs Session 1.

This session examined demographic shifts across Asia including youth bulges, ageing populations, and urbanization and their implications for public investment in youth.

Presentation 1: Hon. Mina Sivilay, MP Lao PDR, Deputy Secretary General of Lao Youth Union



Hon. Mrs. Mina Sivilay, MP Lao PDR, Deputy Secretary General of Lao Youth Union, presents on demographic trends.

Hon. Mina Sivilay presented on "Population Trends and Investment in Youth in the Lao PDR." She highlighted that since the ICPD in Cairo (1994), the Lao PDR has consistently prioritized population and development policies aligned with the international Programme of Action and the 2030 SDGs.

Key demographic data from the 5th Population and Housing Census (2025):

- Total population grew from 3.5 million (1985) to 6.7 million (2025)
- Population growth rate has steadily declined: from 2.4% (1985–1995) to 0.8% (2015–2025)
- Working age population (15–64) accounts for approximately 65% of the total
- Young population (0–14) accounts for about 24.9%
- More than half the population is between ages 15 and 35
- Those aged 65+ account for only 5.7%

Legislative and policy framework: The Lao PDR has adopted three National Policies on Population and Development (current: 2019–2030). Key laws include the Law on the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union, the Law on Lao Adolescents, Education Law, Public Health Law, Labour Law, Skills Development Law, Gender Equality Law, and the Lao Youth and Adolescent Development Strategy (2021–2030).

Key achievements under the 9th Five Year NSEDP (2021–2025):

- Education: Enrollment rate for 5 year olds increased from 82.7% to 84.7%; Grade 1 enrollment reached 99.3%; vocational training provided to 176,720 young people
- Health: Under 1 mortality decreased to 7.2 per 1,000 live births; under 5 mortality decreased to 8.3 per 1,000
- Labour: Youth unemployment (15–24) decreased significantly from 18.2% to 5.2%; child labour (5–17) decreased from 42.8% to 25.9%; jobs arranged for 464,514 people

Ongoing challenges: Poverty among ethnic groups in rural areas, economic instability and inflation, increasing school dropout rates, and high rates of child marriage and adolescent pregnancy.

Presentation 2: Mr. Kambiz Kabiri, Policy and Census Coordinator, UNFPA Lao PDR

Mr. Kambiz Kabiri presented on "Harnessing Lao PDR's Demographic Transition: Strategic Investments for Sustained, Inclusive Growth."

Key findings:

- Lao PDR's total fertility rate has declined dramatically from 6.3 to 2.4 (2024), creating a demographic window of opportunity
- The country faces 5 structural bottlenecks to the demographic dividend: limited healthcare access, highest adolescent pregnancy rate in ASEAN, underemployment, inadequate social protection, and education/skills mismatch
- Critical data: 17% gave birth before 18; 30% married before 18; 95% youth in informal economy; 39% NEET; 70% in subsistence agriculture
- Adolescents out of school: 14% primary, 29% lower secondary, 58% upper secondary
- Gender gap: female male labour force participation gap widened from 8.7% to 10.7%; women earn 22% less; closing gaps could increase GDP by ~10%
- Lao PDR is preparing its first Demographic Dividend Roadmap (2025–2030) with the theme "Empower, Employ, Educate, Engage"

Session 2: Education, Skills Development and School to Work Transition



Session 2 presidium (from left): Hon. Seng Nhak (Cambodia), Hon. Somboun Sihanath (Session Chair, Lao PDR), and Mr. Thongsia Inthavong (MoES, Lao PDR).

Session Chair: Hon. Somboun Sihanath, Member of the National Assembly of Lao PDR



Hon. Somboun Sihanath, MP Lao PDR, chairs Session 2.

Presentation 1: Hon. Seng Nhak, MP Cambodia

Hon. Seng Nhak presented on Cambodia's education policy implementations, legal frameworks, and strategic alignment for workforce strengthening.

Key data on Cambodia:

- Average annual economic growth of over 7% pre pandemic; projected 5.3% (2025) and 4.3% (2026)
- One of the youngest populations in ASEAN: nearly two thirds under 30; 3.8 million aged 15–30; over 60% under 35
- Progress: Lower secondary enrollment rose from 75% to 79%; upper secondary from 44% to 47%; youth literacy (15–24) climbed to 96%
- Persistent gaps: Dropout rates at 15% (lower secondary) and 14% (upper secondary); approximately 300,000 children remain out of school; 30% of five year olds not in preschool; skills mismatch with industry demand

He outlined Cambodia's legislative framework including the National Education Law, TVET reforms, and the role of Parliament in strengthening human capital through oversight and legislative action.

Presentation 2: Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali, MP Nepal (Online)



Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali (Nepal) presents online via Zoom, with Hon. Seng Nhak (Cambodia), Hon. Somboun Sihanath (Chair), and Mr. Thongsas Inthavong (Lao PDR) at the presidium.

Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali, Co Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth, presented on Nepal's education and skills development challenges.

Key data on Nepal:

- Population: approximately 30 million; literacy rate 71.15% (male 83.6%, female 69.4%)
- Youth unemployment: 20.36% (vs ~1% national average); 500,000 youth entering the labour market annually
- Digital literacy: only 31% despite 95%+ broadband subscriptions
- 547 TVET institutes across 753 local governments

Key challenges: Structural misalignment (academic degrees valued over TVET; curricula lag behind industry); gender and digital divide; geographic inequality; weak school to work transition; brain drain; and weak qualification frameworks.

He presented Nepal's constitutional framework (Articles 31, 34/35, 18, 42, 51) guaranteeing education and employment rights, and proposed reforms aligned with the federal governance structure.

Presentation 3: Mr. Thongsas Inthavong, Deputy Director General, Department of TVET, Ministry of Education and Sports, Lao PDR

Mr. Thongsas Inthavong presented on "Development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in the Lao PDR," structured around three pillars based on the TVET Law (revised, No. 63/NA, 12 June 2019), the 10th Education Sector Development Plan (2026–2030), and the TVET Development Plan (2026–2030, approved 19 September 2025).

Pillar 1 Access to TVET: Mr. Thongsas outlined the government's strategy to expand opportunities and promote equitable access to TVET for employment. Key measures include: improving the learning environment and facilities of TVET institutions, establishing model TVET centres of excellence; providing stipends and scholarships for disadvantaged students, women, and those in remote areas; delivering short term training courses and career counselling for rural youth; and expanding vocational guidance through both face to face and online channels, with diverse programmes at both short term and long term professional levels.

Pillar 2 Skills Development and School to Work Transition: The presentation emphasized the promotion of business sector participation in teaching and learning, and the continuous development of occupational standards, curriculum standards, and testing standards in partnership with the private sector. Specific targets for the TVET curriculum include: at least 30% of programmes delivered through Dual Cooperative Training (DCT); at least 30% through Competency Based Training (CBT); and 40% through other modalities including traditional, general vocational, enterprise based learning (EBL), and workplace based learning (WBL). At least 60% of TVET institutions are targeted to implement blended learning approaches combining traditional, modern, and distance learning methods.

