



**PARLIAMENTARIANS AS THE FOURTH PILLAR FOR
ACHIEVING THE 2030 AGENDA: POPULATION, FOOD
SECURITY, AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH (SRH)**

8-10 AUGUST 2018
ACCRA, GHANA

GROUP PHOTO



*Honorable Delegates and Members of Parliament from Africa, Asia and European countries attending the Meeting and Study Visit on **Parliamentarians as the Fourth Pillar for Achieving the 2030 Agenda: Population, Food Security, and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)** at Accra City Hotel, Accra, Ghana on 8-10 August 2018.*

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

AADPD:	Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development
AFPPD:	Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
APDA:	Asian Population and Development Association
CHOGM:	Commonwealth Heads of States and Governments
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
CYC:	Common Youth Council
FAO:	Food and Agricultural Organization
FP:	Family Planning
FPA:	Africa Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development
FR:	Fertility Rate
GHS:	Ghana Health Services
GMO:	Genetically Modified Organic foods
GPCPD:	Ghana Parliamentary Caucus on Population and Development
GSS:	Ghana Statistical Services
HIV/AIDS:	Human Immune Deficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IAPPD:	Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
ICPD:	International Conference on Population and Development
IMR:	Infant Mortality Rate
IPPF:	International Planned Parenthood Federation
IPES:	Integrated Package of Essential SRH Services
IPU:	Inter-Parliamentary Union
JFPF:	Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population
JTF:	Japan Trust Fund
MCH:	Maternal and Child Health
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
MMR:	Maternal Mortality Rate
NDC:	National Democratic Congress
NHIS:	National Health Insurance Scheme
NHIA:	National Health Insurance Authority
NPP:	New Patriotic Party
NSS:	National Service Scheme

NYA:	National Youth Authority
NYC-HAPPY:	National Youth Commission-HIV and AIDS Prevention Program for the Youth
RH:	Reproductive Health
SBA	Skilled birth attendance
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
SRH:	Sexual Reproductive Health
SRHR:	Sexual Reproductive Health / Rights
TICAD:	Tokyo International Conference for African Development
TIVET:	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UHC:	Universal Health Coverage
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
VNR:	Voluntary National Review
WHO:	World Health Organization
YEA:	Youth Enterprises Agency
ZAPPD:	Zambia All Party Parliamentary Group on Population and Development

ABSTRACT

This report is based on the proceedings of the three-day Parliamentarians' Meeting and Study Visit that took place on 8-10 August 2018 at the Accra City Hotel in Accra, Ghana.

This conference was organized by the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) and hosted by the Parliament of Ghana and supported by the Japan Trust Fund (JTF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). Parliamentarians from different countries joined the event to discuss issues connected with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), share their countries' views and experience, and find ways to enable implementation of the 2030 Agenda in relation to key issues such as population, food security, sexual reproductive health (SRH) and the sub-themes of the conference.

The meeting brought together Members of Parliament representing various African, Asian and European countries, Embassy representatives, Development Partners, officers of the Parliament of Ghana and APDA secretariat. On Days 1 and 2, presentations were made by the delegates, and were followed by discussions. The sessions were presided over by Session Chairs under six thematic areas: (1) Food Security and Environmental Sustainability for the 2030 Agenda; (2) Investing in Youth and Gender Equality; (3) Building a Healthy Society: Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH); (4) Parliamentarians' Role in Ensuring Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance (TAGG); (5) Legislative Initiative to Support the SDGs; and (6) Discussion for the Adoption of Policy Proposal: Building Partnership for Achieving the SDGs Towards G20 and TICAD in 2019.

The delegates undertook study visits on Day 3, to five institutions: (1) the Parliament of Ghana, (2) Ridge Hospital, (3) the University of Ghana (Graduate Studies) - Ajinomoto Project in Ghana, (4) Cocoa Processing Company, and (5) the Afienva Youth Leadership, Training and Skills Center.

The views and suggestions made by the delegates are expected to inform the forthcoming TICAD in Japan. This Report recommends that the Members of Parliament who participated in this project make change in their respective countries by suggesting legislation and by urging their governments to implement appropriate policies that positively impact on issues of population, food security, and sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

OPENING SESSION

Introductory Remarks

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of the Ghana Parliamentary Caucus on Population and Development (GPCPD)

Hon. Dr. Pelpuo welcomed participants and stressed that it was a pleasure to host this meeting because the delegates are reflecting on key issues that directly touch on population and food security in their various countries. In addition, with this conference parliamentarians have an opportunity to interact with participants from different backgrounds, and so arrive at practical solutions on how their various countries can tackle questions of food security, population and reproductive health (RH). Much effort has been made to ensure the success of this meeting. For this, Hon. Dr. Pelpuo acknowledged the fact that Rt. Hon. Speaker of Ghana's Parliament, and in particular Hon. First Deputy Speaker have been very committed.

In addition, Hon. Dr. Pelpuo stated that this gathering is an important platform to discuss key issues on how policy can affect population issues and how to ensure food security in their country, and finding ways of financing family planning and RH in the face of dwindling national resources and reductions in funding from other countries.

Hon. Dr. Pelpuo expressed his hope that these deliberations would produce the best of results and that in the end, they can produce concrete outcomes that will directly influence various policies that may be implemented by attending countries.

Address of Organizer

Hon. Yukio Ubukata, MP Japan

Hon. Ubukata, on behalf of the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JFPF), expressed his sincere appreciation to all for participating in this conference. He explained that the theme was taken from the concept that was adopted at APDA's conference of African and Asian parliamentarians in New Delhi, India, last year. It reflects the fact that in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), that alongside that played by the government, private sector, and civil society, the role of parliamentarians is critical.

The whole world shares the ideals of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, and it is imperative that we achieve these goals. Hon. Ubukata stated that political will is the most important factor in achieving the 2030 Agenda. He mentioned that parliamentarians' activities for addressing international issues began when they started tackling the issue of population.

It is essential for parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, to play a role because the issue of population has a bearing on the lives of individuals and solutions to this issue can never be forced upon individuals.

From the outset, parliamentary activities have been carried out in two directions;

1. There is a need to communicate to the people the international concepts of sustainable development, and to play a role in gaining the understanding of the people as to the reasons why support is needed for international organizations.
2. Parliamentarians need to be a mechanism through which people's voices can be conveyed to the government and to international organizations. Their role of listening to the silent majority and introducing traditional and cultural wisdom to the international community is something only they can do.

Parliamentarians have partnered and cooperated with UN organizations, while maintaining their distinct backgrounds and perspectives, promoting activities with an eye to their own responsibilities and using their own judgment. For this reason, parliamentary activities originating in Japan have consistently acknowledged the distinct circumstances of each country and region, and have striven to provide support in ways in which activities can be independently carried out. APDA was established as a legal foundation for supporting such parliamentary activities.

Hon. Ubukata was convinced of the successful outcome of the conference and hoped that the discussions will also be reflected on the international discussions at next year's Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and G20. To conclude, he expressed his sincere appreciation to the Parliament of Ghana for granting the opportunity to hold this conference.

Address

Mr. Niyi Ojuolape, Country Representative of UNFPA, Ghana

Hon. Ojuolape said it was a pleasure to see all the delegates from the different countries, and that he was delighted to be there and have the opportunity to deliver an opening statement.

Coming from UNFPA, he could not have been more excited by the theme. UNFPA has a vital role to play in supporting countries in their implementation and achievement of the SDGs. The SDGs cannot be achieved without empowering women, girls and young people to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health (SRH). The sustainability of every country lies in its human resources and Africa, including Ghana, currently has a large youth base. In order to be able to gain economic freedom, there is a need for the continent to consciously invest in its human resources, especially the youth, which is its largest asset. These aims cannot be achieved without filling the data gaps and without keeping human rights at the forefront of any policy considerations.

For Africa, the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD) in Africa beyond 2014 contains 88 commitments agreed to by the countries acting together under the aegis of the African Union (AU).

Pillar Two of the Addis Ababa Declaration, which is on health, consists of 17 commitments that address development challenges, including key issues such as universal access to SRH services including maternal healthcare, skilled birth attendance (SBA), the unmet need for family planning, HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and comprehensive sexuality education, and equitable and universal access to healthcare, and health system strengthening.

Africa is at best in the first stages of the demographic transition. Since 2013 the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) of UNFPA has provided leadership to African countries on how they could harness the demographic dividend. The AU in collaboration with UNFPA developed a roadmap on harnessing the demographic dividend which was launched last year by member countries.

Hon. Ojuolape said that when they are properly catered to and prepared for life, young people will create a new and innovative environment as they are adventurous and creative by nature. It is strategic that Africa seriously tap into this potential.

Mr. Ojuolape reiterated what the former and late Executive Director of UNFPA stressed during his visit to Ghana in early 2016. *“African countries should not do anything without the youth”*. Illustrating this in terms of SRH issues, he revealed that adolescent girls have the highest prevalence of unwanted pregnancies, which often create barriers for them to achieve their full potential, as they are affected negatively by so many issues. Mr. Ojuolape therefore urged Ghanaian parliamentarians to work with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in their various constituencies to put in place controls to ensure that girls are not forced to marry too early. He observed that a high percentage of maternal mortality is from unsafe abortions which are undergone largely by adolescents.

He addressed the parliamentarians saying that parliamentarians as the fourth pillar have overarching oversight on the achievement of all SDGs. Population, food security, SRH have been focused on by the delegates for this conference, since as legislators they will ensure all laws are turned into policies, programmes and strategies. Mr. Ojuolape was confident that by the end of the conference, the participants coming from their different backgrounds will have shared many experiences of good practices and of lessons learned.

He stated that UNFPA is always available to collaborate and partner with the delegates to address population issues in such a way that there are no unwanted pregnancies, and that safe births and the full potential of youth is fulfilled.

Address

Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa, MP Cameroon, President of Africa Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (FPA)

Hon. Effa was honored to take part in the conference. On behalf of the African Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (FPA) and of the delegation which consists of members of parliament from countries across Africa and Asia, she expressed her deepest appreciation and gratitude to the host side and the organizers.

Hon. Effa stated that what unites them as parliamentarians is an unshakeable belief in the potential of a world in which there are zero unmet needs for family planning, zero maternal deaths, and zero violence and harmful practice against women and girls. As lawmakers, they have the responsibility to do everything to make this possible. She said that over the course of this visit, they will benefit from theme-based sessions, interactions with key leaders who are delivering policies of benefit for women and girls, and presentations from parliamentary champions of successful legislative and funding initiatives.

Hon. Effa confessed how each parliamentary meeting she attends makes her a better advocate for a comprehensive human rights approach to sustainable development. She hopes that parliamentarians will take the promise of the new commitment, new knowledge and understanding one step further.

Hon. Effa mentioned that the participants need to think collectively, to exchange ideas, and talk to each other about what they see and learn in Ghana. It will help them, as parliamentarians who come from across national and political boundaries, to deliver real change when they go back home. She acknowledged that while they also have their own issues to deal with in their respective countries, they also have an extremely important role to play by acting collectively beyond national boundaries.

For the first time, the role of parliaments in the enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets, and in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of commitments, has been highlighted in the SDGs. Parliaments must now make the ICPD Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda, and the African Union 2063 Agenda central to their work and to their national policy dialogues on population and development. She emphasized that everything is urgent, and they must address many issues regarding family planning, maternal health, and traditional but harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, and child, early and forced marriage.

One of the main challenges facing Africa today, according to Hon. Effa, is the imperative to empower its largest-ever population of youth and to provide them with opportunities to realize their full potential. This calls for crucial and sustainable investments into young people's needs – their healthcare, their education – and of course, ensuring that they have access to modern contraception to allow them to take charge of their own futures.

Millions of girls worldwide see their dreams, hopes and plans shattered simply because they are girls. She suggested that by working together, the delegates can help deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled, and the world is one free of violence and discrimination, and a place where human rights are respected and people's diversity is celebrated.

Welcome Address

Hon. Joseph Osei-Owusu, First Deputy Speaker, Ghana

The welcome address was delivered on behalf of the Speaker of the Parliament of Ghana, Rt. Hon. Aaron Michael Oquaye. Hon. Osei-Owusu said that on behalf of the Speaker it was his pleasure to welcome all to this historic moment—the 2018 Conference of the Asian and African Parliamentarians in Accra. This is the first time for the Parliament of Ghana to host such a project and Ghana is grateful to have this opportunity to promote South-South cooperation on issues related to population, food security and sexual and reproductive health (SRH). He said the Speaker wishes to highly commend the organizers, the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), for putting together such an important project.

He said that the theme of this year's conference is appropriate, as issues of population and development have emerged as key elements in the advancement of society. He stated that it is worth noting that by the end of 2015, several developing countries had made significant strides towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Some African Countries including Ghana were able to reduce extreme poverty and hunger, the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate and incidents of mother-to-child transmission.

But despite such positive achievements, challenges posed by other issues such as maternal and infant mortality, drought and the other effects of climate change that affect food security, discrimination against the poor and the disadvantaged in society, and inequality between rural and urban populations continue to be of grave concern.

Hon. Osei-Owusu noted that in order to build on the gains of the MDGs, heads of the states at the UN Summit in 2015 adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Discussions at this conference may enable them to devise strategies towards achieving the objectives outlined in the Agenda 2030, particularly Goals 2 and 3, which are the focus of deliberations at this conference.

Hon. Osei-Owusu urged participants to pay particular attention to female empowerment issues. Women and girls constitute more than 50% of the population of most developing nations, yet how issues impact on them is something that is often not fully considered in discussions on social, economic and political issues. Prioritizing female empowerment would ensure that targets set for the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs are met. The studies indicate that increasing female education, particularly at the secondary level, reduces the birth rate, lowers maternal and child mortality, and improves the lives of families. Also, the *UNDP 2016 Africa*

Development Report estimates that the full participation of women in Africa's labor market would add 95 billion dollars per year to the economy of the continent. Consequently, it would be useful for delegates to consider how to leverage their roles as Members of Parliament to empower women and girls to more fully participate in national development.

Another issue worthy of concern is the high rate of youth unemployment in Africa. Africa as a continent has a population of about 1.3 billion. The youth, those aged 15-24, constitute about 19% of Africa's population. However, this relatively large youthful population has not delivered desired economic benefits, including employment generation and wealth creation. With its relatively large population, Africa has the potential to enjoy rapid economic growth if its human resource is more effectively harnessed.

He suggested that there is a need for institutions, including Parliaments, to be adequately resourced to bridge the current data gap, and to build human resource capacity and institutional architecture. This would enhance data collection and processing in a timely manner to facilitate the effective monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs.

Hon. Osei-Owusu said that together they must continue the transformation of their Parliaments and ensure that they remain relevant amid the challenges that confront them. He hopes that by the end of the conference they will be equipped with the necessary tools to enable their Parliaments to pursue their roles effectively and efficiently.

On that note,

He declared the conference officially open.

Keynote Speech

Hon. Hiroyuki Nagahama, MP Japan, Vice-Chair of the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JFPF)

1. SDGs and Population: the Fourth Pillar

Hon. Nagahama pointed out that the factors that will be essential in achieving the SDGs are political will, legislation and policy formation to make concrete that political attitude, and budget allocation for translating policy into action. At the conference of African and Asian parliamentarians held in New Delhi, India, last year, they made these points clearly and showed that parliamentarians have an important role in achieving the SDGs.

Population-related goals are not included in the SDGs and some say that this is evidence that people have "forgotten about population". To him, this is not so. Population is none other than our society; therefore it is inappropriate to manipulate individuals to achieve any population-related goals. This concept was included in the Programme of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo. It would be

reasonable to say that because of this intrinsic nature of the issue of population, no population-related targets were set for the SDGs.

