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In an age when global solidarity is needed to address various challenges, JPPF is expected to play an increasingly important role as a parliamentary caucus with a long history and tradition of leading Japan's diplomacy in the international community.

In every issue of JPPF Newsletter, we will carry "News" on activities and initiatives related to population and development issues.

News:

- *APDA Organized Intergenerational Dialogue of the Asian Parliamentarians and Youth Advocates on Meaningful Youth Engagement, Part II*

[Editorial responsibility: JPPF secretariat]

News

APDA Organized Intergenerational Dialogue of the Asian Parliamentarians and Youth Advocates on Meaningful Youth Engagement, Part II

On 2 June, in partnership with UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (APRO) and Y-PEER, the Asian Population and Development Association (APDA), the JPPF Secretariat, organized *Intergenerational Dialogue of the Asian Parliamentarians and Youth Advocates on Meaningful Youth Engagement Part II* in Bangkok, Thailand. More than 30 delegates joined on site, with more than 110 online participants, including parliamentarians and representatives of national committees on population and development (NCs) and Y-PEER affiliated youths from Asia-Pacific countries.

Hon. Ayano Kunimitsu, MP Japan, first delivered an opening address, in which she touched upon the youth initiatives in the fight against COVID-19, emphasized the importance to ensure opportunities for young generations to achieve their full potentials, and expressed her wishes for the success of this dialogue.



Hon. Dr. Jetn Sirathranont, MP Thailand and Secretary-General of AFPPD, then introduced Thailand's schemes to encourage youth engagement and highlighted the role of quality education to empower youths. Mr. Klaus Beck, Regional Director a.i. of UNFPA APRO, discussed the impact of COVID-19 on young generation, and advocated that each country should respond to diverse needs of the youths, especially those who are marginalized, and expand possibility for them.

Session 1 was a Follow-up with Intergenerational Dialogue 2021 and Mr. Lakey Tshering (Nepal, Y-PEER) presented the outcomes of the Dialogue 2021. The 2021 Dialogue enabled participants to have a shared understanding towards meaningful youth engagement¹, to share good examples/gaps and discuss ideas to address these gaps. Three priorities were put forward, which are enabling political framework, needs driven reforms, and inclusiveness.

Following the presentation, the participants were divided into small groups, to discuss the progress and gaps in meaningful youth engagement in their own countries. Participants reported that progress has been made in many Asian Pacific countries, with multiple programmes provided.

Gender inclusiveness, mental health issues, LGBTQI+ rights are also highlighted in the agenda. However, some gaps remain. First, proper policies and laws are still lacking, and many current ones need to be revised. Also, there still lacks the representation of different groups in decision making process. Some groups also mentioned the lack of opportunity to marginalized youths in many sectors. Two main recommendations were proposed by the participants. First, adequate communication channels must be created for meaningful engagement of young people. Second, more supports should be provided from the government, including sensitization, financial commitments, to name a few.



¹ The Global Consensus Statement on meaningful adolescent and youth engagement defines the principles as follows: "Meaningful adolescent and youth engagement is an inclusive, intentional, mutually-respectful partnership between adolescents, youth, and adults whereby power is shared, respective contributions are valued, and young people's ideas, perspectives, skills, and strengths are integrated into the design and delivery of programs, strategies, policies, funding mechanisms, and organizations that affect their lives and their communities, countries, and world". <http://meaningfolyouthengagement.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/MAYE-Statement-%E2%80%93-English.pdf>

Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP)

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Session 2 discussed the roles of parliamentarians to address youth policies and legislation. Hon. Virasak Kohsurat, MP, former Vice-Minister of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand, proposed that efforts should be made to build enabling environment, co-manage policies with youths, and build trusts. He concluded his presentation with three words: Patient, Polite and Open.

In Session 3, under the topic of youth engagement in COVID-19, Hon. Irene Gay Saulog, MP Philippines, stressed the paradigm of shift on engagement measurement, from number of youths participating in events to the role they play in decision making. She then noted that education is the best answer to solve many issues and that investing in youths is about creating a space for the youths to communicate their voice without fear and giving young people ownership over their future. The next presenter, Sgt. Dusadee Thirathanakul, Chair of Children and Youth Council of Thailand, shared the Thai experiences and introduced an "AI mask" as a good example of youths' contribution to the fight against COVID-19.

In Session 4, young participants and parliamentarians were divided into separate groups to find good practices for engaging young people from one another, and develop a list of systems that their own governments can adopt in the future. Participants agreed that several actions are needed, including (1) ensuring meaningful youth engagement from the grassroots level; (2) organizing capacity building programmes, especially in rural areas; (3) establishing youth parliament/council and some other platforms for youths to engage; and (4) providing accessible grants and funding to youth grassroots movements.

On the following day on 3 June, the participants visited the office of the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT), where they were briefed on their youth engagement programmes. PPAT is undertaking a project for promoting HIV prevention among young people and disseminating knowledge of HIV/AIDS so that HIV/AIDS-related stigma can be removed. Many participants commented that they learned a great deal from PPAT in engaging young people in their endeavors. The delegates also visited an orphanage, Rajvithi Home for Girls Operation Center.



The 2-day hybrid dialogue and study visits boosted exchanges and enhanced trusts between Y-PEER youths and parliamentarians/representatives of NCs, which will further the implementation of the recommendations. In closing, the participants agreed that even though substantial gains have been achieved, challenges remain, and much should be done from both sides.

【Media coverage】

Meaningful Dialogue Amplifies Youth Issues, Leads to Change

<https://www.ipsnews.net/2022/06/meaningful-dialogue-amplifies-youth-issues/>



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