Pillar 3 Digital Skills Transformation in TVET: Mr. Thongsavet presented the government's ambitious digital transformation roadmap for TVET, with the following key targets: at least 5% of trained TVET personnel to create innovations using digital technology; development and provision of new teaching tools, machinery, and equipment for at least 10 new curricula across at least 5 TVET institutions; development of a TVET e learning platform accessible to all TVET institutions; at least 60% of TVET teachers to be trained in digital skills and apply them in teaching; at least 50% of TVET institutions to integrate digital skills into their instruction; at least 40% of TVET students to use digital competencies in the classroom. The digital transformation timeline includes: modernization of TVET management tools by 2027; upgrading of the TVET Management Information System (TVET MIS) by 2028; and at least 80% of TVET institutions using the modernized TVET MIS by 2029.

Session 3: Youth Employment, Migration and Inclusive Economic Growth

Session Chair: Hon. Khoeng Nupheap, MP Cambodia



Group photo of Session 3

Presentation 1: Hon. Renee Louise Co, MP Philippines



Rep. Renee Louise Co delivers her presentation.

Rep. Renee Co (Kabataan Partylist, Assistant Minority Leader, 20th Congress) presented on the Philippine experience with youth employment and migration.

Key demographic and labour data:

- Youth population (15–30): 31.9 million, approximately 30% of total population
- Youth unemployment: 11.7% (significantly above national average of 4.44%)
- Youth underemployment: 15–20% in the informal sector
- 45% of youth workforce informally employed (no contracts, below minimum wages, no social protection)
- OFWs: approximately 2.4 million, with youth cohort (15–24) estimated at 300,000+
- Remittances: ~\$37 billion annually (10%+ of GDP)

Critical analysis: Rep. Co argued that youth unemployment stems from systemic structural constraints – insufficient formal job creation, economic policies favoring low wage sectors, weak labour standards enforcement – rather than individual deficiency. Migration is increasingly driven by lack of domestic opportunity rather than genuine choice.

Policy recommendations: She called for structural economic reform beyond protection mechanisms, emphasizing that safe migration frameworks are necessary but insufficient without addressing root causes of domestic unemployment.

Presentation 2: Ms. Chintanaphone Chanthavong, National Coordinator, Y PEER Laos



Ms. Chintanaphone Chanthavong delivers her presentation as a Y PEER Laos representative.

Ms. Chintanaphone (Zuzan) Chanthavong presented on youth employment challenges from a youth perspective, asking: "What kinds of futures become possible for young people when decent work and fair opportunity are within reach?"

Key challenges identified: Difficulties transitioning from education to workforce; skills mismatch; decent work concentrated in urban hubs; migration becoming a necessity rather than a choice; lack of youth friendly spaces; and mental health and social protection issues.

Youth recommendations: (1) Incentivize private sector investment in internships, training, and micro credential programmes; (2) Institutionalize career guidance services; (3) Strengthen public private collaboration through practical workshops and industry exposure; (4) Create safe and inclusive youth spaces for networking, mentorship, and entrepreneurship.

Presentation 3: Hon. Rohini Wijeratne, MP Sri Lanka

Hon. Rohini Wijeratne presented on Sri Lanka's Youth Talent Paradox: From Inherited Labour Structures to a New Economic Compact, a comprehensive analysis of the structural contradictions at the heart of Sri Lanka's youth employment crisis.

Hon. Rohini Wijeratne presented on "Sri Lanka's Youth Talent Paradox: From Inherited Labour Structures to a New Economic Compact," examining the structural contradictions at the heart of Sri Lanka's youth employment crisis — a country with free education through university and 93%+ literacy, yet whose world-class professionals are exported abroad while youth unemployment reaches 19.7% (nearly five times the national average of 3.8%).

She highlighted critical data: fewer than 5% of youth participate in TVET; graduates with Advanced Level qualifications face 6.1% unemployment versus only 2% for those without Ordinary Level qualifications — revealing an education system calibrated for a public sector that can no longer absorb graduates. The youth NEET rate stands at 17.2%, with a severe gender gap (22.4% female vs 11.9% male) and female labour force participation stalled at 29.6%.

On migration, she noted that 1.7 million Sri Lankans work abroad, with remittances reaching a record USD 8.076 billion in 2025 (the largest source of foreign exchange). Over 40% of departures are female domestic workers, driven by a poverty trap and wages 5–10 times higher than rural Sri Lankan earnings. She emphasized the hidden human cost: exploitation, wage theft, passport confiscation, trauma among children left behind, and elevated divorce rates.

Hon. Wijeratne proposed a New Economic Compact built on five legislative pillars: safe migration frameworks with binding bilateral agreements; mainstreaming TVET and digital skills beyond the current 5% participation; legislative diaspora engagement through diaspora bonds and tax incentives; addressing women's structural exclusion; and parliamentary oversight with disaggregated tracking of youth employment outcomes. Her closing message: "Youth are not a problem to be managed, nor a labour supply to be deployed. The task of parliament is to ensure that when young Sri Lankans choose to stay, they find a country that deserves them."

Session 4: Health, Rights and Well being of Youth

Session Chair: Hon. Dr. Kolakanh Phommavong, MP Lao PDR, Vice Chair of the Committee on Cultural Social and Ethnic Affairs, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth

Presentation 1: Hon. Howard Lee Chuan How, MP Malaysia, Secretary General of AFPPD (Online)

Hon. Howard Lee presented on "Malaysia's Strategic Vision for Youth Empowerment and Inclusive Growth," calling for a fundamental shift from the outdated paradigm of "just jobs and education" toward a comprehensive Whole-Person Paradigm built on six interconnected pillars: mental well-being and healthcare; digital safety and AI readiness; meaningful participation in governance; social protection and resilience; quality education and future skills; and leadership and civic duty.

He outlined Malaysia's Tripartite Development Framework operating on three layers: the MADANI Youth Development Model 2030 (core values of resilience and civic leadership), the Malaysian Youth Policy 2015–2035 targeting youth aged 15–40, and the MYD Action Plan 2035 aligning ministries and stakeholders on digital readiness, employability, and well-being.

On youth mental health, he presented alarming data: the Malaysian Youth Mental Health Index Score stands at only 71.91 (moderately satisfactory); mental health problems among those aged 16+ nearly doubled over four years; and prevalence among children aged 5–15 rose from 7.9% to 16.5% between 2019 and 2023, affecting over 922,000 individuals.

He argued for a shift from ceremonial youth engagement toward structural empowerment, proposing six parliamentary best practices: cross-sector oversight through AFPPD mechanisms; evidence-based policy using national research institutions; whole-of-government action; institutionalized youth roundtables feeding into parliamentary resolutions; legislative digital frameworks on AI literacy and online safety; and recognition of volunteer networks as official social infrastructure.