But if policy makers depart from a philosophical discussion about their understanding of human society and instead look at things from the perspective of the natural sciences, they are confronted with some sobering facts; one is that the basis of our lives on this planet Earth is one that is very vulnerable. Hon. Nagahama said that “if we were to shrink the Earth to ten-millionth of its actual size, the Earth would only have a diameter of 1.3 meters. In this model, the troposphere, which contains most of the atmosphere and extends to a height of 10,000 meters above the surface of the Earth, would only be one millimeter thick. And the deep, expansive oceans would only be 0.5 millimeter thick”. The SDGs are a collection of needed targets that have been assembled without considering this other perspective.

2. Diversity of Populations

Hon. Nagahama noted that the UN Statistics Division’s projections of future world population have repeatedly been revised upwards in recent years. This is due partly to improvements in public health, but it is also clear that people still do not have enough access to RH services, including family planning. He was very surprised to see the analysis in the recent population projection. Apparently, Africa will account for more than 90% of the increase in the world population from 2020 to 2100. Asia, which has a large share of the world population, does have significant issues particularly in South Asia, but its population will peak around 2050 and start to decline thereafter. In Africa, on the other hand, it is still not possible to forecast when the population will peak.

Hon. Nagahama noted that the declining fertility and an ageing population in Japan and many other developed countries are causing many problems, as social systems that were premised on a sizeable youth population are unable to adapt to the new situation. In regions that have made some progress in the demographic transition, an increase in the population of youth has provided an engine for growth, but in other regions, a large population of youth has caused social anxiety. At the same time, it is clearly a fact that the situation will become unsustainable if policy makers neglect to do anything about the population increase in Africa.

3. The Fundamental Importance of Reproductive Health (RH)

According to Hon. Nagahama, there is a need to prevent unwanted pregnancies and births. Specifically, as already put forward at the ICPD in Cairo, there is a need to achieve universal access to RH services including family planning. He stated that it is an individual right for people to choose how many children they will have and when, and no one should intervene in that decision. But in reality, there are many children who are born from unwanted pregnancies and births. Such a situation attests mainly to the fact that women’s reproductive rights are being violated.

Children born from unwanted pregnancies have nothing to be blamed for, as it is the adults who are responsible for bringing such a plight to these children. As such, it is important for parliamentarians to legislate, allocate funding, and implement programmes for universal

access to RH services in ways that are culturally acceptable in their respective countries. Hon. Nagahama applauded UNFPA for having identified this issue in its new strategy of “Three Zeros”.

4. Difficulty in Ensuring Food Security

One of the difficulties in dealing with the issue of population is the element of momentum. This means that once a change begins to take shape, it is difficult to change its direction. In that respect, even if they implement measures against declining fertility in Japan today, it will take some time before the effect of those measures can be felt. Similarly, if African policy makers do not take appropriate measures now to deal with the continent possibly accounting for more than 90% of the future increase in world population, they will have to grapple with an even bigger problem later.

There is a need to supply food for the increasing population in Africa. According to calculations by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), this is possible by cutting down on losses from foods that are discarded around the world, and by engaging appropriately in farm management and production. But even with this, economic principles compel us to ask the difficult question of how the population in Africa will gain access to food supply.

Economic development may enable countries to purchase food to supplement the food supply, but there is no guarantee that this can be achieved. In this respect, it is considered important to determine the value of traditional foods that are suited to the local habitat and climate, scientifically analyze their characteristics, and use science and technology to increase the yield of these traditional foods, and improve their quality.

He mentioned that there is a type of grain called *teff* in Ethiopia. *Teff* is ground into flour and then is fermented to make pancake-like bread. When *teff* was used in crackers, it added market value to these products among health-conscious consumers in the U.S. There could be countless such examples of creating new market opportunities and earning cash, if countries turn their attention to heretofore neglected local traditional foods.

Hon. Nagahama said that parliamentarians come into contact with people every day. It may be that if parliamentarians take an interest in the issues, give attention to traditional assets, promote international exchange, and obtain technological cooperation from developed countries, these traditional foods may come to play an important role in ensuring food security in Africa.

Parliamentarians can work towards the achievement of the SDGs. They will need to design and execute concrete strategies. Next year in 2019, Japan will be hosting the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7) and the G20 Summit. He hopes that when the parliamentarians return to their countries, they will work with their respective governments on the issues that have been mentioned.

SESSION 1: Food Security and Environmental Sustainability for the 2030 Agenda

Session Chair: Hon. Viplove Thakur, MP India, Vice-Chair of the Indian Association of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (IAPPD)

Hon. Mohammed A. Mahmud, MP Nigeria

Hon. Mahmud introduced Nigeria's potential and its prospects in agriculture, and noted that the sector is a pivot for economic stabilization, diversification and growth in the country.

The country's commitment is to deploy technology, entrepreneurship and use the power of the market to explore opportunities for commodity value chains in the real economy, in order to achieve sustainability in terms of food security and environment. A key reference point is the nation's focus on infrastructure, governance and security, social development, the real economy, regional integration and environment. These make the formulation and the implementation process of policies at the national and sub-national levels lead to the appropriate socio-economic paradigm towards human capital development, domestic resource utilization, appropriate technology capability, productive enterprise ventures, diverse employment opportunities, sustained food security and inclusive wealth creation.

As a national strategic development agenda, the 2017-2020 Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) is meant to reactivate the economy, empower the citizenry and stimulate the competitiveness of enterprises in the country, with a view to enabling infrastructural facilities, empowering domestic businesses, driving private sector investment, boosting agricultural productivity, integrating the value chain and improving market access. In this regard, a sectoral framework, tagged the "Green Alternative Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP)" is aimed at achieving sustainable food security, reducing import dependence, stimulating agro-exports, enhancing wealth creation and diversifying the economy. Within the principle of "agriculture as a business for long-term economic growth via value chain approach", the framework features the pillars of productivity enhancement, private investment, and institutional realignment, as instruments for commodity value chain development in the country.

The Institutional Realignment pillar is to encourage partnership among stakeholders for synchronizing initiatives, pooling resources, and implementing projects. The alignment will facilitate community orientation, public-enabled and private-driven agribusiness undertakings in the country through the levers of climate change adaptation, infrastructural facilities, research and innovation, quality assurance, credit support, youth empowerment, and market access. The requirement is to commit socio-economic resources to drive agricultural value chains with significant private sector participation and appreciable communal involvement for entrepreneurship, ownership, consolidation and expansion. The task is to accommodate emerging best practices in all the segments of a chain along technology changes, business

strategies and resource mobilization for a competitive edge that is attainable through cooperative formation.

Linked to this, resilience strategy is linked to the SDGs targeting certain achievements of basic needs by 2030, which indicate the need to combat climate change impacts, the need to conserve oceans, seas and marine resources, and the need to protect terrestrial ecosystems, reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity losses.

The agricultural promotion policy implementation process towards food security includes the provision of 25% input subsidy contribution to farmers, under the private managed growth enhancement support scheme on fertilizers, seeds and chemicals for all year round farming across the various commodity value chains.

Another area of impact is the development of high yielding, wilt-tolerant tomato and pepper varieties, as well as yam mini set adaptable to Nigeria agro-ecologies, citrus and mango value chains through improved sustainable production technologies. Besides, the Land Clearing intervention at various locations in the country is meant to boost crop output, ensure cluster of agricultural products in a typical location and encourage high premium for high value crops to facilitate their commodity value chain development.

Other efforts include the establishment of fish farm clusters equipped with fish feed mills in various regions of the country, in order to facilitate fish farmers' access to shared infrastructure and technical knowledge, as well as finance and government supports.

In the livestock sub-sector, 65,000 hectares from 13 states were secured for the development of pasture / paddocks grazing reserve and exotic grass seedlings were procured to enhance paddock fodder package and increase domestic beef and milk output in a sedentary grazing reserve setup. As support service, Animal Health Centers were constructed nationwide under the Primary Animal Health Programme to provide affordable, accessible and quality veterinary health care services.

Regarding mechanization programme, 500 threshers were distributed to rice farmers from 12 rice-producing states at a 60% discount to farmers who would pay 20% while the state governments bare 20% of the cost. Related to this is the provision of motorized boreholes to major disadvantaged communities, feeder roads to link communities to markets, and solar powered street light in rural communities.

The execution of the Livelihood Improvement Family Enterprise Programme across the six geopolitical zones equally established cottage processing factories for shea nut, cashew, sesame, palm oil, palm kernel oil, tomato, yam, soybean, cassava, dairy, plantain, banana and coconut oil.

In conclusion, the framework of the Agricultural Promotion Policy is to achieve food sufficiency, enterprise promotion, productive employment and wealth creation in the country. It is to address the challenges of growing population and declining revenues by promoting agribusiness, aiding economic livelihood, and attaining food security. Our institutional

commitments to the rehabilitation, construction and expansion of water resources facilities, as well renewed national synergy on effective extension system and research result application, are engaging new generation of agribusiness practitioners in the country.

To enhance domestic production in agribusiness undertakings, a policy of low tariffs on imported agricultural materials and equipment is being maintained. A focus to increase returns on agricultural exports is the Zero-Reject initiative for government institutions and business entrepreneurs to comply with appropriate standards in accordance with international food safety procedures.

As a necessity for trade and investment promotion for agricultural development, bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation is being explored to augment the revenue base of the country to fast-track the implementation of critical infrastructure projects and aid a private-sector led economy.

Hon. Mahmud hopes that this national strategy towards achieving food security and environmental sustainability will produce the desired results.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD

According to Hon. Dr. Pelpuo, food security in developing countries depends in part on the sustainable use of natural resources. However, household use of natural resources often undermines food security and threatens the sustainability of critical ecosystem functions. The environmental consequences of agricultural activities have become more apparent, and failure to reliably achieve sustainability in domestic food production can have serious negative impact on food security, especially for the poor and the most vulnerable. Food security and environmental sustainability are key goals of the SDGs, which aim at ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition, promoting sustainable agriculture, and ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. To achieve these goals, individual countries are expected to come up with their own strategies.

Ghana's Experience: Challenges of food security and environmental sustainability

Ghana is generally food secure; however, pockets of food insecurity exist in all regions because of acutely limited resources and limited alternative livelihoods for people to meet their dietary needs. Hon. Dr. Pelpuo referred to estimates of about 5% of Ghana's population (1.2 million) being food insecure. It is also estimated that about two million people nationwide are vulnerable to becoming food insecure, which means any unexpected natural or man-made shock can greatly affect the patterns of their food consumption. The challenges that Ghana faces in relation to illegal activities in forest reserves and protected areas continue to increase. It is estimated that the number of illegalities increased by 6% in 2016 compared with a 2.5% increase in 2015. That estimate shows that less than 20% of the forest reserve areas have acceptable levels of integrity and are under further threat from illegal logging and clearing for agriculture.

Government Policies on Food Security and Environmental Sustainability

Hon. Dr. Pelpuo mentioned that there are several policies and strategies that the Government of Ghana is implementing to ensure food security and environmental sustainability. These include:

- A ban on illegal mining (Galamsey) – a threat to Ghana’s water bodies;
- The use of Extension Officers – to educate farmers on the right application of chemicals and on good farming practices;
- The establishment of University of Environment and Sustainable Development – to develop the manpower needed;
- The Land Bank strategy document that serves as a repository of critical information on land for commercial agriculture including information on ownership of land, coordinates and soil profiles.

Parliament’s Role in ensuring Food Security and Environmental Sustainability

Hon. Dr. Pelpuo acknowledged that the Parliament’s role in ensuring food security and environmental sustainability cannot be overemphasized. He pointed out that it is of paramount importance for parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, to ensure that citizens have physical and economic access to enough safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences in order to lead an active and healthy life.

Given this, the Parliament of Ghana through its legislative, deliberative, advocacy, oversight and budgetary functions continues to play a very important role. To this end the Parliament:

1. has enacted a number of laws to ensure food security and environmental sustainability;
2. ensures that budgetary provisions are made for the implementation of government policies and programmes;
3. monitors policy statements of the Government and ensures their implementation;
4. through its members interacts with constituents, especially farmers, advises them on the need to patronize the services of extension officers and adhere to good farming practices;
5. plays an advocacy role, and statements are made on the floor of the House and at other events on the need to ensure food security and environmental sustainability;
6. through its members ensures that the budgetary allocations that they approved are spent as intended. This increased accountability is to ensure people are getting value for their money;
7. requires by law that institutions which receive public funds to deal with food security and environmental sustainability issues send mid-year and annual reports to the

Parliament. This enables the Parliament to assess impact and performance as well as challenges so that any necessary corrective measures can be taken.

Parliamentarians in Ghana collaborate with various stakeholders in a more sustainable way to help address challenges with food security and environmental sustainability.

Hon. Paul Chibingu, MP Malawi, Vice-President of FPA

Hon. Chibingu outlined his presentation, stating that it would discuss the concept of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture; achieving food security; and the role of Members of Parliament in ensuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda is a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 worldwide, ensuring that no one is left behind. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda was a landmark achievement for its provision of a shared vision of sustainable development for all. Further, the 2030 Agenda structurally offers ways and means of self-review which promotes progress and long-term accountability.

Food Security and Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture

He noted that out of the 17 SDGs that the world leaders agreed to deliver, nine of them are directly or indirectly connected with farming, conferring a special multidimensional status to agriculture. Specifically, Goal 2 talks about ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. As far as this goal is concerned, the aim is to see to it that all people have enough quality food to lead a healthy life. However, this is not as easy as it sounds. There are a lot of sacrifices to be made.

Globally, the number of people is still growing. This means that the world will require more food to feed its growing population. Therefore agriculture will play a crucial role in addressing the planet's future needs — whether in food production, in health or in the preservation of the environment.

Again globally, there are more challenges in food production as well as with food-related diseases. Currently, the state of global food security raises serious concerns as the number of the hungry has surpassed one billion and emerging trends are further threatening global food supply.

Achieving Food Security

Hon. Chibingu mentioned that achieving Goal 2 of the SDGs entails undertaking the following measures:

1. The productivity and incomes of small farmers should be improved by promoting equal access to land, technology and markets, promoting sustainable food production systems, and promoting resilient agricultural practices;
2. Increased investments through international cooperation need to be encouraged in order to bolster the productive capacity of agriculture in developing countries;
3. In order to reduce food price volatility and enhance the efficiency of agriculture markets , existing harmful trade restrictions need to be eliminated and governments must refrain from imposing new restrictions;
4. The provision of social safety nets should be scaled up to offset the impact of shocks, secure basic livelihoods, and protect poor people from risk and vulnerability;
5. A combination of adaptation and mitigation strategies is needed at regional, national, and local levels to reduce the vulnerability of poor people to climate change and to moderate the impact of climate change;
6. The competition for natural resources, together with the degradation of environmental assets in many developing countries, calls for the placing of a sharper focus on the harmonization of food security and sustainability policies.

The Role of Members of Parliament

To him, in order to achieve the SDGs, in particular Goal 2 of the SDGs, members of parliament are called on to undertake the following roles:

1. to ensure that they pass a budget and that the budget is in line with the aspirations of the SDGs;
2. to scrutinize public spending and ensure that expenditure conforms to approved budgets;
3. to localize international instruments and agreements, and ensure that they are implemented;
4. to repeal old archaic laws;
5. to harmonize policies to make sure that they work in unison;
6. to propose new legislation.

Discussion

Hon. Rockson Nelson Dafeamekpor, MP Ghana, sought to know the attempt by their government to address the problem of land ownership rights when original land owners go back to use their lands illegally after the government has taken the land for other purposes.

Hon. Paul Chibingu, MP Malawi, Vice-President of FPA, responded that in Malawi there are three categories of lands – customary land which is a huge land that belongs to the people, coteries land which belongs to very few people, and the free road land which is being taken care of by investors. When the government wants to do something on the customary land, they need to follow procedures with a good reason as to why they want to do it. He added that if they want to construct a road, for example, and that road will benefit a lot of people, then the person has to surrender it.

Hon. Helen Adjoa Ntoso, MP Ghana, asked what the countries are doing for their farmers to adapt to climate change.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, commented that in Ghana it does not seem to be very attentive to the pressures brought by climate change and that the country does not seem to have a real policy direction that will tackle it. He also mentioned that it is believed that the country has the dividend because those causing the climate change are mostly in the developed world.