Hon. Howard Lee closed with a five-point Blueprint for ASEAN Cooperation: a Regional Mental Health Framework, Comparable Well-Being Indices, harmonized digital standards, an AIPA Youth Platform, and Cross-Border Volunteer Networks — aspiring to an ASEAN where young people are "healthy enough to dream, skilled enough to compete, safe enough to grow, and empowered enough to lead."

Presentation 2: Hon. Ledia Hanifa Amaliah, MP Indonesia

Hon. Ledia Hanifa Amaliah presented on "Health, Rights and Well Being of Youth in Indonesia."

Key data:

- Indonesia has approximately 65 million young people (aged 10–24), representing 28% of total population, including nearly 46 million adolescents (10–19)
- Child marriage: Successfully reduced, with the 2019 revision of Marriage Law raising minimum age to 19; rates dropped below the national RPJMN target of 8.74% by 2024, reaching the lowest historical rate by 2025
- Mental health: According to I NAMHS 2022 (Indonesia's first national adolescent mental health survey), 34.9% of adolescents aged 10–17 (approximately 15.5 million) experience at least one mental health issue

Policy recommendations: Expand youth friendly health services (PKPR); strengthen comprehensive sexuality education; improve mental health services; enhance confidential and non discriminatory care; increase youth participation in policy design; and strengthen digital health platforms.

Presentation 3: Dr. Souphon Sayavong, PFHA/IPPF Lao PDR

Dr. Souphon Sayavong presented on "Investing in Youth Health, Rights and Well being" from the perspective of the Promotion of Family Health Association in Lao PDR (PFHA), a member association of IPPF.

Key data on Lao PDR youth health:

- 58–59% of the population is under age 25
- One of the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in Southeast Asia
- 17.4% of women gave birth before age 18; 30.5% married before age 18
- National adolescent birth rate: 83–89 per 1,000 girls aged 15–19
- Rural adolescent birth rate: 136 per 1,000 (vs 42 per 1,000 in urban areas)
- Hmong Mien adolescents: 197 births per 1,000

PFHA/IPPF contributions: Youth friendly health services; family planning and HIV/STI services; comprehensive sexuality education; youth leadership and peer education; community engagement and advocacy.

Recommendations to parliamentarians: Increase investment in youth health and SRHR; expand youth friendly services in rural areas; strengthen comprehensive sexuality education; prevent child marriage and adolescent pregnancy; and integrate mental health into primary healthcare.

Open Discussion: Summary of Q&A Across All Sessions



Active discussion among delegates during the thematic sessions.

The open discussion segments following each of the four thematic sessions generated substantive exchanges among parliamentarians, experts, and international partners. The following is a consolidated summary of the key questions, responses, and policy insights raised throughout the day.

Session 1: Demographic Trends and Youth Investment

Targeted TVET Support for Vulnerable Groups: In response to queries regarding the selection criteria for national TVET programmes, the Cambodian delegation clarified that enrolment is highly inclusive and open to all demographics without restrictions on gender or age. However, to ensure equitable access for marginalized communities, a specific \$70 monthly financial compensation is strictly targeted toward vulnerable and economically disadvantaged families, while tuition remains free for all participants.

Key Performance Indicators: The primary metric used to evaluate the impact and sustainability of youth investment programmes is the post graduation employment rate. Current data from Cambodia indicates an exceptional placement rate approaching 100% immediately following programme completion.

Curriculum Adaptability: To ensure long term sustainability, curriculum design relies on direct consultation with industrial employers across 10 core sectors and 38 specific skills. Training frameworks are dynamically updated to align with market demands, particularly in response to rapid digital transformation and AI integration.

Session 2: Education, Skills Development, and School to Work Transition

Labour Market and Economic Opportunities (Cambodia): Addressing questions regarding the creation of 800,000 jobs in 2025, it was highlighted that these opportunities span both formal and informal sectors, including newly emerging digital and gig economy roles. The core strategy to sustain this growth is ongoing synchronization between educational institutions and private sector players to match skills with corporate demand.

Youth Brain Drain and Unemployment (Nepal): The Nepalese delegation highlighted a critical "youth exodus," noting that Nepal has lost approximately 3.4 million active youths over the past four years, representing 15% of its active population currently residing abroad. This is driven by high youth unemployment rates of 20–24%, which double the national average of 12%.

Global Value Chain Integration (Nepal): To combat this structural challenge, Nepal is focusing on revamping its secondary education curriculum and enhancing modern skills. Currently, a major mismatch exists as only 17% of human capital stems from STEM fields, while 40–45% comes from management streams. The country's strategy aims to leverage its massive diaspora net wealth (over \$44 billion, surpassing the national GDP) to better integrate local youth into the global supply chain.

Public Private Partnerships in TVET: Panellists emphasized the necessity of structural cooperation through dedicated Vocational Development Institutes. For instance, when developing specialized curricula such as hospitality, active hotel and tourism professionals are directly embedded into the drafting process to maximize practical alignment.

Session 3: Youth Employment, Migration, and Inclusive Economic Growth

Regional Commitments: The session reaffirmed that youth empowerment must serve as the central pillar of inclusive and sustainable regional development across the 30 member nations of AFPPD.

Broadening Employment Frameworks: Parliamentarians noted that legislative oversight must look beyond traditional corporate hiring and actively foster entrepreneurial environments, safe labour migration frameworks, and regulatory protection for youth operating within informal labour markets.

Session 4: Health, Rights, and Well being of Youth

Youth Friendly Healthcare Infrastructure (Indonesia): Indonesia shared its ongoing transformation of Primary Health Centres to make them youth friendly, with 18.44% of its 10,209 centres currently equipped. Key barriers identified include conflicting clinic hours with school schedules, long wait times dominated by elders, structural stigma, and a lack of confidentiality especially regarding the country's 35,484 HIV cases, of which 12,000 have progressed to AIDS.

Legislative Reforms on Child Marriage (Indonesia): To curb adolescent pregnancy and disrupt multi generational poverty cycles, Indonesia revised its 1974 Marriage Law in 2019, raising the minimum

legal marriage age for females from 16 to 19 years. Consequently, the child marriage rate fell below the national target to 8.74% in 2024, alongside a significant decrease in adolescent pregnancy rates (dropping from 39 to 26.6 births per 1,000).

Gender Budgeting and Mental Health (Indonesia): Indonesia has instituted Presidential Instructions on "Gender Budgeting" to align national financial accounts with maternal and youth welfare targets. To address alarming mental health trends where one third of adolescents aged 10–17 experience emotional difficulties and suicide ranks among the top five causes of youth mortality the government is expanding school based counselling and mental health screenings to elementary school level.

Holistic Education as Prevention (Malaysia): The Malaysian delegation emphasized that adolescent pregnancy and early marriage are handled as public health, child protection, and social equity challenges. Rather than focusing solely on punitive laws, Malaysia prioritizes institutionalized education through its Reproductive and Social Health Education (PEERS) programme, integrated into secondary education since 2006.

Rural Urban Disparities and Community Based Strategies (Lao PDR): The host nation presented urgent baseline statistics: 58–59% of its total population is under age 25, with some of the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in Southeast Asia. The national adolescent birth rate of 83–89 per 1,000 hides stark regional inequalities, climbing to 136 per 1,000 in rural communities and peaking near 197 per 1,000 among Hmong Mien communities, compared to just 42 per 1,000 in urban areas. To combat these disparities, Lao PDR utilizes local peer to peer volunteer networks (22 youth volunteers per district hub), mobile clinics, and remote telehealth consultations. Parliamentarians work directly with village authorities to establish community level agreements enforcing the legal marriage age and formal referral links from village to district channels.

Cross Cutting Policy Recommendations from the Discussions

1. Sustainable Budgetary Increases: Prioritize youth and adolescent SRHR, mental health support, and STEM/TVET initiatives within national fiscal allocations through formalized gender responsive budgeting.
2. Structural Integration of Soft Skills: Formally embed comprehensive sexuality education, life skills, and digital well being into national school curricula.
3. Meaningful Youth Participation: Ensure youth delegates have a permanent seat at the table in policy design, legislative drafting, and oversight functions.
4. Strengthen Accountability and Oversight: Expand parliamentary oversight to monitor parallel health security threats, including unregulated over the counter antibiotic supplies in rural communities contributing to antimicrobial resistance.

Adoption of Statement



Delegates deliberate on the joint Statement.



Wide view of the Adoption of Statement session.

Chair: Hon. Dr. Kolakanh Phommavong, MP Lao PDR, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth

Moderator: Dr. Usmonov Farrukh, Executive Director of AFPPD

The meeting adopted the following Statement:

Preamble: The meeting brought together more than 60 participants from 10 countries to share and discuss good practices in policies, legislation and programmes on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The meeting focused on policies and services that could strengthen empowerment of young people and engaging them in decision making, consistent with the AFPPD Strategic Plan 2026–2029.

Key Commitments:

1. Reaffirm that young people represent a vital force as present and future leaders for national development, innovation, social cohesion, and democratic participation.
2. Reaffirm that investment in youth education, health, decent work, entrepreneurship, digital skills, climate action, safe migration, and civic engagement contributes directly to sustainable economic growth and social stability.
3. Pledge to champion the advancement, mentorship, and safeguarding of young and newly elected parliamentarians, political candidates, and national and sub national leaders, advocating for robust institutional mechanisms for their meaningful participation.
4. Enact policies and allocate adequate resources that promote the welfare, empowerment, and participation of young people, and that address persistent inequality.
5. Support legislative reform for investing in youth, including extending expert guidance and fostering knowledge exchange to support member states in reviewing and amending existing legislation.
6. Further resolve that relevant ministries, parliamentary committees, local authorities, civil society organizations, and youth led groups shall collaborate in implementing youth centered policies, addressing data gaps, and monitoring implementation.
7. Reaffirm budget allocation for supporting youth empowerment and investing in young people at national and sub national levels.
8. Invite donors and partner organizations to provide sustained technical expertise and parliamentary capacity building for effective implementation and monitoring of key national policies.
9. Recognize and reaffirm the important role of AFPPD as a key regional partner in advancing parliamentary advocacy for investing in youth.
10. Express gratitude to the Japan Trust Fund (JTF) and UNFPA for continuously supporting AFPPD's activities in the Asia Pacific region and beyond.

Closing Session

Remarks by Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP Sri Lanka, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee

H.E. Mr. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR, warmly welcomed Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali, Co Chair of the AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth, and the delegation to the National Assembly. He expressed appreciation for AFPPD's role, noting that the organization has worked with Asian parliaments for over 30 years in promoting population work aligned with the SDGs.

H.E. Monexay emphasized that investing in youth is not merely a policy matter but a practical necessity encompassing investment in education, health, decent employment, and social welfare for all young people. He highly valued the meeting's focus on demographic trends, education and skills development, youth employment, and youth health and well being.

He underscored the role of parliamentarians in translating discussions into concrete action through legislation, budget allocation and oversight, and policy advocacy to ensure policies reach young people, including women, ethnic groups, and the disadvantaged. He expressed confidence that the meeting outcomes and the joint Statement would serve as an important foundation for promoting youth investment within the AFPPD framework and in each country.

Regarding the Lao National Assembly's partnership with AFPPD, H.E. Monexay noted that the Lao Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (LAPPD) was established in 2003 during the 5th National Assembly term, under the responsibility of the Cultural Social and Ethnic

Affairs Committee. Over 22 years, LAPPD has contributed to the National Assembly's three core functions – legislation, decision making on important national issues, and oversight – particularly in areas of reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention, family planning, gender equality, protection of women and children's rights, youth and elderly welfare, nutrition, education access, labour issues, and the SDGs 2030 agenda.

He shared that the Lao PDR's current socio economic development faces challenges from the global economic situation, with GDP growth reaching 4.8% in 2025. The Government is currently implementing the 10th Five Year NSEDP (2026–2030), prioritizing connectivity and infrastructure development, including the Lao China railway. The 10th National Assembly (2026–2030) has 175 members, of whom 52 are women (29.71%); Provincial People's Assemblies have 745 members, with 211 women (28.32%), including 19 young National Assembly members (10.85%) and 265 young provincial members (35.57%).

Closing Address by H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng, Chairperson of the Cultural Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee

H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng delivered the closing address, noting that the meeting had proceeded throughout one full day in an atmosphere that was vibrant, constructive, warm, and candid. She expressed her sincere gratitude to all delegates for their active and responsible participation, presentations, and contributions.

She extended special thanks to Hon. Howard Lee Chuan How, Secretary General of AFPPD, for closely co hosting the meeting with the Lao National Assembly, and to UNFPA, the Japan Trust Fund (JTF), and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) for their support.

She emphasized that the meeting was of great significance in building the capacity of parliamentarians on youth affairs. She highly valued the delegates' discussions and experience sharing under the four main themes, which enhanced parliamentarians' understanding of demographic trends and youth investment, human resource development through education and skills training, policy options for youth employment, and the importance of investing in youth health and well being.

She noted that the meeting outcomes and the joint Statement adopted reaffirm parliamentarians' serious commitment to investing in youth for inclusive growth. She expressed confidence that the results would serve as an important foundation for promoting youth investment within the AFPPD framework and in each country, and hoped that the shared commitment would create meaningful changes in the lives of young people across the region.

She formally declared the meeting closed.

The Official Dinner Reception was hosted on behalf of the Chairperson of the Cultural Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee at Lanexang 2 Ballroom, Crowne Plaza Vientiane.

Study Visit Report – Day 2 (Friday, 5 June 2026)

On the second day of the meeting (Friday, 5 June 2026), delegates participated in a structured study visit programme comprising two site visits: the Lao Youth Union (LYU) Headquarters and the National Assembly of the Lao PDR. The programme provided delegates with direct exposure to institutional frameworks, legislative history, and operational strategies underpinning youth development in the Lao PDR.