Hon. Mohammed A. Mahmud, MP Nigeria, explained that the Government of Nigeria has been able to come up with a committee for climate change and that they have agencies like meteorological agencies.

Hon. Inusah A. B. Fuseini, MP Ghana, asked what they would recommend by way of policy or legislation to ensure the maximum utilization of what is produced in the country.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, answered that so many harvests go to waste due to poor technology, insufficient technology, and lack of understanding of the act of preservation of food products. The idea tackled by the present government is to have warehouses in every district, and hopefully it can monitor them and keep pressure on them. The country trains and engages extension officers who have been working to help farmers so that they can farm well, fund properly, and produce and preserve their products.

Hon. Judith Pareno, MP Kenya, asked what percentage of the population Hon. Pelpuo referred to when he said two million people. She asked what was wrong with these two million, whether it is hardship, the environment they live in probably has less rainfall, or are they are just lazy. She also asked what the penalty is for the people who are causing havoc in terms of the preservation of the environment and what is provided as punishment, or as a way to solve these problems.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, replied that it accounts for roughly 6% of the population as Ghana has a population of about 30 million. He went on to say that part of the people who are food insecure are those two million people who are susceptible to variations in climate. Also, any person who takes any part of the minerals that belong to the state without due process or license, there are existing laws against it. This law is within the constitution and one who engages in illegal mining is arrested and persecuted. The law exists, but the problem is law enforcement. The policy of the government has shown that they arrest those who violate the law regarding mining. Facilities, vehicles and other equipment used for the implementation of mining have been destroyed, and yet people are still doing it. He concluded that it is not about a lack of the law; it is about law enforcement.

Hon. Sharon Garin, MP Philippines, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, asked if their countries interrelated food security with population growth rate.

Hon. George Samuel Nartey, MP Ghana, asked, “What is the position of Africans on the Paris Treaty in relation to climate change? How are they making that case in the world body at the UN? What is their position as parliamentarians on Genetical Modified Foods (GMO)? What are they doing as a stock up measure and what are they doing about food security?”

Hon. Paul Chibingu, MP Malawi, Vice-President of FPA, responded that most of the African leaders attended conferences where this issue has been discussed and that it is something we must look at seriously.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, answered that Ghanaians are very much averse to GMO food and do not want it to be produced or imported in Ghana. There is a law, the buyers’ Safety Act 2011 3831, which allows Ghana to apply biotechnology to production. It encourages the country to produce GMO food in Ghana. He added that the country even has an act for protection of certain plant diseases.

Hon. Alexander Roosevelt Hottordze, MP Ghana, asked in what ways the various states in Nigeria are involved in the crafting and implementing the various food security and environmental sustainability policies that Hon. Mahmud just spoke about.

Hon. Mohammed A. Mahmud, MP Nigeria, responded that they have worked out a holistic way at the federal level. The aim is to move away from oil dependency to farm production. Nigeria has the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Before each of these policies, all the states commissioners of agriculture were invited and their contribution was taken along in the formulation of these policies. He emphasized that there is a hope that these policies will turn out to be beneficial for the country.

SESSION 2: Investing in Youth and Gender Equality

Session Chair: Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP Sri Lanka

Hon. Sharon Garin, MP Philippines, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives

The Republic of Philippines continues to observe the standards set by the United Nations in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The country is on track to achieving the SDGs and has been performing well in the world rankings. However, despite this improved performance, the country's progress is hampered by challenges, particularly in reproductive health (RH) and gender equality. Hon. Garin said that they, in the 17th Philippine Congress, are trying to address these challenges by pushing for measures that will safeguard the rights of the disadvantaged.

Based on the 2015 Census of Population, the Philippines had a total population of 100,981,437. The total population has gone up by 8.6 million since 2015. According to the 2015 Census, males outnumber females. Males comprise 50.6% of the population, while females comprise 49.4%. The Philippines' population is young. The median age in the Philippines is 24.3 years, meaning half of the population is younger than 24.3 years. This also implies that they have more people depending on the working population.

Work and Economic Participation

The Philippines has been known to be the most gender equal country in South East Asia. According to the Labor Force Survey, men outnumber women in the labor force by about 20%, while women outnumber men in doing unpaid work. Unpaid family workers refer to family members who work without pay on a farm or in a family-operated business. In agriculture, the gender gap in land ownership is significant. There are about 1,342,509 land ownership certificates titled to men, while there are 653,945 land ownership certificates titled to women.

It appears that both men and women are looking for greener pastures outside the country. Women who work outside the country are most commonly employed in elementary occupations (as defined by the ILO). This category includes domestic workers, service workers, and shop assistants. On the other hand, male overseas Filipino workers are most likely employed as plant and machine operators and assemblers. To encourage women to join the workforce, it must be ensured that their reproductive role is not compromised, and that in every workplace their health and well-being is prioritized. Women are often employed in elementary occupations and in manufacturing industries, which makes them more vulnerable to health hazards.

In terms of education, there are more males who are enrolled in tertiary education, while there are more women who are engaged in technical vocational education and training. According to the results of the 2016 Annual Poverty Indicators Survey (APIS), the most common

reasons among out-of-school youth and children for not attending school were marriage or family matters, the high cost of education or financial concerns, and a lack of personal interest.

Women's access to higher education is largely hindered by their unmet need for sexual and reproductive health (SRH). According to the 2017 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), one in every 10 women aged 15-19 years old was pregnant for the first time, or already a mother. Around the world, pregnancy and childbirth-related complications are the leading causes of death for women aged 15-19. Maternal death in the Philippines is the highest in the region.

The rising number of HIV cases in the Philippines remains a challenge in the country. She mentioned that 629 persons were diagnosed with HIV and more than 80% (513 persons) who were diagnosed with the HIV virus belong to the 15-34 age group. To address this, the Department of Health has done information campaigns on HIV/AIDS, and has reiterated the preventive measures available. The Department of Health also continues to collaborate with influencers and advocates like 2015 Miss Universe Pia Wurzbach and 2015 Miss International Kylie Verzosa.

The National Youth Commission, on the other hand, has recently launched an information campaign "National Youth Commission - HIV and AIDS Prevention Program for the Youth" (NYC-HAPPY), which aims to engage youth organizations, schools, communities and agency partners with technical support for HIV awareness, education, prevention, screening, training, and volunteer engagement.

There is no genuine gender equality if women are not free from violence. Violence has an impact on the health and well-being of individuals. According to NDHS 2017, one in four women has experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence at the hands of their husband or partner. Fourteen percent have experienced physical violence while 5% have experienced sexual violence from their current or most recent husband or partner.

Sadly, it does not stop there. According to the Center for Women Resources, every hour, one woman or child is raped in the Philippines. And according to the Department of Health, most recorded victims of sexual abuse are children aged 13 to 15. To address the gaps in protecting women against any type of harassment, the Philippines Congress has proposed legislative measures that seek to expand the definition of violence in their existing laws on sexual harassment. These bills aim to ensure that every place, whether it is online or on the street, whether it is at home or at work, is a safe place for women.

In fact, compared to the previous Congresses, the 17th Congress has recognized the abilities of women legislators, and has elected seven female Deputy Speakers, including herself. This Congress is proving to be more gender progressive by giving women more space in the political arena.

Improved ratings in four of the SDGs could harness these achievements and continue to target the other 13 Goals. As evident, consideration need be given as to whether government policies are effective enough at reaching out to most of the population. While there are many

areas to work on, there are many opportunities to solve these gaps. The Philippines observes the SDGs and Family Planning 2020. Their commitment to the SDGs, particularly SDG5 on gender equality and women empowerment, will help mainstream initiatives to close the gender gap.

One of the positive policy reforms made with regards to youth is the “Sangguniang Kabataan Reform Act of 2015”. This law mandates the establishment of a youth development office in every municipality in the country with paid staff to serve as a focal point.

Hon. Garin was pleased to share one of the bills that she has authored, the First 1,000 Days Bill, which has been approved by Congress. This bill aims to institutionalize services in different stages of the first 1,000 days of life through strengthening the health and nutrition programmes for pregnant and lactating women, adolescent girls of reproductive age and teenage mothers, and infants and young children.

The Philippines has the highest rate of maternal death in the ASEAN region. The First 1,000 Days Bill is an attempt to address this issue. This is also an investment to address malnutrition. In a study conducted by UNICEF, the total cost of doing nothing for malnutrition is \$4.5 billion annually. This gives a clear rationale for the government investment in the first 1,000 days of a person’s life.

Proposed Legislation on Preventing Gender-Based Violence

- An Act Defining Electronic Violence Against Women and Their Children (House Bill Nos. 2592, 1471, 2664, 2850, and 5153 and Senate Bill Nos. 1251 and 1080)
- An Act Expanding the Coverage of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act (House Bill Nos. 194, 508, 2591, 2932, 3691, 4822 and 5977, to expand the definition of violence against women and sexual harassment)

For women to be able to participate in the public sphere, they should be free from all forms of violence. Another milestone in the House of Representatives is that they were able to pass a bill institutionalizing divorce. They may not see its enactment in the 17th Congress but they are looking at it as one step forward to advance the rights of women. This legislation is one solution to free women from abusive relationships.

- Proposed Legislation on Women’s Political Participation
- Women Participation and Representation in Political Parties Act of 2016 (House Bill 3200, to increase the quantity and quality of women participation in politics and governance).

Hon. Larry Younquoi, MP Liberia

Hon. Younquoi greeted the participants and highlighted what Liberia is doing with respect to investment in youth and in gender equality.

Investing in the Youth

Liberia's population is relatively young: those aged 0-24 comprise 63% of the population and those aged 25-54, 30%. So if we consider the ages 0-35, the ages that are considered to define youth, we can see that they account for 75% of the population; in other words, there is high dependency ratio. Most of the youth are primarily consumers. Every year, a high percentage of graduating students cannot find jobs. Recent studies put Liberia's unemployment rate is very high and there are not enough jobs being created for university graduates with bachelor and master's degrees. Policy makers know the demographic dividend will soon become a demographic bomb which could explode at any time. In response, the Government is enacting a lot of youth-friendly programmes and laws. UNFPA was instrumental in coordinating and drafting population policies for Liberia.

Many of these policies have been passed into law, and there has been a special emphasis on Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). A number of community colleges located away from Monrovia are helping to keep youth from migrating towards the already overcrowded capital. But these cannot sufficiently address the problem of migration to the city because they lack adequate funding. There are many competing budgetary demands on a limited government purse, and the total budget is less than 1 billion — barely over half a billion in U.S. dollar terms. In other words, huge challenges remain, and investing in youth means not only providing jobs and education, but also having appropriate policies to address reproductive health and rights. The government has population policies and programmes to address these latter issues.

Gender Equality

Liberia's population is almost evenly distributed among males and females, with women accounting for 49.7% and men 50.3% of the population. People taking an uncritical look may think that Liberia has no problem with gender equality because the country had Africa's first elected female president for a very recent 12 year period, from 2006-2018, and currently has a female vice-president playing an active part in helping the President (a former football star). Nevertheless, there is still a problem.

The former President was not just an ordinary woman — she worked for some time with the United Nations, and City Bank, and was a political activist. Her victories in two elections did not automatically mean that key issues with regards to women's emancipation were addressed, though she did manage to set the stage, and Liberia has a very vigorous rape law; no bail is available for those charged with rape.

Liberia's population policy has done well under recent administrations. Budgetary resources have been allocated towards maternal and child health (MCH), which is integrated into the

health services. The government also allows private NGOs to carry on their activities to help women, young girls, and males in understanding RH issues and in helping to meet their unmet needs.

The role of lawmakers is to ensure that there are sufficient resources directed to these issues. Liberia spends 15% of its budget on health and is trying to push this to a more standard level of 25% of the budget, in order to address most of these issues. Lawmakers are heavily involved with updating Liberian laws dealing with matters of public health. Most laws on the book date from the revision of Liberia's Code of Laws in 1976. Updating these will address a lot of issues that are concerned with women's well-being, such as abortion. Also lawmakers have established a Land Authority law which details how land business should be conducted, and which advances women's land rights.

Finally, laws and traditional mindsets have prevented women from being elected and holding positions of authority. Liberia is a small country with an estimated 2017 population of 4.7 million. The primary issue facing the country is not the number of its people but the quality of life that people have. The unemployment rate is still high, mortality rates are still high, and access to health services is still a challenge, as is food security because of the protracted war. Currently the country is experimenting with democracy.

Hon. Seth Acheampong, MP Ghana

Investing in the Youth and Gender Equality: The Ghanaian Experience

Undoubtedly, more international, national and regional attention is being paid to investing in youth and gender equality. For instance, Goals 4 and 5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development focus on educating both males and females, and ensuring gender equality. In this regard, countries are making appreciable efforts at building the capacities of youth and for their participation in development and decision-making processes.

The United Nations defines youth as persons in the 15-24 age bracket. This definition is not legally binding however, and the age definition of youth varies from one country to another and from one organization to the other.

The African Youth Charter defines youth as those between the ages of 15-35 and Ghana has adopted this age definition in its National Youth Policy. In this discussion, Hon. Acheampong said that nations are investing in their youth because nearly half the world's population, about 46%, is 24 years old or younger. He also noted that women constitute more than 50% of the population in most states, and are important in the economy, particularly in the area of agriculture, where they constitute about 50% of the labour force and in developing countries produce about 60-80% of food according to the global women fund report.

It is also argued that investing in the youth will lead to economic growth as it will lead to more youth being employed. However, despite such efforts being made with regards to the

economy and production, too many youth and women still face challenges of unemployment, poverty, and discrimination.

The above situation is similar to that of Ghana where youth aged 15-35 constitute about 33% of the population, and yet, most youth and women are unemployed.

In Ghana, more than 1.2 million persons aged 15 years old and older are estimated to be unemployed. This represents a total unemployment rate of 11.9%, according to the Labour Force Survey Report by the Ghana Statistical Services (GSS).

The plight of females is worse as they are more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts. Out of the 1.2 million unemployed, 714,916 are females, representing 57.2% of the number.

Hon. Acheampong explained that unemployment has negative impact on young people and on society at large. Unemployed youth are forced to find alternatives to generate income, and these may include activities such as hawking, prostitution, armed robbery, and drug trafficking. In such a situation, young women may be raped, defiled, assaulted and face unwanted pregnancies.

Females are underrepresented in politics and in parliament as well. In the Parliament of Ghana, for instance, women make up only 13.5% of the body while their male counterparts make up 86.5%.

Hon. Acheampong stated that access to information on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of youth also remains a challenge. He explained that this is a result of socio-cultural practices that do not allow young people to assert their views and to access useful education on their sexuality. The low use of contraceptives among youth and women in general is a key concern with regards to rapid population growth, and the transmission of some STDs. There is also discrimination against women as a result of negative cultural practices such as female circumcision, the Trokosi' system of ritual servitude, and the childhood marriage of girls.

He also stated that studies indicate that investing in agriculture has the potential of reducing unemployment, ensuring food security, and improving the lives of the people. Although some youth, particularly women in rural areas, are farmers, there are not many incentives for farming due to lack of access to land, to financial support, and to modern techniques of farming.

Despite the above challenges, there are positive indications that investing in youth and females can contribute immensely to socio-economic development. Consequently, various governments have adopted investment strategies for socio-economic development and for the empowerment of youth, women and the disadvantaged in society. Examples are the National Service Scheme (NSS) and the Youth Enterprises Agency (YEA). NSS, since its inception in 1973, has contributed in no small measure to the development of Ghana, especially in the educational sector, where a shortage of teachers has been a perennial problem in most rural

areas. Service personnel have augmented the government's efforts at staffing schools, particularly in rural areas.

Investing in skills training of youth and women is crucial for them to participate in the labour market. To this end, the government, through the National Youth Authority, has trained about 3,000 young people across the country in Online / Digital Marketing. Each trainee was given a tablet as a start-up tool.