Site Visit 1: Lao Youth Union (LYU) Headquarters

The AFPPD delegation visited the Lao Youth Union (LYU) Headquarters, where they were welcomed by LYU leadership and received a comprehensive briefing on LYU's institutional mandate, strategic

programmes, and ongoing challenges in youth development. The session facilitated substantive exchanges between the delegation and LYU representatives across four key areas.



The AFPPD delegation during the working session at the Lao Youth Union Headquarters.



Delegates and LYU representatives in discussion at the Lao Youth Union Headquarters.



Delegates observe vocational training facilities during the site visit at the Lao Youth Union.

Key Inquiries from the AFPPD Delegation

The delegation posed three core questions to LYU leadership. First, regarding policy advocacy: how does LYU plan to advocate for and support the concrete implementation of the National Youth Policy across different provinces and target groups? Second, regarding strategic vision and budgeting: what is LYU's specific three to five year vision for human resource development and financial planning to sustain youth focused programmes? Third, on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) indicators and evaluation: what are the core pillars and specific indicators being used to measure the success of sex education among youth? The delegation notably identified a current gap in structured monitoring tools to accurately track and evaluate the real world impact of these initiatives.

LYU's Strategic Framework and Responses

LYU representatives outlined their primary target demographic as adolescents and young adults aged 15 to 35, encompassing both school going youth and young people in local communities. The overarching institutional goal is to develop youth who are healthy physically and mentally equipped with essential life skills, and capable of contributing productively to national socio economic development. LYU is currently advancing a comprehensive five to six year youth development strategy aligned with the broader national development agenda.

In terms of implementation methodology, LYU highlighted five core areas of action. First, the development and distribution of standardized handbooks and official training materials on CSE and reproductive health. Second, a dual channel communication approach combining online platforms social media and digital channels with offline community workshops, school based peer to peer discussions, and face to face training. Third, digital literacy and safety education, integrating life skills training that teaches youth how to navigate the internet safely, filter credible information, and protect themselves from online risks. Fourth, strengthening youth friendly health services by expanding counselling models and clinical services that guarantee privacy, confidentiality, and a non judgmental environment to encourage youth uptake of reproductive health support. Fifth, formalizing a coordinated inter institutional mechanism between LYU, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), the Ministry of Health (MoH), and other relevant line ministries to ensure a holistic and integrated approach.

Agreed Next Steps

The exchange concluded with three agreed priorities for follow up action. First, framework development: LYU committed to developing and finalizing a clear, measurable indicator matrix to evaluate the progress of CSE and youth health initiatives directly addressing the gap identified by the AFPPD delegation. Second, resource mobilization: both parties underscored the importance of securing multi year budget commitments and technical assistance from government allocations and international partners, including AFPPD. Third, cross sector integration: standardization of training materials across MoES and MoH channels was agreed upon as a priority for nationwide scalability and policy coherence.



Group photo of the AFPPD delegation and Lao Youth Union leadership at the LYU Headquarters.



The AFPPD delegation in front of the Lao Youth Union Headquarters.



Delegates visit the Youth-Child Information Technology Center at the Lao Youth Union.

Site Visit 2: National Assembly of the Lao PDR

The second site visit brought the AFPPD delegation to the National Assembly of the Lao PDR, where the programme comprised two distinct components: a guided tour of the National Assembly's Heritage Room and a high level courtesy call with H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice President of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR.

Tour of the National Assembly Heritage Room

Delegates were guided through the National Assembly's Heritage Room, which chronicles the historical development of constitutionalism and parliamentary governance in the Lao PDR. The tour provided delegates with an informative overview of the constitutional milestones that have shaped the Lao legislative system from its founding to the present day, offering important historical context for understanding the institutional foundations underpinning current youth legislation and policy frameworks.



The AFPPD delegation pays tribute during the tour of the National Assembly Heritage Room.



Hon. Hector Appuhamy signs the heritage guestbook, flanked by members of the delegation.

Visit to the National Assembly Plenary Hall

Following the Heritage Room tour, delegates were escorted to the National Assembly's main plenary hall – the Saphaahaeng Xat – the principal chamber where the National Assembly of the Lao PDR convenes its sessions. The visit offered delegates a direct and vivid impression of the architectural grandeur and institutional gravitas that characterise Lao parliamentary governance. The plenary hall, with its distinctive domed ceiling, tiered seating arrangement, and prominent display of the national emblem and state flag of the Lao PDR, provided a powerful backdrop for reflection on the role of parliament in advancing youth-centered legislation and policy. Delegates gathered for a group photograph inside the chamber, marking the occasion as a memorable milestone in the two-day programme.



Visit to the National Assembly's Main Conference Hall



Delegates in the main plenary hall of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR.

High Level Courtesy Call with H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice President of the National Assembly

The AFPPD delegation, led by Hon. Hector Appuhamy (Chair, AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth), was received in a formal courtesy call by H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice President of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR. The meeting also involved contributions from representatives of relevant line ministries and the Lao Youth Union. Discussions centred on youth political participation, employment education alignment, early pregnancy, rural and traditional barriers, and the Lao PDR's legislative frameworks in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Hon. Hector Appuhamy expressed the delegation's deep gratitude for the warm and distinguished reception, reiterating AFPPD's strong commitment to fostering and enhancing the bilateral relationship between AFPPD and the National Assembly of the Lao PDR for a more sustainable future.

H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong highly valued AFPPD's collaboration, noting that the courtesy call serves as an important platform to exchange information and gather critical lessons learned. Drawing on over 30 years of public service experience across three pivotal leadership roles, H.E. Monexay underscored that human resource development must look beyond health and education alone, and must focus on systemic content and specialized youth policies. He highlighted that throughout his career he has actively championed legislative adjustments closely tied to the SDGs, with the aim of delivering tangible benefits to Lao citizens. He shared significant demographic benchmarks reflecting the growing representation of young people in leadership at national and sub national levels with young parliamentarians now comprising 10.85% of the National Assembly and 35.57% of Provincial People's Assemblies demonstrating the Government's commitment to meaningful youth participation in the state architecture.

Key Discussions

The delegation raised three substantive issues for discussion. First, on youth political participation: the delegation expressed concern that civic and political engagement among youth remains a global and domestic challenge. Noting that even at the university level, participation in student council elections is declining, delegates inquired about the specific strategies and encouragement mechanisms implemented by the Lao National Assembly to foster both formal and informal youth political

engagement. Second, on youth employment and skills alignment: the delegation asked how the Lao PDR is aligning its education system with industry demands to prevent skills mismatch, and what inter ministerial strategies are being deployed to address critical social issues including early pregnancy, early marriage, and drug abuse among youth.