Education is critical to the socio-economic development of any nation. Consequently, free compulsory basic education is available in Ghana. In addition to this, the government recently implemented free senior high school from the 2017/2018 academic year. This has increased youth access and participation in secondary education.

Hon. Acheampong also mentioned that five young people were supported by the National Youth Authority to participate in the Youth Forum of the Commonwealth Heads of States and Government (CHOGM) in London, United Kingdom, from 16-18 April 2018. The authority was gender sensitive as they nominated two young females to be elected as Executive Members of the Common Youth Council (CYC). Indeed, they were elected to the executive position at the conference.

He stated that Parliament plays a crucial role in investing in youth, particularly in women. However, some practices still exist as some communities continue these secretly. An example is the *Trokosi* System which has been banned and so is illegal. He defined it as the following:

Trokosi is a system where parents who are in debt to the fetish priest in the community give their female child to the priest to act as a ritual servant and sexual partner.

The Parliament consequently amended the Criminal Code with the (Amendment) Act 554 of 1998.

The Parliament through the various committees oversees the performance of the Ministries, Departments and Agencies. This is to ensure the effective implementation of the government's youth and gender policies. This has been done using a number of mechanisms such as questions to the Ministers, statements on the floor, motions, and field monitoring visits to project sites.

He said it is important to note that every year the Ministry of Education budget constitutes a large part of Ghana's budget. Parliament will no doubt approve of this budget because of their focus on developing the skills of the youth. Parliament, however, has yet to amend a bill on the National Health Insurance Scheme to include free contraceptives. A bill in affirmation of this has also yet to be passed.

Hon. Acheampong concluded by saying that investing in youth, women and the disadvantaged in society would alleviate the aforementioned challenges they face, and would empower them to participate in the socio-economic development of the country.

Discussions

Hon. Viplove Thakur, MP India, Vice-Chair of IAPPD, asked, “To Hon. Younquoi, regarding the 30% quota for women in Liberia, is this just on a party basis, or is it for the entire constitutional assembly? Then to Hon. Achemamong, what is the literacy rate of women in Ghana? Also what is the percentage of law implementation?”

Hon. Seth Acheampong, MP Ghana, responded that his assistant will confirm the exact statistics as the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) has these and they rely on their statistics. Regarding law implementation, it is an issue in developing countries, but the awareness of it is marvelous. He said that the level of awareness that some civil society groups are showing in enlightening numerous people is a joy and that he is confident that with some policies introduced and implemented, there is some progress being made. When Hon. Acheampong entered the Parliament it had a female Speaker and a female Chief Justice and even now women are in the leading positions.

Hon. Larry Younquoi, MP Liberia, replied, “This law has a problem presently. It is not a constitutional amendment; it is part of the electoral law and the way it is written does not make it easy to implement. It states that political parties need to ensure that among their nominees, 30% are females. However, one can say that ensuring and nominating are different from being elected, so that is the problem we want to address in the constitution”.

Hon. Helen Adjoa Ntoso, MP Ghana, asked, “To Hon. Sharon who referred to the teenage pregnancy reduction bill, what does it entail? To Hon. Younquoi, who stated that gender equality is not a problem in his country, while at the end of the presentation stressing that they are pushing for an affirmative law. How many women have seats in the Liberian Parliament and what makes the representatives think that they do not have a problem in terms of gender equality?”

Hon. Larry Younquoi, MP Liberia, denied that the gender equality is not a problem in Liberia, but from an uncritical look of things it is easy for one to conclude that gender equality is not a problem.

A Member of Parliament from Ghana asked, “To Hon. Garin, what is the proportion of HIV among youth and adults? In addition, is the legislature looking at the funding landscape for HIV to bring these high rates down? Is there a bill that has been established by the parliament as to what amount of money should be used in curbing the high incidence and prevalence of HIV in the Philippines? As to the 1,000 Days Campaign, is it really a laudable one? And also with teenage pregnancy, is it a very big emergency in the country?”

Hon. Sharon Garin, MP Philippines, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, answered, “With HIV, the country’s main problem is not really with funding, but about the awareness of people who think that HIV has a cure and so it is not so important. When you go to the villagers, they think it a taboo topic. That is why all the agencies are trying their best to educate them. The Department of Health, Education even tried to get celebrities because they have more credibility than politicians”.

“It is basically about institutionally deciding, when it comes to education, at what age what should be taught, and to what extent a teacher can advise teenagers as to what they should do if it happens to them. It is empowering teenagers as well as teachers. The Department of Health also gives people access to contraceptives and medications or vitamins they need”.

“As to the 1,000 Days Campaign, it is actually a very beautiful concept which I heard in UNICEF when I was still in my second term. The first 1000 days start with the conception and until the child is 2 years old”.

Hon. Hector Appuhamy, MP Sri Lanka, asked what Ghana’s Youth Act 2015 is.

Hon. Seth Acheampong, MP Ghana, replied, “At one point Ghana had a major unemployment challenge which was that most graduates were not getting employed in the mainstream employment system, and so a policy was adopted to see how it could mitigate that challenge. It started as the National Youth Employment Programme and over a period we realized that it was a good stock up measure, one that we needed to back up by legislation. Thus the then administration introduced a bill and sent it as a memorandum to the Parliament. It was mainly worked on so that the programme could be backed up by law and that every penny used for such duties can be accounted for since it is taken from the consolidated fund.

SESSION 3: Building a Healthy Society: Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

Session Chair: Hon. Hassan Omar, MP Djibouti

Hon. Viplove Thakur, MP India, Vice-Chair of IAPPD

In her opening statements, Hon. Viplove Thakur thanked the Ghanaian community for the warm reception. She then stated that since independence, India has made major strides to deal with communicable diseases and explained why her country supports the Universal Health Coverage (UHC):

- An ideal state of health system organization in which every person gets quality health services as per their needs, without suffering financial hardship.
- Access to health services ensures healthier people, while financial risk protection prevents people from being pushed into poverty.
- UHC also includes universal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services.
- UHC, therefore, is a critical component of sustainable development and poverty reduction, and a key element in reducing social inequities.

She posited that, throughout this time trajectory, the essence of “health for all” has been constant from 1977 through to the present. The UN, as such, has evidenced this long-desired goal in policies like:

- 1977: The World Health Organization (WHO) Health Assembly set the target of “Health for All”
- 2000: The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- 2016: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- 2018: Theme of the World Health Day is “*Universal Health Coverage: Everyone, Everywhere*”.

Speaking on the need for UHC, she said that countries that invest in UHC make a sound investment in their human capital. She went on to say that not only developed countries but also developing countries like Nepal, Afghanistan, Thailand, and El Salvador have committed themselves to UHC. From Africa, Liberia, Gabon, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Rwanda are also moving rapidly to implement UHC.

She stated that the implementation of UHC has not been entirely a smooth ride for her country. She highlighted some of the challenges faced in India:

- India's health indicators improved but are still lagging, when compared to those of other countries.
- The Indian government's expenditure on healthcare is 1.3% of its GDP. This compares to the world average healthcare outlay, which stands at nearly 6%. India's outlay is in fact the lowest in the world.
- India's out-of-pocket-expenditures (OOPE) are extremely high at approximately 70%.
- The quality of public health services is another serious problem. The poor are therefore compelled to spend heavily on private medical care when faced with health shocks, which drives them further into poverty.
- Primary health centers are inadequate and ill equipped. For UHC to succeed there is a need to strengthen these health centers.

Amidst all the challenges that India faces in the implementation of UHC, its strong commitment to the success of such a policy is evidenced through the following:

- UHC is a priority under the National Health Policy 2017.
- "Healthy India, Prosperous India" has been reflected in the 2018-19 Union budget of India
- The government is steadily but surely progressing towards the goal of UHC.
- A National Health Protection Scheme "Ayushman Bharat", the world's largest health protection scheme, was launched in India recently, and will cover 100 million poor and vulnerable families (500 million beneficiaries).
- In addition, 1.5 lakh sub centers will be converted into Health and Wellness Centers providing comprehensive care, including treatment of non-communicable diseases and maternal and child health services. These centers will also provide free essential drugs and diagnostic services.

Talking on SRH, Hon. Viplove Thakur said that sexuality and reproduction are vital aspects of personal identity and are fundamental to fulfilling human relationships within diverse cultural contexts. The core of SRH is promotion of RH, voluntary and safe sexual and reproductive choices for individuals and couples, including decisions on family size and on the timing of marriage. She said that poor women, especially in low- and middle-income countries, suffer disproportionately from unintended pregnancies, maternal death and disability, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, gender-based violence and other problems related to the reproductive system and sexual behaviour.

Governments must ensure that essential SRH, maternal, newborn child, and adolescent health services are available and accessible to everyone. She also mentioned that these areas require continued, sustained advocacy, and political and financial investment.

SRH in India – Status

India is facing several concerns about SRH:

- Unwanted fertility: As per the National Family Health Survey (NFHS IV, 2015-2016), nearly 19% pregnancies are either unwanted or mistimed. The burden of using modern family planning methods is largely borne by females.
- High maternal mortality: India's maternal mortality ratio is unacceptably high at 130 per 100,000 live births (2014-16) as per UN estimates.
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) / Reproductive Tract Infections: In a nation-wide community-based study, the prevalence of such infections was nearly 6% in the 15-50 years age group. The problem is compounded further by the prevailing culture of silence as women are generally reluctant to seek medical treatment for these symptoms.

SRH in India: Government's Approach

- In 1951, India became the world's first nation to launch a family planning programme.
- Post ICPD (Cairo, 1994): India formulated appropriate policy and programmatic responses.
- The National Population Policy (NPP) was formulated in the year 2000. It affirms the government's commitment to the promotion of voluntary and informed choice, and continuation of the target-free approach in family planning service delivery.
- The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was launched in 2005. It aimed to revamp the public healthcare delivery system and to provide accessible, affordable and quality healthcare to the rural population. Conditional Cash Transfer schemes like "*Janani evam Shishu Suraksha Yojana*" (for promoting institutional deliveries) were introduced to help address economic barriers preventing access to services.
- A national level Reproductive and Child Health Programme II (RCH II) which focuses on addressing RH needs of the population through evidence-based technical intervention through a wide range of service delivery networks that was introduced in 2005.

Highlighting the priorities of India with respect to SRH, she said that:

- The Nation is emphasising improving access to quality RH services and providing it throughout the course of a life;
- India is also ensuring that women have access to skilled birth attendants when giving birth, and that those women who develop life-threatening complications during pregnancy, childbirth, or post-partum can have immediate access to treatment at adequately equipped facilities;

- Efforts are being made to eliminate delays due decision-making, to ensure timely transportation to proper facilities and to enable prompt treatment on arrival at facilities;
- Services are being made available to women and men with lower incomes, especially in rural areas.
- There is emphasis on preventing and treating reproductive tract and sexually transmitted infections and meeting the unmet RH needs of underserved groups, such as adolescents and people living with HIV/AIDS, with special reference to information, and counselling services.

She stated that she will always emphasize that RH must not be only a women's issue. As per her experience, a family-based programme for healthy families is of utmost important. She added that RH should not be limited to a woman's childbearing years. Patriarchal and traditional practices such as child marriages and attitudes such as menstrual have come in the way of ensuring female health.

Highlighting the role of parliamentarians in all these, she said that:

- The SDGs are integral to the day-to-day work of parliamentarians and the parliament.
- Parliamentarians are also the link between the government and the people.
- The Parliament formulates policy and gets the feedback of the people, which they transmit to the government to help them do better.
- They can educate people, make them aware of aims and programmes, and guide them in implementing these better.
- They make policy decisions regarding the SDG issues,
- The better allocation of funds and better implementation by continuously monitoring the services both at the ground level as well as in the parliament through question hour.

At the community level, they can:

- Motivate people to accept programmes by convincing them about their benefits.
- Ensure reasonable functioning of the service centers by continuously monitoring them.

In summation, she said that UHC and SRH are key in attaining sustainable development throughout the world. India has a huge challenge to meet these goals and the Government of India is committed to these goals, and is taking proactive measures to attain them. In addition,

parliamentarians have a vital role to play through advocacy, legislation and resource mobilization.

Mr. Lucien Kouakou, Regional Director of IPPF Africa Region

Mr. Kouakou used the opportunity to say that IPPF regrets the deaths of several people in Japan due to natural disasters and extended his condolences to the Japanese government. Touching on IPPF, he said representatives from Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Mauritius founded the IPPF Africa Region in Ghana in 1971.

He went on to give what he said was a common understanding of UHC. UHC stands for the goal of ensuring that all people have access to the health services they need without the risk of financial ruin. However, according to WHO, there are one billion people worldwide without any access to health care.

Each year, worldwide:

- 25 million unsafe abortions take place;
- As many as 180 million couples may be affected by infertility;
- Approximately 266,000 women die from cervical cancer,

Each year, in developing regions:

- More than 200 million women want to avoid pregnancy but are not using modern contraception.
- More than 45 million women receive inadequate or no prenatal care.
- More than 30 million women deliver their babies outside of a health facility.

The Guttmacher-Lancet Commission Report, released at the beginning of May 2018, highlights gaps in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) around the world, and quantifies the toll those gaps take on individuals, communities and economies.

Mr. Kouakou said that the Commission shines a light on the need for additional support for groups that are often marginalized and particularly highlights the following:

- Protecting the SRHR of displaced and refugee populations, and strengthening services in humanitarian crisis settings;
- Acknowledging and addressing the needs of people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expression, and sex characteristics. LGBTs face serious barriers in many countries in accessing SRH information and services due to criminalisation of their sexual practices, discrimination and violence;

- Limited evidence available on adolescents aged 10-14 years. The age bands for which RH survey data is generally available are those of women aged 15-49 and of men aged 15-59.

Mr. Kouakou said that for many, if not all of these groups, there is a need for additional research to fully understand and document their SRHR needs, and the challenges they face in obtaining care. Closing these gaps will require a holistic approach that encompasses the right of all individuals to make decisions about their bodies and lives. He further stated that the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission's vision of universal access to SRHR is affordable, attainable, and essential to the achievement of healthy, equitable development, and human rights for all.

The commission's report recommends the following:

- Act on:
 1. A new and comprehensive definition of SRHR
 2. An essential package of SRH interventions
 3. Gaps in health programming, neglected areas of SRHR and services for marginalized groups
- Address evidence gaps and prioritize needed SRHR research
- Support changes in laws, policies and social norms
- Secure sustainable funding and support
- Strengthen and use accountability processes to ensure the realization of SRHR commitments.

According to Mr. Kouakou, one key contribution of the report is the notion that sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive health, and reproductive rights are distinct but interlinked components, and that SRHR must be addressed as an integrated whole.

The report also makes the case for greater investments in SRH, and recommends securing sustainable domestic and international financing to close the gaps that exist. This would cost just nine US dollars per person per year in developing regions, according to the report.

- Fully meeting women's health needs related to pregnancy (including miscarriages, still births, abortions and livebirths) and to modern contraceptives would cost \$53.6 billion or \$8.56 per person in developing regions.
- Every additional dollar invested in contraception reduces the resources needed for pregnancy-related care by 2.20 per person as modern contraception averts unintended pregnancies, and the cost of care associated with these pregnancies.

This is an affordable investment, especially considering that half of this amount is already being spent to on current levels of care, and it will yield enormous returns.

He further stated that the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission report is in alignment with IPPF's vision for all people to be free to make choices about their sexuality and wellbeing, in a world without discrimination. In addition, IPPF's Integrated Package of Essential SRH Services (IPES) promotes comprehensive service provision for the most pressing SRH needs of all, especially for the most marginalized and underserved.

Mr. Kouakou stressed that for IPPF, SRHR is fundamental to people's health and survival, to gender equality and to the well-being of humanity. Yet weak political commitment, inadequate resources, persistent discrimination against women and girls, and unwillingness to openly and comprehensively address issues related to sexuality have repeatedly stalled progress.