Systemic Responses from the Lao Authorities

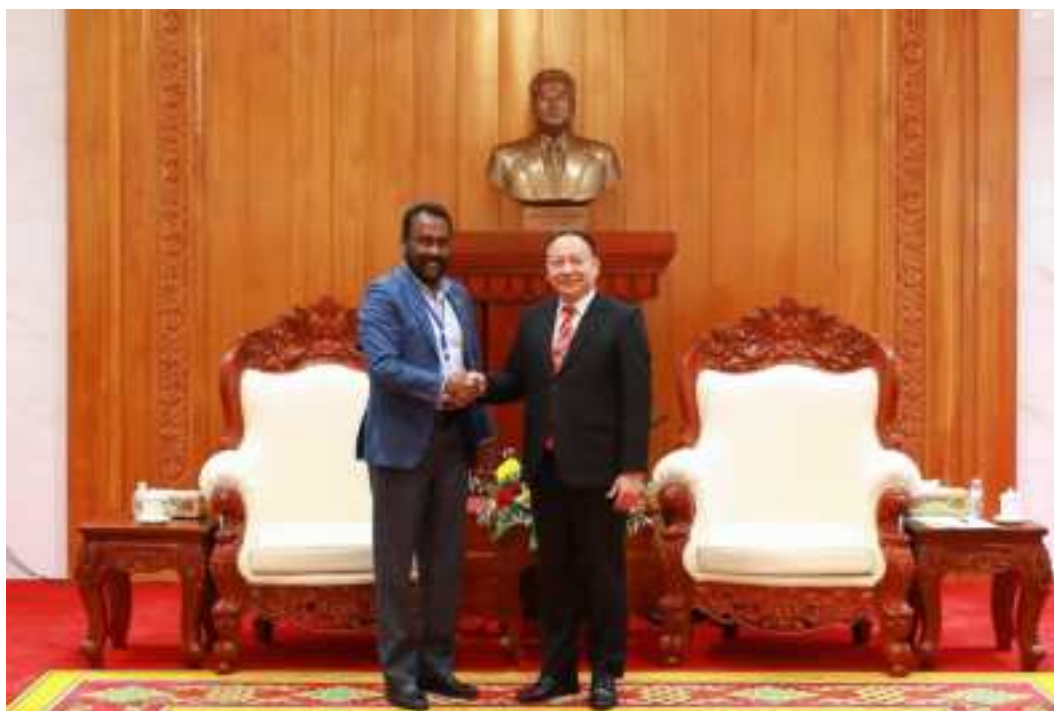
In response, Lao authorities outlined a formalized three ministry collaboration model to address youth unemployment and skills mismatches. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) focuses on vocational training, occupational orientation, and aligning the curriculum with direct market and industry demands. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW) is responsible for evaluating labour market needs, facilitating matching, and allocating graduates into relevant industries. The Lao Youth Union (LYU) serves as the institutional bridge, encouraging youth into vocational pathways and identifying additional training needs to successfully secure career opportunities.

On the legislative front, the Lao PDR has established concrete legal pillars through the Law on Adolescents and the Law on Youth, which institutionalize youth development frameworks and guarantee the rights and welfare of young people. On the challenge of early pregnancy and child marriage – particularly acute in rural and remote communities where deeply rooted traditional customs present significant barriers to behavioral change – the Government and LYU have formalized an aggressive strategic partnership with international donors and development partners since 2021, with long term commitments running through 2030. Core interventions include creating an enabling environment, expanding reproductive health access, mandating Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), and tackling drug abuse among vulnerable youth groups.

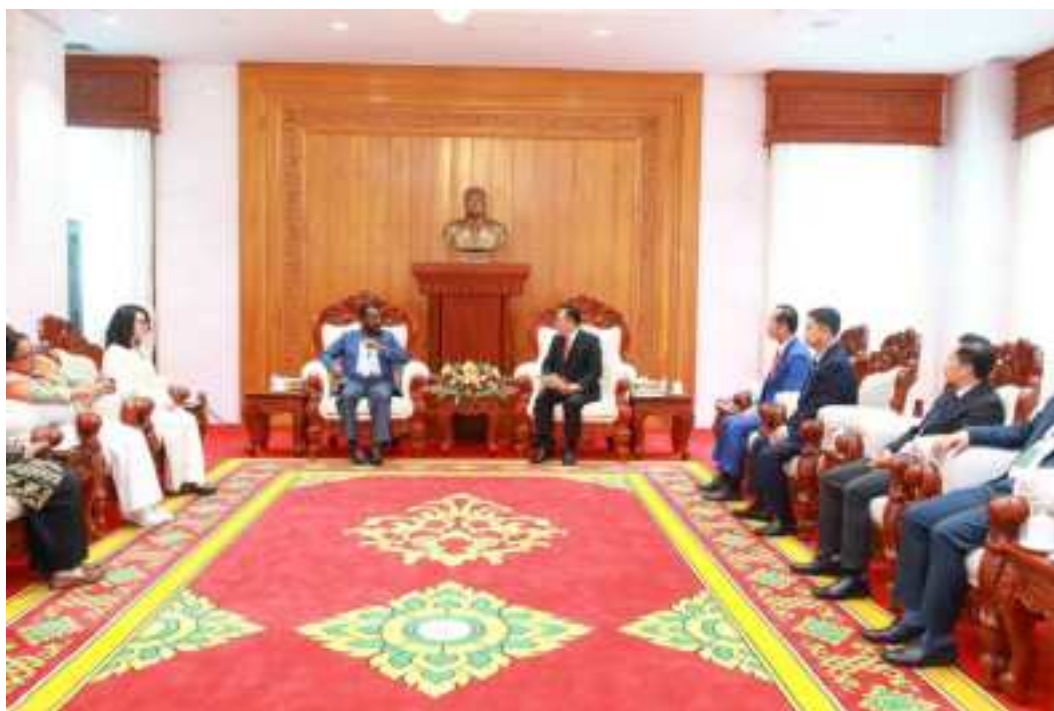
Delegation's Key Takeaway

A prominent AFPPD delegate expressed deep appreciation for H.E. Monexay's thorough and candid responses. The delegation's most notable takeaway was the holistic and comprehensive character of the Lao PDR's Law on Youth, which was praised as a model legislative framework. The delegate noted that while their home country has counterpart legislation, it does not match the breadth and principled comprehensiveness of the Lao legal framework – identifying it as a best practice worthy of further study and potential adaptation.

The courtesy call concluded in an atmosphere of mutual respect and warm cordiality. H.E. Monexay extended his sincere blessings wishing the delegation a safe and pleasant remainder of their stay in the Lao PDR.



Hon. Hector Appuhamy, Chair of the AFPPD Standing Committee, greets H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice-President of the National Assembly.



The formal courtesy call between the AFPPD delegation and H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice-President of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR.