He therefore called on members of parliament to:

- Support SRHR redefinition from the GLC and champion the agenda
- Hold governments accountable on their global and continental commitments
- Join voices to the call of 5% GDPs to ensure that *No One is Left Behind*
- Popularize the UHC to realize its potential.

Discussion

Hon. Judith Pareno, MP Kenya, asked, "To both presenters, you have a good blue print as to what is happening and what will happen, but the challenge is, who will implement these policies. Because the problem is not about not knowing what to do, but who and how to implement these policies to move forward".

Mr. Lucien Kouakou, Regional Director of IPPF Africa Region, responded, "The question is, how they can accelerate action. Indeed, things are slow, but if policies are innovative, they truly can accelerate things".

Hon. Helen Adjoa Ntoso, MP Ghana, commented, "Having UHC is very good, but they should look at the small steps. India reported that 19% of pregnancies were unwanted and Ghana has it at 17%. If they can begin to tackle that by making sure that contraceptives are made free and available everywhere, it will even make it easier for them to have UHC. Countries would have to start by setting targets, at least minimum targets, to reduce unintended pregnancies, so that next year when we meet, we can make a report on what countries have been able to do so far".

Hon. Dr. Chanda Jonas Kamima, MP Zambia, Chair of ZAPPD, asked, “Four months ago, the country passed the National Health Insurance Bill that is now an Act, but the challenge we have is how to implement it effectively. What are the practical steps to take and what are key success factors that Zambia can look at so that we can avoid the same mistakes others have made?”

Hon. Viplove Thakur, MP India, Vice-Chair of IAPPD, responded that from the perspective of SRH, men must be brought to the drawing board to be involved in the whole decision-making process.

Mr. Lucien Kouakou, Regional Director of IPPF Africa Region, pointed out, “When we look at Africa, our tradition is community-based, but how can we take advantage of this to make strides in SRH? Parliamentarians must take on the agenda to make sure that people take matters seriously”.

Hon. Sharon Garin, MP Philippines, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, explained that in the Philippines they use 75% of all taxes collected from tobacco for UHC and that it has worked out well covering about 90% of the Filipinos now. She emphasized that it is something that can be explored by other countries.

SESSION 4: Parliamentarians' Role in Ensuring Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance (TAGG)

Session Chair: Hon. Sharon Garin, MP Philippines, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives

Mr. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, Former MP, Population Expert, Malaysia

In his remarks, Mr. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Ibrahim posited that the role of parliamentarians in ensuring transparency, accountability, and good governance is a prerequisite to achieve the SDGs and parliaments and parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in setting an example of integrity and in striving to hold governments accountable for their actions.

He described accountability as a fundamental prerequisite for preventing the abuse of power and ensuring that those in authority move the country towards the achievement of broadly accepted national goals. The aim of accountability is to inform citizens about the “why” and the “how” of policy processes and choices, so that they can judge and respond to government actions. Open and accountable government is essential, given that corruption thrives in secrecy. Parliamentary accountability includes the following responsibilities:

- Political accountability for policies and other political acts and decisions
- Administrative accountability for the management and administration of public programmes and services
- Financial accountability for the expenditure of public funds

He also raised other key points:

- Parliaments are an integral part in the development of National Integrity Systems.
- Parliamentarians must fight against corruption by first setting good personal examples.
- Parliamentarians need to convince their party leaders of the need for reform. They should cooperate across party lines.
- Parliamentarians can help mobilize the population against corrupt practices.
- Parliaments and civil society should work in partnership to combat corruption and hold governments accountable.
- Parliaments can make a major contribution in anti-corruption efforts by exercising their accountability functions, such as through Finance and Public Accounts Committees.

Mr. Ibrahim spoke about good governance which is an important mechanism to manage a country's resources and affairs. Poor governance stifles and impedes development. In countries where there is corruption, poor control of public funds, lack of accountability, abuse of human rights, and excessive military influence, development inevitably suffers.

This meeting identifies parliamentarians as the “fourth pillar for achieving the 2030 Agenda”, and he said that he could not agree more. “The legislative power (Parliament) plays an important role in creating a democratic state and good governance. It plays a key part in establishing an environment that is conducive to promoting growth and ensuring accountability and transparency of all state and government institutions. The three pillars of democratic governance include:

- Institutions (Parliament, judiciary, executive, political parties, the people, ombudsman)
- Quality of Institutions and Processes (Access, participation, accountability, transparency, rule of law, equity, efficiency, responsiveness and sustainability)
- External Factors (Culture, history, conflict, civil/military relations, donors, economic development, media and global factors).

Building trust in governance has much to do with the operation of the Judiciary in a state. The way the Judiciary implements the rule of law builds trust among people. Corruption is a problem of good governance. The basic cause of corruption is monopoly and discretion without adequate accountability. This implies that the expanding role of government in development has placed the bureaucracy in a monopolistic position and enhanced the opportunities for administrative discretion.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, he said that Parliaments are crucial to the achievement of good governance. Their representational role includes ensuring that citizens and other stakeholders have a voice at the national level and are therefore involved in national governance issues. In truly democratic systems, people elect members of parliament. Representation is therefore mainly about “managing the trust” when voters have confided in their representatives. More precisely, it is about creating jobs, and providing security, health care, education, and infrastructure. Parliamentarians, therefore, should stay in contact with their constituencies and communicate the actions of the Executive and the Parliament to the public”.

Hon. Dr. Chanda Jonas Kamima, MP Zambia, Chair of ZAPPD

Hon. Dr. Chanda started by saying that the “United Nations Parliamentary Handbook on Parliament’s Role in Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals” states that parliamentarians have an opportunity, and a constitutional responsibility to play a significant role in supporting and monitoring implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Parliamentarians are uniquely positioned to act as an interface between the people and state institutions, and to promote and adopt people-centered policies and legislation to ensure that no one is left behind.

Furthermore, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union Guide to Good Practice, parliaments play a key role in constitutional democracies because democracy consists of institutions of representation and accountability, which together determine the laws and policies for society and the respect for the rule of law. Within the traditional separation of powers, the parliament as the freely-elected body holds a central place in any democracy because it is the institution through which the will of the people is expressed, and through which popular self-government is realized in practice. As agents of the people, parliaments represent them in dealings with other branches of government. In doing so, Parliament has the following broad functions:

- Legislation
- Approval of the revenue and expenditure for the nation
- Oversight of executive actions, policy and personnel
- Representation
- Ratification of treaties

Tools for Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance (TAGG)

According to Hon. Dr. Chanda, population matters, as well as food security, and sexual and reproductive health (SRH). All require resources, which demands accountability and transparency. Parliaments, charged with the responsibility of representation and accountability, have a key role in ensuring the achievement of the Agenda 2030. Parliaments have a key role in providing oversight of the government on behalf of the people. This involves budgetary oversight, financial control, oversight over government policy and administration.

Oversight through the Committee System

The most organized method of oversight of the executive is through parliamentary committees. The outcome of a committee’s investigation typically takes the form of a published report, addressed to the government with recommendations, which is laid before the parliament.

Oversight through Parliamentary Questions and Interpellations

In parliamentary systems where ministers are members of the legislature, parliamentarians question Ministers on a regular basis. The purpose of the questions in the House is first to give an opportunity for members to solicit information on matters of public importance. Other salient features about parliamentary questions include allowing members a chance to put across the views of the public to the government; thereby testing the caliber of Ministers and their officers through the way they handle questions.

Monitoring Government Expenditure

A central function of parliaments has always been to exercise control over the spending of public revenue. Parliamentary oversight of government finances can be separated into two broad phases: consideration and approval of the government's plans. Addressing this point, the *post hoc* monitoring of government expenditures is carried out in most parliaments by a Public Accounts Committee or equivalent body, typically chaired by a member from a non-governing party to enhance its independence.

He explained further that effective monitoring encompasses issues such as:

- Has public money been spent on the purposes for which it was assigned?
- Has it been spent efficiently, and without waste?
- Has spending been kept within the budget allocation?
- Is there evidence of fraud or misappropriation, or other irregularities?

Parliamentary involvement in multilateral affairs

The key challenge to parliamentary involvement in international or multilateral affairs is that in almost all countries, foreign affairs and international policy have traditionally been regarded as the exclusive domain of the Executive.

Today, the distinction between foreign or international, and national or domestic, has become increasingly blurred. Parliaments must therefore step beyond the traditional Executive prerogative in international affairs, and subject governments to the same degree of oversight as in the domestic policy arena.

Recommendations

There is a need to identify accountability mechanisms that can be used to review the agenda, such as Parliamentary Committees and Audit Bodies:

- Parliaments should host a debate in the Parliament on the 2030 Agenda. Most members of parliament do not have much information on this agenda and hence there is a need to create awareness;
- Parliaments should share best practices and challenges with a view towards canvassing good solutions;

- Parliaments should create a legal framework that enables implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
- Parliamentarians should advocate for improved budget allocation towards the 2030 Agenda and demand reports on progress, and that they be made in a timely and transparent way.

Hon. Judith Pareno, MP Kenya

Hon. Pareno began her presentation by first explaining the principles of accountability and transparency. She said that accountability is a process whereby public sector organizations and individuals working for them are responsible for their decisions and actions, and submit themselves to appropriate external scrutiny. Transparency, on the other hand, is required to ensure that stakeholders and citizens can have confidence in the decision-making processes and actions of public sector organizations, in the management of their activities, and in the individuals within them. These principles form a powerful force that could help fight corruption and enhance good governance. They are paramount to building healthy democracies, responsible leaders and the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Institutional Accountability and Transparency Framework in Kenya

The legal and institutional framework for accountability and good governance in Kenya consists of the Constitution, laws, policies and guidelines regarding the conduct of public business. The Constitution of Kenya has transformed the governance system and provided a roadmap to democracy. It creates many institutions for enforcing transparency and accountability in the country.

The Role of the Parliament

She went on to say that, Parliaments have the key function of providing oversight over policies and actions of the executive on behalf of the public, as it ensures that there is transparency and accountability by checking the actions of the executive.

The Kenyan Parliament is delineated by the Constitution as the principal agent in holding government officials to account. She further described the functions of the Parliament of Kenya, stating that the Parliament considers the estimates of revenue and expenditure of the national government through relevant committees of the Parliament, which are mandated to discuss and review these estimates.

In furtherance of this, members of parliament are expected to ask questions regarding budget, transparency and accountability, and consult with non-state actors to see the extent to which community needs are addressed in the budget. Outside the Parliament, members of parliament can use their stature as public figures to condemn corrupt activities and practices to ensure accountability in their constituencies.

Conclusion

Hon. Pareno stressed that the mandate for oversight is set out in the Constitution and laws of nearly all countries. There is a broad consensus that oversight is the responsibility of all members of parliament. Effective oversight brings more people into decision-making so that decisions reflect the interests of society as a whole. Effective oversight also improves accountability and transparency, and reduces corruption and enhances parliament's legitimacy as a responsive, inclusive, and representative institution. The Parliament therefore has several important roles to play in advancing the SDGs.

She circulated a document on the Universal Health Care system in Makueni, Kenya, to give members an overview of the policy and how the lives of Kenyans are being transformed, and with this, she ended her presentation.

Discussion

Hon. Viplove Thakur, MP India, Vice-Chair of IAPPD, asked, “To Hon. Dr. Chanda, please tell us more about the National Health Insurance Scheme in Zambia”.

Hon. Dr. Chanda Jonas Kamima, MP Zambia, Chair of ZAPPD, responded that there have been different schools of thought on the scheme and hence it is still at the discussion stage and yet to be implemented.

Hon. Viplove Thakur, MP India, Vice-Chair of IAPPD, asked, “What is the source of funding of elections in Kenya?”

Hon. Judith Pareno, MP Kenya, answered that there are two types of funding: the Government funds political parties for their activities and fully funds the elections. She also explained that there is an Act stipulating that a set percentage of the budget (0.3%) should be set aside to fund the activities of political parties and that the Government takes a role in the nomination of right candidates for elections.

Dr. Osamu Kusumoto, Secretary-General / Executive Director of APDA, commented, “We, the organizer, started projects in 2007 focusing on parliamentarians' role for TAGG and continue taking up this important subject. Back then, there was a prevailing notion that TAGG is something that donor organizations / developed countries are forcing on developing countries and that the latter complied with it in order to receive ODA. Engaging in activities of parliamentarians, who represent people and have a fundamental role in monitoring government actions, we have come to think that it is more imperative to build parliamentarians' capacity to strengthen a “holistic” form of accountability to the people, rather than a “hierarchical” form of accountability to donors. Without accountability to the people, there will be no fair and transparent legal system or law-enforcement, and thus no investment from overseas”.

“Also, approaches to dealing with population issues cannot be forced upon individuals but must be based on their understanding and well-informed choice. As such, parliamentarians have a meaningful and necessary part to play, conveying people’s voices to the government and international community, and communicating international concepts to their constituents. With these two-directional functions, parliamentarians legislate, develop policies and allocate budgetary resources. From this perspective, without accountability to the grassroots, we will never see progress in population programmes”.

“Our activities have seen remarkable development in many countries. In Kenya, Hon. Fredrick Outa pointed to the results of a constitutional amendment that he and his fellow Kenyan parliamentarians initiated after they were inspired by APDA’s projects on TAGG. Hon. Vincent Mwale (MP Zambia) and Hon. Dr. Chris Baryomunsi (MP Uganda), who also participated in APDA’s projects, put efforts to legislate the government’s reporting of ODA to the parliament in Zambia and Uganda, respectively”.

“In relation to this, we would like to encourage all here to provide us with feedback on concrete outcomes from our projects, so that it will serve as strong evidence for us to appeal to the donor organization to continue our parliamentary activities. May I please ask Honorable Members of Parliament from Kenya and Zambia to verify what I just said? (To which they confirmed it is correct.) Thank you, Honorables, for your confirmation”.

Session Chair requested that they share any feedback on progress with the organizer.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, asked, “Do actions against corruption apply to the top of the leadership in Malaysia? While I was in Malaysia, I heard about corruption issues of the past government being cited by the sitting government”.

Mr. Tan Sri Dato’ Seri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, Malaysia, responded that when issues of corruption come up, it is not really a happy thing and that these issues come up because it is the people who suffer considering the amount of leakage. He also added that things are easier said than done, and parliamentarians are there to correct these issues.

Hon. Viplove Thakur, MP India, Vice-Chair of IAPPD, asked, “Given the dominance of some tribes in Kenya, how has equality been promoted and is there really equality?”

Hon. Judith Pareno, MP Kenya, answered that there are about 42 tribes in Kenya. Given the diversity, the Constitution was developed to create room for all — equality and balancing. In appointments and others, there is a look out for ‘the Face of Kenya’ to make sure that every tribe has been represented. In addition, she said that an index has been developed at the county level to check and ensure balance. Announcements are made for the counties who fail to meet the index to correct their actions. There is the delocalization of teaching staff in all schools to ensure that you can teach not only where you are born, but in other places too.

A Member of Parliament from Ghana asked what criteria are used in funding political parties in Kenya.

Hon. Judith Pareno, MP Kenya, responded, “The Act of Parliament specifies the apportionment of funds to the political parties. You only get sponsorship if you have been able to sponsor people to go to the Parliament. Also, there is a coalition amongst the parties where they share funding between themselves, percentage wise, but the total sum before division is received by the party meeting the specified requirements. The office of the registrar of political parties checks that political parties meet the specified requirements and ensures the disbursement of funds”.

Hon. Dr. Chanda Jonas Kamima, MP Zambia, Chair of ZAPPD, emphasized that in democratic countries, parliamentarians who are directly elected by people have more authority than the executive and judiciary and it is parliamentarians’ mission to exercise this authority to influence policies and budget, and hold the government accountable.

Hon. Judith Pareno, MP Kenya, remarked, “It has been only a few months since I became a senator, but from this short experience, I feel that people are placing more confidence in us as their representatives, elected directly by people, and seeking justice and representing their voices. Therefore, it is our duty to ensure that the government is accountable and to act to translate discussion into action”.