Annex I: Programme



AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth

AFPPD's Sub-Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting: Youth Empowerment for Inclusive Growth

Vientiane, Lao PDR | 4-5 June 2026

Join the Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87020019906?pwd=EJRPOchPxN9cyvzjVWsVfLO06ORtOQ.1>

Meeting ID: 870 2001 9906

Passcode: 528484



https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1k0cHE8xJdctFa_qpBnEAHSGsNYaiGduT?usp=sharing

Draft Program (as of 03.06.2026)

Wednesday, 3 June 2026	
Arrival of delegates (Welcoming the foreign delegation at Wattay International Airport by the Protocol Team of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR)	
Day1: Thursday 4 June 2026: Meeting	
08:20-09:00	Registration Location: Lanexang 1 Ballroom (1 st floor), Crown Plaza Vientiane
09:00-09:40	Opening Session MC: Ms. Douangthip Bouphe , official staff of the National Assembly of Lao PDR Addresses (7 mins each): ➤ H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng, MP Lao PDR, Chairperson of the Cultural-Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee ➤ Dr. Usmanov Farrukh, Executive Director of AFPPD ➤ Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov, Representative for UNFPA Lao PDR ➤ H.E. Koizumi Tsutomu, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Lao PDR ➤ H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong, Vice-President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR
09:40-10:00	<i>Group Photo & Coffee break</i>

10:00–11:00	Session1: Demographic Trends and Youth Investment: Opportunities and Policy Implications This session will examine demographic shifts across Asia—including youth, aging populations, and urbanization—and their implications for public investment in youth. It will explore how countries can harness the demographic dividend through evidence-based policymaking, while addressing regional disparities and emerging risks. Session Chair ➤ Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP Sri Lanka, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee Presentation (15 minutes each) ➤ Hon. Mina Sivilay, MP Lao PDR, Deputy Secretary General of Lao Youth Union ➤ Mr. Kambiz Kabiri, Policy and Census Coordinator, UNFPA Lao PDR Open discussion (30 minutes)
11:00–12:10	Session 2: Education, Skills Development and School-to-Work Transition This session will focus on strengthening human capital development through quality education and skills training systems. Discussions will address the alignment between education systems and labour market demands, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), digital skills, and equitable access for marginalized groups, including women and ethnic minorities. Session Chair ➤ Hon. Somboun Sihanath, Member of the National Assembly of Lao PDR Presentation (15 minutes each) ➤ Hon. Seng Nhak, MP Cambodia ➤ Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali, MP Nepal, Co-Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth (Online) ➤ Mr. Thongsia Inthavong, Deputy Director General, Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, Ministry of Education and Sports Open discussion (25 minutes)
12:10–13:30	Lunch Venue: Mosaic Restaurant 1st Floor
13:30–14:40	Session 3: Youth Employment, Migration and Inclusive Economic Growth This session will explore policy options to promote decent work opportunities for youth, particularly in the context of high levels of informal employment and labour migration in the region. It will address safe migration frameworks, entrepreneurship promotion, and the role of governments in fostering inclusive and resilient labour markets. Session Chair ➤ Hon. Khoeng Nupheap, MP Cambodia Presentation (15 minutes each) ➤ Hon. Renee Louise Co, MP Philippines ➤ Ms. Chintanaphone Chanthavong, the national coordinator/representative Y-PEER Lao PDR ➤ Hon. Rohini Wijeratne, MP Sri Lanka Open discussion (25 minutes)
14:40–15:50	Session 4: Health, Rights and Well-being of Youth This session will highlight the importance of investing in youth health and well-being as a foundation for sustainable development. Key topics include access to health services, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), prevention of early marriage and adolescent pregnancy, mental health, and addressing inequalities in service delivery. Session Chair ➤ Hon. Dr. Kolakanh Phommavong, MP Lao PDR, Vice-chair of the Committee on Cultural-Social and Ethnic Affairs, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth Presentation (15 minutes each) ➤ Hon. Howard Lee Chuan How, MP Malaysia, Secretary General of AFPPD (Online) ➤ Hon. Ledia Hanifa Amaliah, MP Indonesia MP ➤ Dr. Souphon Sayavong, Promotion of Family Health Association in Lao PDR (PFHA) Open discussion (25 minutes)
15:50–16:10	<i>Coffee Break</i>

16:10–17:00	Adoption of Statement This session will summarize key discussions and identify actionable policy recommendations for parliamentarians. It will emphasize the role of legislative and oversight functions in advancing youth investment agendas and outline possible follow-up actions within the framework of AFPPD. Chair: ➤ Hon. Dr. Kolakanh Phommavong , MP Lao PDR, Vice-chair of the Committee on Cultural-Social and Ethnic Affairs, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth Moderator: ➤ Dr. Usmonov Farrukh , Executive Director of AFPPD
17:00–17:20	Closing Session Addresses (10 mins.): ➤ Hon. Hector Appuhamy , MP Sri Lanka, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee ➤ H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng , MP Lao PDR, Chairperson of the Cultural-Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee
18:30	Official Dinner Reception on Behalf of the Chairperson of the Cultural-Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee Location: Lanexang 2 Ballroom (1st floor), Crowne Plaza Vientiane
Day 2: Study Visit, Friday 5 June 2026	
<i>Participants will visit various youth-related centers and observe practical measures and experiences in Lao.</i>	
08:00–08:10	Location: Meet at the Lobby
08:15	Departure from Hotel to the Lao Youth Union
08:30–11:30	Visit and work with the Lao Youth Union
11:30–	Departure to restaurant for Lunch
12:00–13:00	Lunch Venue: The Green pepper Vientiane restaurant of the Thatluang D'or boutique hotel
13:15–	Departure to National Assembly of Lao PDR
13:30–14:00	Courtesy Visit to H.E. Mr. Monexay Laomoaxong , The Vice-President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR
14:15–14:30	Visit the Heritage Hall of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR
14:30–15:30	Visit the National Assembly's main conference hall
15:30–16:00	Departure to hotel
16:30–	Free time or Courtesy visit to the Embassy
Saturday 6 June 2026	
	Participants Departure

Organized by:

The Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD)
 The Lao Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (LAPPD)
 The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)

Supported by:

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Japan Trust Fund (JTF)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