Mr. Tan Sri Dato’ Seri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, Malaysia, commented, “It is an unmitigated fact that democracy is inefficient. At the same time, democracy gives people power and a chance to speak out their needs. From the viewpoint of economic efficiency, democracy is inefficient and inconsistent. However, we have to accept it for the soundness of our society. Even it is inefficient, it is important to ensure accountability, transparency and good governance through this process”.

“While democracy has some issues, it can provide a platform where everyone can access the information on public policies and management and keep track of what to do and what has been done. We would like to promote economic development, and it is not our intention to stifle it by strengthening TAGG. As we are aiming at further growth, it needs to be achieved by improving transparency and governance and by eliminating corruption. I would like to reiterate that democracy is inefficient; even with innovative ideas, it may take years to realize them. Even there is consensus, some are left with dissatisfaction. With all that, I strongly believe that parliamentarians can contribute to the success of their own country by fulfilling their significant roles in TAGG”.

Session Chair commented that TAGG cannot be measured in statistical figures and that as the presenters mentioned, institutions and changes therein result from individuals and their changes. She thanked the presenters for their wonderful presentations and wished them all the best in their endeavors.

SESSION 5: Legislative Initiative to Support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Session Chair: Hon. Inusah A. B. Fuseini, MP Ghana

Hon. Dr. Sharif Rahimzoda, MP Tajikistan

He began his presentation by thanking the Parliament of Ghana for their warm welcome and hospitality, and the organizers of the event for the excellent organization of the meeting.

Transformation from the MDGs to the SDGs

Starting off, he gave country's overview on the transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He said that following the implementation of the MDGs in September 2015, the countries assumed a fundamentally new global commitment to eradicate poverty and to lead the world along a sustainable path of development. All Member States of the United Nations approved the sustainable development agenda for the years through to 2030. Based on the experience and lessons learned from the implementation of the MDGs between 2000 and 2015, the SDGs define long-term global development goals aimed at creating sustainable means of economic, environmental and social development for all countries of the world.

Tajikistan approved and adopted the Agenda 2030 and has initiated the promotion of water sector challenges as one of the important challenges within the framework of Agenda 2030. He noted that the adoption of the SDG coincided with the development of the new National Development Strategy of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030 (NDS-2030), which ensures the inclusion of the goals of sustainable development in national policies and programmes. According to the rapid integrated assessment, 78% of the SDGs targets are reflected in the national and sectoral strategic programmes.

He emphasized that members of parliament should perform significant functions as the 2030 Agenda recognizes “the fundamental role of national parliaments in enacting laws and approving budgets, as well as ensuring accountability for the effective fulfillment of our commitments”. Parliamentarians have the opportunity and the constitutional powers to take on important functions to support and monitor the achievement of the SDGs.

He stated that in the NDS-2030, the main role assigned to the Parliament is to ensure transparency and accountability through improving public access to information, parliamentary oversight and civil society participation in the budget process. The Parliament will have to work on improving the existing legislative frameworks and developing and adopting new laws.

Citing the example of Tajikistan, they initiated the preparation of the Voluntary National Review (VNR) in the country for presentation at a high-level political forum in July 2017. The report was based on broad consultations at the national level, in which the members of

parliament took an active part. The main objective of the Review was to analyze the process of implementing NDS at the national level and to integrate the 2030 Agenda into national development policies through the broad participation of all stakeholders.

While ensuring oversight over budgetary funds, Hon. Rahimzoda noted that members of parliament should ensure the allocation of sufficient funds to achieve the SDG in the annual budget. He further stated that in order to strengthen parliamentary oversight, the Committee on Economics and Finance in 2016 introduced the practice of holding quarterly hearings on the execution of the state budget. He posited that the increased role of Parliament in the implementation of the SDGs was linked to the developing the capacities of individual members of parliament in this extremely important area.

In comparison with other authorities, parliamentarians have the most direct connection with constituents, as they are their elected representatives. This gives them a most important opportunity to promote national responsibility, and to ensure that the focus of the SDGs is in people's interests, meeting the diverse needs of the country's population and of benefit to all.

He said that currently preparations are being made to improve the quality of parliamentary oversight at the adoption stage the state budget through:

- The introduction of pre-budget hearings at the budget planning stage
- Holding hearings of sectoral committees of the Parliament to identify sectoral budget priorities, which will allow the committees to familiarize themselves with the budget priorities of the sectors and ensure that they meet the main strategic objectives of public policy.

Hon. Rahimzoda recognized that developing countries face difficulties in achieving targets without the support of the donor community, and Tajikistan is no exception. Over the past few years, the country has seen a decline in support from all donors for poverty reduction, education and health. At the same time, the relatively high levels of poverty, maternal mortality, child mortality, gender disparities suggest serious ongoing challenges in the country. Solving these problems would be possible both with increased funding from the Government and donors.

Parliamentarians must improve coordination mechanisms between themselves, the public authorities of the country, international development partners, UN agencies, and civil society.

In conclusion, he said that it is necessary to:

- Develop a roadmap for the reporting of strategic documents
- Link the monitoring and evaluation structures of strategic documents to the SDGs
- Re-examine national provisions for the development, implementation, and monitoring of urban and area development programmes coordinated with strategic documents

- Strengthen the participation of civil society and raise public awareness to facilitate achievement of the SDGs.

Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa, MP Cameroon, President of FPA

Hon. Effa stated that on behalf of FPA, she was delighted to be part of this important initiative of creating and sustaining a worldwide momentum for the SDGs. She then reiterated their commitment in their work as parliamentarians to keeping their promise to the women and girls on the continent.

She said that the demographic dividend is not a simple question of the rate of youth population growth. The economic, social and environmental potential of all societies fundamentally depends on the attention paid to the rights, health and living conditions of fellow citizens, especially the younger ones. Therefore, it is essential to promote joint efforts to ensure progress in the common struggles against maternal mortality, gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, early marriage, early or closely spaced pregnancies and unsafe abortions.

She posited that the 2030 Agenda highlights the role of parliamentarians, which underlines “the essential role of national parliaments through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets, and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of our commitments”. Between now and 2030, national parliaments must deliver on their promises to enable millions of women and adolescent girls to use voluntary family planning, and protect the basic human rights for all. Parliamentary engagement with the implementation of the ICPD goals and the 2030 Agenda can take many forms and may differ from region to region, depending on the political and constitutional circumstances, she said.

Parliamentarians need to be active in ensuring that their governments uphold the principles of respecting their commitments which they made at the United Nations. She called on members of parliament in Africa and in other continents to keep striving to bring the international community to focus on preventing unintended pregnancies and averting maternal deaths. Hon. Effa said that each parliamentarian in this venue has a specific role to play to make this happen. She also highlighted the fact that strengthening their work with other UN agencies, international development partners, and civil society organizations is important to ensure the success of the Ouagadougou Partnership and related initiatives.

She also called on all governments to increase funding for contraceptives and to support the organizations that are advancing the SRHR of all, including young people and adolescents. Advocating, promoting, supporting and de-politicizing the rights and empowerment of women and girls will be crucial in capturing the benefits of the demographic dividend.

She said that they must urge all fellow members of parliament in Africa, Asia, and any other regions of the world to join them to ensure that the national and international commitments to the rights of women and girls for sustainable development are strictly respected. Thank you.

Hon. Florin Bodog, MP Romania

Hon. Bodog stressed that as a social democrat, he is very passionate about the UN vision to transform the world to fight against inequality and achieve more progress in a sustainable way.

He focused on policy and legislative initiatives made by the Parliament and Government of Romania to achieve the SDGs:

- GOAL 1: Increasing the national minimum wage; encouraging and supporting young people to learn, improve their skills, and even start their own businesses; offering incentives to private businesses to create new and decent employment opportunities; improving social services and welfare;
- GOAL 2: Implementing a national programme to provide a warm meal every day; developing the capacity of the agricultural sector; helping small farmers be more productive and sell their products with ease with the objective of reducing food imports; the Senate will propose a legislative project to ensure easy access of young people to the national land market registry, and to support them in agricultural endeavors;
- GOAL 3: Allocating funds to the health care system; increasing the wages of health care professionals; implementing a government programme to constantly update the national medicine registry and offer significant discount for generic drugs, a Ministry Order regarding the obligation to ensure adequate and continuous supplies of medicines nationally;
- GOAL 4: The Guaranteed Social Package for Education that provides quality education for all; a law to increase teacher and auxiliary personnel salaries;
- GOAL 5: Promoting an entire set of anti-discrimination laws; a national strategy aimed at curbing domestic violence and promoting gender equality;
- GOAL 6: Laws and national programmes to increase access to clean water;
- GOAL 7: Working on a legislative framework to encourage alternative sources of energy for decades to come;
- GOAL 8: A law that establishes guidelines in regards to registration of employment, working hours, contract clauses and religious freedom for non-Christian holidays, national programmes to promote small and medium business ownership and development;
- GOAL 9: National measures and programmes to create a sustainable environment for industrial development, innovation and research through local and national business capital, creating more IT companies to create more jobs; encouraging that there is greater technological transfer from the research sector to the larger society, allocating budgetary resources for resilient infrastructure development;

- GOAL 10: Transformation and legal implementation of the Europa 2020 Strategy, through promoting development in 11 thematic objectives and a total financing of over 200 billion EUR;
- GOAL 11: The National Territorial Development Strategy of Romania (2016-2035) for a broader technical and legislative framework for urban development;
- GOAL 12: Implementing a national strategy and a law for sustainable consumption, offering fiscal incentives in order to ensure that citizens become more responsible when thinking about consumption and waste;
- GOAL 13: Developing the National Action Plan Regarding Climate Change (2016-2020) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions significantly below the current 3% level;
- GOAL 14: The Governmental Order regarding Terms & Rules for Recreation / Sports Fishing for obtaining the necessary permits aimed at stopping the unnecessary degradation of natural water ecosystems, a law regarding water protection for the right of use, terms of conservation, and rules for activities related to water in Romania, passing the National Biodiversity Protection Act as a buffer for the protection of the eco-system, creating the Ministry of Water and Forest;
- GOAL 15: Creating the National Forest Strategy (2018-2027) that tackles forest expansion, wood exploitation, wood product manufacturing, the furniture industry and biodiversity protection;
- GOAL 16: Developing crucial legislation that brings the Penal and Civil codes of the country in accordance with decisions from the Constitutional Court, EU Directive 2016/343 or Directive 2014/42/UE;
- GOAL 17: The Romanian Government continues to make a strong commitment to partnership and cooperation between states regarding attaining all the SDGs.

He also mentioned that there are more laws currently at the implementation stages that are targeted at helping Romania achieve the SDGs.

Ms. Helen Kuyembah, former MP, Population Expert, Sierra Leone

Speaking on legislative initiatives to support the SDGs through a gender lens, she posited that all countries around the world are doing their best to bring the 17 SDGs into effect in order to end extreme poverty, inequality and injustice. All governments and parliaments are using various methods to achieve these goals and Sierra Leone is no exception.

She shared some of the initiatives that the Sierra Leone Parliament has been working with from 2012 to the present:

- The Government mandated the House of Parliament to take responsibility for rolling out and supporting the SDGs. Collaborating with NGOs and with civil society organizations, they aggressively publicized the SDGs through bill boards, group meetings, town hall meetings and radio and other media programmes, explaining to the populace what the SDGs are, and what problems they are designed to solve.
- The Parliament created an SDG Standing Committee responsible for working on implementing the 17 goals with the government's institutions, ministries and departments, as well as other institutions.
- The Parliament, through the regular parliamentary committees on health, education, agriculture, and finance, inculcated oversight of the SDGs in their individual committee oversight and monitoring activities.
- The Parliament also included, issues relating to the SDGs in their parliamentary seating and debates, and had individual ministries report their activities to the House for discussion and guidance.
- The Parliament had radio discussions with civil society groups and leading institutions.
- The SDG Parliamentary Committee held workshops in clusters for the private sector, educating them on their role in making the goals work.
- The Government has passed a bill in the Parliament on providing free education to children across the country. Presently the logistics are being worked on.
- The Government has also instructed the Department of Agriculture to support more farmers in different cropping areas in order to increase food sufficiency, which is being prepared to get parliamentary approval. The current President has mandated that all politicians must be farmers.

The Anti-Corruption Commission is also aggressively fighting corruption. Many government officials have to declare their assets and answer any questions about these.

She stated that Goal 5 on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment is the one area where the Parliament and Government have still not done much. It is a given that Government has done well in appointing women into ministerial positions and into parastatals, but the number

is very small compared to the total population of women; women account for about 52% of the population. The Female Caucus in the Parliament did not get support from the government to roll out Goal 5 and other goals of the SDGs, particularly for women in the rural areas who are greatly marginalized. She stressed that Africans must deal with the syndrome of waiting for external funding and donor support.

To conclude, she mentioned that the Sierra Leone Legislature, like most legislatures, needs to do more and more to achieve the SDGs. She added that new think tanks should be set up to evaluate the performances of all actors, and come up with fresh and better ideas to enhance further the achievement of the SDGs, particularly Goal 5 dealing with women. All the other goals are contingent on Goal 5 as it is women who bear the brunt of the failure of all the other SDGs.

Discussion

Hon. Rockson Nelson Dafeamekpor, MP Ghana, asked what modalities the Cameroon Parliament adopts to monitor the successful implementation of legislative measures for achieving the SDGs.

Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa, MP Cameroon, President of FPA, answered that she cannot conclusively say that the evaluation is effective and that we need statistics based on the social surveys in that regard.

Hon. Larry Younquoi, MP Liberia, commented that until there is sufficient political will in the government, it will be hard to implement some policies, especially for a country like Liberia.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, asked why the Government of Sierra Leone took the hard decision of making it a condition of being a parliamentarian that you also are a farmer.

Ms. Helen Kuyembeh, Sierra Leone, explained that the country has everything needed to farm and feed its own people in terms of food security and that this decision also attempts to address the notion of politicians being corrupt. She added, “If you are a farmer, it means you have an income stream apart from that that comes from the government”.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, asked if Tajikistan was compelled to spend below what was expected, or if it can go over budget to finance population activities and embark on food security policies.

Hon. Dr. Sharif Rahimzoda, MP Tajikistan, responded that the nation has strategies to tackle the SDGs with consideration for their capabilities and resources and that they do their best but definitely cannot reach everyone”.

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD, asked what are the main contributing factors that have caused a huge drop in corruption in Romania.

Hon. Florin Bodog, MP Romania, replied that the drop was not in corruption but the index, which is the European Index on Corruption Perception that checks what the populace perceives about corruption in Romania. He added that the works of the Anti-Corruption Commission in Romania is geared towards achieving minimum levels of corruption.

Hon. Seth Acheampong, MP Ghana, asked what are the challenges that Ms. Kuyembeh as a former MP in Sierra Leone faced trying to ensure the achievement of the SDG5.

Ms. Helen Kuyembeh, Sierra Leone, answered, “For instance, when we were trying to pass an abortion bill, the males in the Parliament fought against it. The traditional mentality does not need to be in power and was not helpful”.

SESSION 6: Discussion for the Adoption of Policy Proposal: Building Partnership for Achieving the SDGs Towards G20 and TICAD in 2019

Session Chair: Hon. George Samuel Nartey, MP Ghana

The draft statement was actively discussed by the delegates, which was unanimously adopted as a meeting output. The highlights of the adopted statement include the following:

- Population represents society and all SDGs are related to population issues.
- The mortality transition should proceed in tandem with the fertility transition.
- Having zero unwanted pregnancies is of the most importance.

CLOSING SESSION

Closing Address

Hon. Dr. Toshiko Abe, MP Japan

Hon. Abe began by recognizing the progress made during the conference with regards to parliamentary activities and how these activities will be geared towards achieving the SDGs. She also noted the potential future increase in population in the world, with Africa accounting for about 90% of this, and Asia maintaining its already large population.