Questionnaire↓



<https://forms.gle/wMMipXg3KdsXjUse8>

Annex II: List of Participants

No	Name	Country	Position
International Delegates			
1	Hon. Seng Nhak	Cambodia	MP
2	Hon. Khoeng Nupheap	Cambodia	MP
3	Hon. Ledia Hanifa Amaliah	Indonesia	MP
4	Mr. Samidjo	Indonesia	Senior Program Manager, IFPPD
5	Hon. Howard Lee Chuan How	Malaysia	MP, Secretary General of AFPPD (Online)
6	Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali	Nepal	MP, Co Chair AFPPD SC (Online)
7	Rep. Renee Louise M. Co	Philippines	MP
8	Ms. Chamen Balana	Philippines	Advocacy Officer, PLCPD
9	Hon. Hector Appuhamy	Sri Lanka	MP
10	Hon. Rohini Wijeratne	Sri Lanka	MP
11	Hon. Rinlita Adisa	Thailand	MP
12	Ms. Panadda Sungkhum	Thailand	Foreign Affairs Officer
Lao PDR – National Assembly			
13	H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong	Lao PDR	Vice President of the NA
14	H.E. Amphaivone Lombounpheng	Lao PDR	Chairperson, Cultural Social Committee
15	Hon. Dr. Kolakanh Phommvong	Lao PDR	Vice Chairman, Cultural Social Committee
16	Hon. Phosy Temmerath	Lao PDR	Vice Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee
17	Hon. Mina Sivilay	Lao PDR	Deputy SG, Lao Youth Union
18	Hon. Khemphone Anothay	Lao PDR	Deputy Chief of Cabinet of the NA
19	Hon. Somboun Sihanath	Lao PDR	MP
20	Hon. Khamvaen Singbandith	Lao PDR	MP
Partners, Guest Speakers & AFPPD Secretariat			
57	H.E. Koizumi Tsutomu	Japan	Ambassador to Lao PDR
60	Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadirov	UNFPA	Country Director
61	Mr. Kambiz Kabiri	UNFPA	Policy and Census Coordinator
64	Dr. Souphon Sayavong	IPPF/PFHA	Executive Director, PFHA
65	Dr. Farrukh Usmonov	AFPPD	Executive Director
66	Ms. Fuke Mio	APDA	Secretariat

AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth | Vientiane, Lao PDR | 4–5 June 2026

International Delegates

No.	Name	Country	Position
1	Hon. Seng Nhak	Cambodia	MP
2	Hon. Khoeng Nupheap	Cambodia	MP
3	Hon. Ledia Hanifa Amaliah	Indonesia	MP
4	Mr. Samidjo	Indonesia	Senior Program Manager, IFPPD

5	<i>Hon. Howard Lee Chuan How (Online)</i>	Malaysia	MP, Secretary General of AFPPD
6	<i>Hon. Yogesh Gauchan Thakali (Online)</i>	Nepal	MP, Co Chair AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth
7	Rep. Renee Louise M. Co	Philippines	MP
8	Ms. Charmen Balana	Philippines	Advocacy and Partnerships Officer, PLCPD
9	Hon. Hector Appuhamy	Sri Lanka	MP, Chair of AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth
10	Hon. Rohini Wijeratne	Sri Lanka	MP
11	Hon. Rinlita Adisa	Thailand	MP
12	Ms. Panadda Sungkhum	Thailand	Foreign Affairs Officer, Secretariat of the House of Representatives of Thailand

Lao PDR – National Assembly

No.	Name	Country	Position
13	H.E. Monexay Laomoaxong	Lao PDR	Vice President of the National Assembly of Lao PDR
14	H.E. Amphavone Lombounpheng	Lao PDR	Chairperson of the Cultural Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee
15	Hon. Dr. Kolakanh Phommvong	Lao PDR	Vice Chairman of the Cultural Social and Ethnic Affairs Committee; Chair, AFPPD SC on Investing in Youth
16	Hon. Phosy Temmerath	Lao PDR	Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
17	Hon. Mina Sivilay	Lao PDR	Deputy Secretary General, Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union
18	Hon. Khemphone Anothay	Lao PDR	Deputy Chief of Cabinet of the National Assembly
19	Hon. Somboun Sihanath	Lao PDR	Member of the National Assembly of Lao PDR
20	Hon. Khamvaen Singbandith	Lao PDR	Member of the National Assembly of Lao PDR

Guest Speakers, Partners & AFPPD Secretariat

No.	Name	Organization	Position
57	H.E. Koizumi Tsutomu	Japan	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Lao PDR
58	Mr. Hino Tomohiro	Japan	First Secretary, Embassy of Japan
60	Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadirov	UNFPA	Country Director, UNFPA Lao PDR
61	Mr. Kambiz Kabiri	UNFPA	Policy and Census Coordinator
64	Dr. Souphon Sayavong	IPPF/PFHA	Executive Director, Promotion of Family Health Association in Lao PDR (PFHA)
65	Dr. Farrukh Usmonov	AFPPD	Executive Director of AFPPD
66	Ms. Fuke Mio	APDA	APDA Secretariat
67	Ms. Vilaysak Phandanouvong	Lao PDR	Rapporteur; Officer, Inter Parliamentary Relations Department, Foreign Affairs Committee

Annex III: Joint Statement

AFPPD Standing Committee on Investing in Youth

AFPPD's Sub Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting on Youth Empowerment for Inclusive Growth

4 June 2026 | Vientiane, Lao PDR

Statement

Preamble

The Sub Regional Parliamentarians' Meeting on Youth Empowerment for Inclusive Growth was hosted in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 4 June 2026. The meeting was co hosted by the National Assembly of Lao PDR and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD), with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) through the Japan Trust Fund (JTF).

The meeting brought together more than 60 participants from parliaments, government, international organizations, NGOs, youth organizations, and academia, involving 10 countries, to share and discuss good practices in policies, legislation, and programmes on implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a focus on investing in youth. The meeting focused on policies and services that could strengthen empowerment of young people and engaging them in decision making, consistent with the principles of the AFPPD Strategic Plan for 2026–2029.

In line with our role as parliamentarians, we:

1. Reaffirm that young people represent a vital force as present and future leaders for national development, innovation, social cohesion, and democratic participation;
2. Reaffirm that investment in youth education, health, decent work, entrepreneurship, digital skills, climate action, safe migration, and civic engagement contributes directly to sustainable economic growth and social stability;
3. Pledge to champion the advancement, mentorship, and safeguarding of young and newly elected parliamentarians, political candidates, and national and sub national leaders, advocating for robust institutional mechanisms to ensure their meaningful participation in public and private spheres and promote a political culture rooted in mutual respect, inclusivity, and equal opportunity for all;
4. Enact policies and allocate adequate resources that promote the welfare, empowerment, and participation of young people, and that address persistent inequality;
5. Support legislative reform for investing in youth, including extending expert guidance and fostering knowledge exchange to support member states in reviewing and amending existing legislation and enacting progressive laws to empower young people across all sectors of society;
6. Further resolve that relevant ministries, parliamentary committees, local authorities, civil society organizations, and youth led groups shall collaborate in implementing youth centered policies, addressing data related gaps, strengthening data sharing, and monitoring implementation;
7. Reaffirm budget allocation for supporting youth empowerment and investing in young people at the national and sub national levels;
8. Invite donors and partner organizations to provide sustained technical expertise and parliamentary capacity building to support parliamentarians in the effective implementation and monitoring of key national policies, including for youth development;

9. Recognize and reaffirm the important role of the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development as a key regional partner in advancing parliamentary advocacy for investing in youth, and further acknowledge its continued contribution as a credible and strategic partner in strengthening parliamentary capacity building initiatives throughout the region;
10. Express gratitude to the Government of Japan's Japan Trust Fund (JTF) and UNFPA for continuously supporting AFPPD's activities in the Asia Pacific region and beyond.