She then proceeded to outline some perspectives presented and confirmed at the conference which included the following:

- The population issue is not simply a matter of numbers but has bearing on our human society. Without efforts to stabilize the population, there can be no sustainable development;
- To stabilize the population, we need to achieve UHC to enable people to live healthier lives and to promote the mortality transition. At the same time, we must make comparable efforts to bring about the fertility transition;
- To bring about the fertility transition, we must reduce unwanted pregnancies by achieving a system of universal access to RH services;
- To help make our youth the engine for development, we must focus on the education of girls, who are often in a vulnerable position in society, and provide youth with education and training that meets the future needs of society;
- To improve the supply of food for increasing populations, we should give attention to and further enhance indigenous crops and traditional foods that until now were considered as having little market value.

In conclusion, she hoped to continue her support of parliamentary activities tackling population and development issues, and thanked all the participants and attendees of the conference for their invaluable contributions.

Address

Mr. Sam Ntelemo, Resident Representative of IPPF, Liaison Office to the African Union, on behalf of Mr. Lucien Kouakou, Regional Director IPPF African Region

Mr. Ntelemo began by expressing his gratitude to APDA for their organization of the meeting. He also appreciated the work done during the meeting, stating that it was “exceptional”.

He then pointed out the challenges and dangers that many adolescents, especially females, face around the world and made some recommendations about the issues, including provision of access to comprehensive sexuality education, counseling, and the use of rights-based family planning services.

Mr. Ntelamo was however happy that Africa had come up with policy instruments which, if implemented, would help in facing these challenges. He emphasized the need for political commitment to realizing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

He also pledged to “prioritize and intensify the advocacy work within six African countries to mobilize political support for the implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action, as well as the Maputo Protocol”, and called on all parliamentarians to engage themselves actively in the implementation of these instruments. In conclusion, he expressed appreciation to all participants and attendees.

Closing Address

Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD

Hon. Dr. Pelpuo expressed his delight with the successful end of the conference saying that “the conference has underscored the fact that unity is strength”. He then urged all participants to continue working together to eradicate many challenges facing the world.

He believes and hopes that the spirit of collaboration among the participants will not end in Accra but will continue after they have departed for their own countries, that they will continue to share ideas and suggestions that will help their respective countries.

Hon. Dr. Pelpuo stated that this conference has also emphasized the fact that to effectively implement population policies, South-South nations not only need good governance and sound economic policies, but also financial capital and investments. In other words, to achieve the 2030 Agenda, there is a need for resource allocation from both domestic and international sources, and this need is particularly crucial for developing and low-income countries.

He mentioned that participants further underlined the fact that females, particularly adolescent girls, lack access to SRH services and family planning methods, and that this situation does not allow them to exercise their reproductive rights. Though high fertility rates could lead to

low development and poverty, low fertility rates affect the job market because countries with low fertility rates are raising concerns about their prospects for sustained economic growth and for their social security systems. Consequently, a balance in the population should be maintained by reviewing policy documents on a regular basis.

To him, nations require capacity building programmes, exchange of knowledge, and training to confront challenges with regard to issues of population and the SDGs. To this end, he acknowledged the platform created by APDA for this occasion to improve the capacity of Members of Parliament in the African and Asian regions. He said that there is no doubt that the participants have benefited from the theme and the topics discussed.

Hon. Dr. Pelpuo concluded by thanking participating members of parliament from Asia, Africa, and Europe, as well as the organizers of the conference. Thank you.

STUDY VISITS: FRIDAY, 10 AUGUST 2018

Visit to the Parliament of Ghana

The delegates visited the Parliament of Ghana where they were ushered into the Chamber of Parliament and were given briefs on the history, seating arrangement (Government and Opposition sides), and outline of the Parliament of Ghana:

- The Role of Parliament
- The Composition of Parliament: 275 Members of Parliament
- The Members of Parliament come from two parties: 169 National Patriotic Party (NPP) members form the majority, while 106 National Democratic Congress (NDC) members constitute the minority
- The building entails various services, such as a clinic, a bank, and so forth.

Delegates were then shown the Speaker's Office and the Administration block, before leaving the Parliament building



Visit to Ridge Hospital

The delegates were led directly into the Teleconsultation Center where they were welcomed on behalf of the management. There a brief history of Ridge Hospital was given.

- The hospital was built by the colonial masters in 1928 and at Independence it was handed over and commenced service as a district hospital catering for the local people within the area.
- In 1997 the hospital was converted into a regional hospital to be responsible as the referral center for the Greater Accra Region because of its location in the city center.

Participants engaged in active discussion with the management of Ridge Hospital. Questions were asked on matters such as the number of beds, doctors, nurses, and patients. In response, it was mentioned that:

- Ridge hospital is not the only hospital in Accra. There are many other hospitals, such as Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, 37 military hospitals, the Police Hospital, Tema General Hospital, and many more.
- Ridge Hospital has 420 beds and 60 doctors, while giving training for paramedical and laboratory staff as well.
- As a typical regional hospital, it not only provides services like cervical services and general surgical services, but it also has specialists that provide services like plastic surgery and neurosurgical services, as well as a full range of specialists - cardiologists, chiropractic, obstetric, gynecologists and so on.
- Ridge Hospital also has a dialysis center, physical therapy department, and as part of this department, the hospital has a chiropractic practitioner who does spine care. It also has a bone marrow transplant center.
- The hospital provides 24/7 service. It has a centralized emergency department where all patients that are referred to the hospital are first assessed and categorized depending on the level of severity of their condition, and they are color coded into green, orange, yellow, red and blue. Blue means a patient that is seriously sick and needs immediate attention. This system came from South Africa, and it is being implemented here in a very successful manner.
- The hospital has an intensive care unit and 12 theatres; four are dedicated to emergencies, two theatres are dedicated to obstetric care, and six to general and gynecological surgeries.

Parliamentarians received the briefings enthusiastically and asked more questions on topics such as the teleconsultations center, types of insurance and coverage levels. The manager of Ridge Hospital responded that:

- In some parts of the country, patients are cut off from service. There may be community health nurses available, but very often they lack adequate knowledge to manage patients in their area. So teleconsultation is a new mode that the government has put into place to provide support for staff in rural centers. This teleconsultation center has telephone lines for any time community health nurses in local areas need advice.
- The country has a National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), which is the main scheme in public institutions and some private institutions. The main source of income for this insurance is a levy that everyone who consumes goods and services pays, and then National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) pre-registers institutions for the delivery of service. After doctors provide a service, they put the diagnosis on the form and this is then retrieved and submitted to the NHIA for a refund.
- Regarding the coverage of National Health Insurance, it covers basic diseases like malaria and hypertension. In addition, it covers some medicines, all lifesaving medicines and basic antibiotics, for example. Moreover, some labour delivery services are covered. For example, if a pregnant woman has to go to an intensive care unit, then that extra cost should be covered by her. It is universal coverage but there are some items that are not included in the basket.

Visit to University of Ghana (School of Graduate Studies): Briefing about Ajinomoto Foundation Project in Ghana

Presentation by Prof. Kwesi Tano-Debrah, Dean of the Graduate Studies, University of Ghana

The project was originally initiated to commemorate the Ajinomoto company's 100th year anniversary. Seventy-five years ago, a nutritional problem was identified in Ghana. The traditional, corn-based weaning food in Ghana, koko, is deficient in energy, protein, and micronutrients, causing kwashiorkor. To set local children on a firmer path towards long-term health, Ajinomoto decided to boost the nutritional value of its baby food through the development, production, and sales of KOKO Plus amino acid supplements. Also, they noticed the issue of micro-nutrients deficiency and so they came up with this product. Eventually they decided to introduce safe, affordable and acceptable complementary foods to meet the nutritional needs of children.

Complementary foods can come in many forms, and can be fortified. Ajinomoto developed a food that has optimal protein content, energy, and is safe. Determined to make a food that would have acceptable sensory characteristics, and also be affordable, their team sought to introduce a new ready-to-use supplement from locally available raw materials in order to

improve the health status of children aged 6-24 months old. To do so, Ajinomoto did the following:

- Engaged stakeholders from all parts of the country in order to produce a product that would be acceptable, affordable and meet the general population;
- Had institutions do surveys on many ongoing food practices in order to best produce formula that works for the widest range of people;
- Adopted the Millennial Programming Method of product formulation and evaluation;
- Ensured the safety of the product through quality insurance. There was an issue of peanut allergies so they introduced and included peanut flavor instead.

The project grouped and listed foods that could help them get the nutrients they needed. In order to make sure the product was safe, they sent some samples to be tested in several institutions such as the Ghana Standards Authority, the Ajinomoto Lab in Japan, the University Ghana Department of Nutrition and Food Science and other labs in Ghana. A local factory was set up to produce the product for efficacy test. The effectiveness of distribution studies was to see which strategy could get the product straight to the child.

According to the comparison studies:

- Children who consumed only the micro-nutrients were under-nourished, compared to the group of children with KOKO Plus only;
- The combination of micro-nutrients in the KOKO Plus helped with the blood plasma;
- Essential amino acid profiles improved significantly;
- The prevalence of acute infection in the KOKO Plus Project group was the lowest among the treatment groups;
- The hemoglobin levels of children without inflammation in the KOKO Plus Project group was significantly higher compared to the other groups.

The observation indicated that KOKO Plus has the capacity to improve a child's nutrition. Children using it developed a higher IQ. Ajinomoto is now doing marketing studies to introduce the product to the Ghanaian community and they believe it can be sent to other countries which share a similar culture in terms of food, such as Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast, and even the countries of East Africa where they consume maize.

Discussion

After the briefing, participants asked several questions regarding the project, such as how products were distributed and whether these products can be bought in the market or are

distributed freely. They also were interested in the content of the product as well as its benefit for producers and institutions.

To respond, Prof. Tano-Debrah pointed out that:

- In the market the product has been sold at a very affordable price. The price was set through stakeholder interaction to determine the capability of parents to buy the product.
- It is about 30 pesewas per sachet for the wholesaler who then sells it for 50 pesewas. It is creating markets for people and is very affordable.
- They are waiting for WHO or other partner institutions to support the production so they can address the issues of malnutrition in the sub-regions.
- Regarding the quantity of the package, 15 grams for one use provides a user with the recommended nutrient amounts. Packages are not for multiuse, because a mother might open a package and then might not keep it well, leading to contamination.
- The institution is currently working on registering the product, and Ajinomoto has been given the rights to market it.
- This product is not for stand-alone eating but is a supplement that is added to the food.

Presentation by Mr. Takashi Uesugi, Representative in Ghana, Ajinomoto Foundation

According to Mr. Uesugi, the foundation is now trying to introduce the product into the market. They are currently in Phase III, with penetration activities (Marketing Studies):

- Recommendations by influencers
- Collaboration with Ghana Health Services
- Propose Nutrition Education Tools to the Ghana Health Service to improve education by nurses
- Nutrition education with complementary feeding poster
- Education about sanitation and cooking complementary food
- Mother's Behavior Change

Discussion

After the presentation, one of the parliamentarians commented that Ajinomoto Foundation should approach the government to get a subsidy. In addition, some recommended distributing their product to poor people for free, so poor mothers and families do not have to buy but it can still have the benefit of KOKO Plus. Otherwise only people who can afford the supplement will benefit from it. On the other hand, others pointed out that if distributed for free, there is the issue of the sustainability in a longer term.

Visit to Cocoa Processing Company

A presentation was made by the Managing Director Mr. Nana Agyenim Boateng. He gave a brief history of Ghana and how cocoa came to the country.

- The Cocoa Processing Company Limited (CPC) based in Tema was established in 1965.
- Ghana is the world's second largest producer of cocoa.
- The mission of the company is to process cocoa and delight customers with the full health benefits of world class cocoa/chocolate products. Cocoa has a lot of health benefits.
- The company's core values include customer satisfaction, high commercial ethos, human capital development, and others.
- The Cocoa Factories have an annual throughput of 65,000 metric tonnes of Premium Ghana Cocoa beans.
- Cocoa is not an indigenous product. The first seed was brought by Tetteh Quarshie who travelled from Fernando Po in Equatorial Guinea and planted the seed in Aburi in Ghana. There are schools which have hostels named after Tetteh Quarshie and the overpass it was mentioned that the overpass the delegates had just used was also named after him.

A presenter then explained the process of making cocoa and the types of machinery used, and how the company contributes to the community, region and the country in terms of human capital development and rural development.

During a discussion, parliamentarians asked about the right to sell the products, prices, package quantity, and the ability of advertising the national products. In response, Mr. Boateng explained that:

- They can deal with the farmers so no other individual can process it. Farmers can sell only after they have registered under the Ghana Cocoa Board and can serve as an agent.
- There is a set price to be adhered to. On average, one pod consists of 100 grams and its cost is fixed but the market prices change annually.
- The company exports the semi-finished products and transfers part of the semi-finished products into confectionery products. This product is well-known abroad. Switzerland and Belgium have been receiving cocoa from Ghana to produce chocolates.

Visit to Afienya Youth Leadership, Training and Skills Center

The delegates were ushered into the school's multi-purpose hall where they were enthusiastically welcomed by the students gathered there. Mr. Ansah, the Public Relations Officer of the Parliament of Ghana, called on the delegates to introduce themselves, which they did with brief introductions of their own countries and encouraging messages to the students.

The students patriotically sang their school anthem "Arise Ghana Youth for Your Country". After that, the Headmaster, Mr. Daniel Kofi, gave a speech, highlighting the following:

- A memorandum of understanding was made between the government and a foundation in Germany on 8 May 1951. The school started in September 1972.
- Most of the students of the school now work in the Ghana Army, Prison offices, Security services and so on.
- The intention of the Government of Ghana in the early 1970's was to try and curb the problem of youth unemployment, so a lot of people were given skills that would ready them for private employment so that they would not be dependent on government jobs.
- The school has nine programmes but ICT is compulsory.
- The school has graduated over 10,000 students with employable skills.
- Serious attention is given to technical and vocational training. Courses taught are catering/cooking, fashion and designing (dress making), carpentry, building and construction, welding and fabrication, general electricals, plumbing and secretarial duties.

Mr. Kofi said that due to colonialization, serious emphasis was made on formal education and such people tend to look down on those who go for skills acquisition. His plea was that

serious attention should be given to technical vocational training. The youths were invited to speak or ask any questions, while delegates proceeded to give them well wishes.



STATEMENT



Parliamentarians as the Fourth Pillar for Achieving the 2030 Agenda: Population, Food Security, and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

9 August 2018

Accra, Ghana

Statement

Preamble

The year 2019 will offer an important opportunity to advance concrete action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and G20 Summit, both of which will be hosted by Japan. In addition, 2019 also marks the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). In anticipation of this commemorative year, we Parliamentarians from 17 countries working on the issue of population and development recommend to our fellow Parliamentarians, national governments, the international community and civil society, the following actions as constructive contributions:

Where as;

1. Population represents society which is the very agent to realize the SDGs. Building a society where no one is left behind is to ensure every individual who makes up its population can live with dignity;
2. Political will is necessary for achieving the SDGs. Parliamentarians have a role to play in giving shape to that political will through law making and allocation, oversight and monitoring of budgetary resources. In this regard, Parliamentarians, as the fourth pillar in the achievement of the SDGs, have a critical role to play together with national governments, the private sector and civil society;
3. Approaches to dealing with the issue of population cannot be forced upon individuals but must be based on their understanding and acceptance. As such, Parliamentarians have an important role to play in creating a viable platform for community engagements; and
4. By the UNs projections Africa will account for more than 90% of the increase in world population by 2100¹, while Asia currently accounts for a majority of the global population. Making concerted efforts between Asia and Africa is key to achieving the SDGs.

Now therefore, we strongly support UNFPA's new three transformative and people-centered results and recommend as follows:

¹Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision*, custom data acquired via website. <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DataQuery/> (2018/July/5)

- i. In order to achieve sustainable development, the mortality transition should proceed in tandem with the fertility transition. This requires promoting mortality transition by improving people's health through measures to combat communicable diseases and expanding primary health care and promoting fertility transition by making comparable effort to ensure universal access to Reproductive Health (RH) services, as crucial components of Universal Health Coverage (UHC).
- ii. Having zero unwanted pregnancies is essential for fertility transition, which requires achieving universal access to RH services. We urge fellow Parliamentarians to legislate measures that are needed in their countries and to allocate funding to this end. We also urge the international community to reinforce support in this area.
- iii. In addition to further improvement in primary education, boys and girls should be given age appropriate comprehensive sexuality education, at the right time, based on accurate medical knowledge so that they can make responsible choices.
- iv. To make the increasing population an engine for social and economic development, there should be active investment in youth education and training up to par with the acceptable global standards.
- v. To eradicate gender-based violence and ensure respect for human rights of women and girls, eradicate discrimination and other maltreatment, enable women and girls to fulfill their potential to contribute positively to social development, it is imperative to place high priority on investment in youth education particularly for girls.
- vi. As representatives of the people, Parliamentarians have a role to make known the people's traditional knowledge and wisdom to the government and the international community. Parliamentarians should recognize the importance of traditional foods, such as indigenous crops, and utilize science and technology to improve and enhance its quality and quantity and call attention to the potential of such foods in order to ensure food security for the increasing population.
- vii. Countries without legislation for reporting Official Development Assistance (ODA) to their parliaments and also countries without sufficiently clear demarcation between their ODA budget and regular budget should take concrete steps towards achieving best global practices. Such efforts will promote mutual understanding between donor and recipient countries and improve Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance (TAGG), providing a foundation for further assistance for development.
- viii. Such global partnership is premised on countries' internal efforts to realize Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance. It is important for Parliamentarians to strengthen their unique role in exercising oversight over their governments to further enhance TAGG in accordance with their respective situations.
- ix. As Parliamentarians, we urge our governments to prioritize SDG 3 and SDG 5 on Health and Gender respectively as well as adopt all international and regional policy instruments which are focused on improving the health and livelihoods of women.

Accordingly, to achieve the SDGs, it is essential for Parliamentarians to encourage inter-regional exchange, share information, and take stock of progress on population and development issues. For this purpose, it is important to promote Parliamentarians' activities in which Parliamentary groups in respective countries can actively engage. We urge the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA) and other independent public interest organizations to provide concrete evidence-based proposals in support of the activities of Parliamentarians.

PROGRAMME

Parliamentarians as the Fourth Pillar for Achieving the 2030 Agenda: Population, Food Security, and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

8-10 August 2018

Accra, Ghana

Programme

7 August 2018

Arrival of participants

8 August 2018

Meeting Day 1

- 09:00-09:30** **Registration** (Venue: Ankobra room 2&3, Ground floor, Accra City Hotel)
- 09:30-10:00** **Opening Session** (Venue: Ankobra room 2&3, Ground floor, Accra City Hotel)
- MC: Mr. Isaac Kwame Ansah, Public Relations Officer, the Parliament of Ghana
- Introductory Remarks: **Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo**, MP Ghana, Chair of Ghana Parliamentary Caucus on Population and Development (GPCPD)
- Address of Organizer: **Hon. Yukio Ubukata**, MP Japan
- Address: **Mr. Niyi Ojuolape**, Country Representative, UNFPA Ghana
- Address: **Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa**, MP Cameroon, President of Africa Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development (FPA)
- Opening Statement: **Hon. Joseph Osei-Owusu**, First Deputy Speaker, Ghana
- 10:00-10:15** Group Photo (Location: Garden)
- 10:15-10:30** Coffee Break (Location: Garden)
- 10:30-11:00** **Keynote Speech**
- Hon. Hiroyuki Nagahama**, MP Japan, Vice Chair of JPFP [30 min]
- 11:00-12:00** **Session 1: Food Security and Environmental Sustainability for the 2030 Agenda**
- Session Chair: **Hon. Viplove Thakur**, MP India, Vice Chair of IAPPD [20 min]
1. **Hon. Muhammed A. Mahmud**, MP Nigeria [20 min]
 2. **Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo**, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD [20 min]
 3. **Hon. Paul Chibingu**, MP Malawi, Vice-President of FPA [20 min]
- 12:00-12:30** Discussion [30 min]
- 12:30-13:30** **Lunch** (Venue: Fihankra Restaurant, Ground floor)
- 13:30-14:30** **Session 2: Investing in Youth and Gender Equality**
- Session Chair: **Hon. Hector Appuhamy**, MP Sri Lanka
1. **Hon. Sharon Garin**, MP Philippines, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives [20

	min]
	2. Hon. Larry Younquoi , MP Liberia [20 min]
	3. Hon. Seth Acheampong , MP Ghana [20 min]
14:30-15:00	Discussion [30 min]
15:00-15:20	Coffee Break (Location: Garden)
15:20-16:00	Session 3: Building a Healthy Society: Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)
	Session Chair: Hon. Hassan Omar , MP Djibouti
	1. Hon. Viplove Thakur , MP India, Vice Chair of IAPPD [20 min]
	2. Mr. Lucien Kouakou , Regional Director of IPPF Africa Region [20 min]
16:00-16:30	Discussion [30 min]
19:00	Dinner

9 August 2018

Meeting Day 2

09:30-10:30	Session 4: Parliamentarians' Role in Ensuring Transparency, Accountability and Good Governance (TAGG)
	Session Chair: Hon. Sharon Garin , MP Philippines, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives
	1. Mr. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim , former MP, Population Expert, Malaysia [20 min]
	2. Hon. Dr. Chanda Jonas Kamima , MP Zambia, Chair of ZAPPD [20 min]
	3. Hon. Judith Pareno , MP Kenya [20 min]
10:30-11:00	Discussion [30 min]
11:00-11:15	Coffee Break (Location: Garden)
11:15-12:30	Session 5: Legislative Initiative to Support the SDGs
	Session Chair: Hon. Inusah A. B. Fuseini , MP Ghana
	1. Hon. Prof. Sharif Rahimzoda , MP Tajikistan [20 min]
	2. Hon. Marie Rose Nguini Effa , MP Cameroon, President of FPA [20 min]
	3. Hon. Florin Bodog , MP Romania [20 min]
	4. Ms. Helen Kuyembah , former MP, Population Expert, Sierra Leone [20 min]
12:30-12:50	Discussion [20 min]
12:50-13:50	Lunch (Venue: <i>Fihankra Restaurant, Ground floor</i>)
13:50-15:00	Session 6: Discussion for the Adoption of Policy Proposal: Building Partnership for Achieving the SDGs Towards G20 and TICAD in 2019
	Session Chair: Hon. George Samuel Nartey , MP Ghana
15:00-15:20	Coffee Break (Location: Garden)
15:20-16:00	Closing Session
	<u>Closing Address</u> : Hon. Dr. Toshiko Abe , MP Japan; Deputy Executive Director of JFPF

Address: **Mr. Sam Ntelamo**, Resident Representative of IPPF, Liaison Office to the African Union & UNEC, *on behalf of* Mr. Lucien Kouakou, Regional Director of IPPF Africa Region

Closing Address: **Hon. Dr. Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo**, MP Ghana, Chair of GPCPD

19:00- Dinner hosted by Parliament of Ghana

10 August 2018

Study Visit

- 08:45-08:55** Meeting at the Lobby
- 09:00-09:15** Travel to the Parliament of Ghana
- 09:15-10:00** Visiting the Parliament of Ghana
- 10:00-10:15** Travel to Ridge Hospital
- 10:15-10:45** Visiting Ridge Hospital
- 10:45-11:00** Travel to University of Ghana
- 11:00-12:00** Visiting and briefing at University of Ghana (School of Graduate Studies); and briefing on Ajinomoto project in Ghana
- 12:00-12:15** Travel to Restaurant Mayflower
- 12:15-13:00** Lunch at Restaurant Mayflower
- 13:00-13:30** Travel to Cocoa Processing Company, Tema Accra
- 13:30-14:30** Visiting and briefing at Cocoa Processing Company
- 14:30-14:50** Travel to Afienya Youth Leadership, Training and Skills Center at Afienya (near Tema)
- 14:50-15:40** Visit and briefing at Afienya Youth Leadership, Training and Skills Center
- 15:40-16:20** Travel back to hotel

11 August 2018

Departure of participants

Organized by:

The Asian Population and Development Association (APDA)

Hosted by:

The Parliament of Ghana

Supported by:

The Japan Trust Fund (JTF)

United Nations Population Fund UNFPA)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Title	Name	Country	Position
MPs and National Committees on Population and Development				
1	Hon.	Marie Rose Nguini Effa	Cameroon	MP; President of FPA
2	Hon.	Hassan Omar	Djibouti	MP
3	Hon.	Joseph Osei-Owusu	Ghana	First Deputy Speaker
4	Hon.	Osei Kyei-Mensah Bonsu	Ghana	Majority Leader
5	Hon.	Haruna Iddrisu	Ghana	Minority Leader
6	Hon. Dr.	Abdul Rashid Hassan Pelpuo	Ghana	MP; Chair of GPCPD
7	Hon.	Inusah A. B. Fuseini	Ghana	MP
8	Hon.	Ahmed Ibrahim	Ghana	MP
9	Hon.	Helen Adjoa Ntoso	Ghana	MP
10	Hon.	Alban S.K. Bagbin	Ghana	MP
11	Hon.	Alhassan Sualihu Dandawaa	Ghana	MP
12	Hon.	Kojo Asemanyi	Ghana	MP
13	Hon.	Tina Gifty Mensah	Ghana	MP
14	Hon.	Thomas Ampem Nyarko	Ghana	MP
15	Hon.	Hon. Helen Adjoa Ntoso	Ghana	MP
16	Hon.	Seth Acheampong	Ghana	MP
17	Hon. Dr.	Sebastian N. Sandaare	Ghana	MP
18	Hon.	Alhassan Umar	Ghana	MP
19	Hon.	Chiwitey Andrew Dari	Ghana	MP
20	Hon.	Djornobuah Alex Tetteh	Ghana	MP
21	Hon.	Konadu-Yiadom Charles	Ghana	MP
22	Hon.	Terlabi Ebenezer Okletey	Ghana	MP
23	Hon.	Elvis Morris Donkoh	Ghana	MP
24	Hon.	Ekow Hayford	Ghana	MP
25	Hon.	Kwaku Ampratwum Sarpong	Ghana	MP
26	Hon.	Francis Kingsley Ato Codjoe	Ghana	MP
27	Hon.	Yussif Jajah Issaka	Ghana	MP
28	Hon.	Kwadwo Nyanpong Aboagye	Ghana	MP
29	Hon.	Tampi Acheampong Simon	Ghana	MP
30	Hon.	Alhassan Suhuyini	Ghana	MP
31	Hon.	Alexander Roosevelt Hottordze	Ghana	MP
32	Hon.	Derek Darko Ohene Assifo Bekoe	Ghana	MP
33	Hon.	Freda Prempeh	Ghana	MP
34	Hon.	Abdul-Aziz Mohammed	Ghana	MP
35	Hon.	George Samuel Nartey	Ghana	MP
36	Hon.	Rockson-Nelson Dafeamekpor	Ghana	MP
37	Hon.	Yusif Sulemana	Ghana	MP
38	Hon.	Viplove Thakur	India	MP; Vice-Chair of IAPPD
39	Mr.	Manmohan Sharma	India	Executive Secretary of IAPPD
40	Hon. Dr.	Toshiko Abe	Japan	MP; Deputy Executive Director of JPFP
41	Hon.	Hiroyuki Nagahama	Japan	MP; Vice-Chair of JPFP
42	Hon.	Yukio Ubukata	Japan	MP
43	Sen.	Judith Pareno	Kenya	Senator
44	Mr.	Amos Kiangwe Sikweya	Kenya	Clerk Assistant

45	Hon.	Larry Younquoi	Liberia	MP
46	Hon.	Paul Chibingu	Malawi	MP; Vice-President of FPA
47	Mr.	Tan Sri Dato' Seri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim	Malaysia	Former MP, Population Expert
48	Hon.	Mahmud A. Mohammed	Nigeria	MP
49	Hon.	Sharon Garin	Philippines	MP; Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives
50	Hon.	Florin Bodog	Romania	MP
51	Ms.	Helen Kuyembah	Sierra Leone	Former MP, Population Expert
52	Hon.	Hector Appuhamy	Sri Lanka	MP
53	Hon. Dr.	Sharif Rahimzoda	Tajikistan	MP
54	Hon.	Chanda Jonas Kamima	Zambia	MP; Chair of ZAPPD
International Organizations and NGOs				
55	Mr.	Niyi Ojuolape	Kenya	Country Representative, UNFPA Ghana
56	Mr.	Lucien Kouakou	Kenya	Regional Director of IPPF Africa Region
57	Mr.	Sam Ntelamo	Ethiopia	Resident Representative, IPPF Liaison Office to the African Union
58	Mr.	Eben Ankrah	Ghana	SOG
Ghana Parliament, Government & Related Institutions				
59	Mr.	Richard Acheampong	Ghana	Head, Parliamentary Relations & Protocol, Parliament of Ghana
60	Mr.	Charles Dery Tenzagh	Ghana	Deputy Head, Parliamentary Relations Ghana
61	Mr.	Samuel Addei	Ghana	Clerk of Population Caucus, Parliament of Ghana
62	Mr.	Isaac Kwame Ansah	Ghana	Public Relations Officer
63	Mr.	Peter Telfer	Ghana	Parliament of Ghana
64	Mr.	Abrefa Tawiah	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
65	Ms.	Janet Frimpong	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
66	Ms.	Sandra Awuah	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
67	Ms.	Anita Quartey-Papafio	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
68	Ms.	Kate Addo	Ghana	AG Director of Public Affairs, Secretariat of Parliament
69	Mr.	Kennedy Brown	Ghana	Transport officer, Secretariat of Parliament
70	Dr.	Prince Pambo	Ghana	Medical Director, Secretariat of Parliament
71		Chaka Asigri Bachawany	Ghana	Marshal
72	Mr.	John Mensah Kuwornu	Ghana	Protocol Officer
73	Mr.	Ezekiel Birikorang	Ghana	Protocol Officer
74	Mr.	Samuel Frimpong Okyere	Ghana	Protocol Officer
75	Ms.	Lydia Bioh	Ghana	Protocol Officer
76	Mr.	Emmanuel Akrofi-Tibo	Ghana	Assistant Clerk
77	Ms.	Eva Adjei-Emenike	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
78	Mr.	Asare Jonas Menyah	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
79	Mr.	Mark Mensah	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
80	Mr.	Theophilus Abbey	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
81	Mr.	Ibrahim Ansah	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
82	Ms.	Edith Akrong	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
83	Ms.	Edith Machieri	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament

84	Ms.	Janet Frimpong	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
85	Mr.	Enock Nii Doodu Otto	Ghana	Secretariat of Parliament
86	Dr.	Leticia Appiah	Ghana	
87	Dr.	Fred Nana Poku	Ghana	
88	Ms.	Anthonia-Gloria French-Okine	Ghana	
89	Ms.	Gloria Yaa Odumai	Ghana	
90	Ms.	Heleemah Dadzie	Ghana	
91	Dr.	Owusu Asare	Ghana	
APDA				
92	Dr.	Osamu Kusumoto	Japan	Secretary-General; Executive Director
93	Ms.	Hitomi Tsunekawa	Japan	Chief Manager, International Affairs of APDA
94	Dr.	Farrukh Usmonov	Japan	Assistant Manager of International Affairs/Senior Researcher of APDA
Rapporteur				
95	Ms	Madolyn Addison	Ghana	
Photographer and Videographer				
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97	Mr.	Nana Osei Owusu	Ghana	
98	Mr.	Daniel Ampofo Boateng	Ghana	
Media				
99	Ms.	Jamila Akweley Okertchiri	Ghana	
Interpreter				
100	Mr.	Tsukushi Ikeda	Japan	