

From Commitment to Action

A Factsheet on Implementing the 2013 Asia and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development

Introduction

In September 2013, the governments in Asia Pacific adopted the '**Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development**', a progressive and visionary agenda to advance people's rights and well-being through inclusive and equitable development in the region over the next decade and which gained unprecedented support and endorsements from member states. It is critical that the policy directions and priority actions set forward are realized. The document is also valuable as a basis for discussions over Post-2015, the Beijing +20 review, and in other global, regional and national level and multi-stakeholder dialogues.

Background

The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) is heralded for putting people at the centre of population and sustainable development efforts, and in particular the fundamental rights and freedoms of women and girls to have control over their sexual and reproductive lives. 179 governments agreed to realise, by 2014, the vision set out in the PoA.

In September 2013, as part of the ICPD Beyond 2014 review process, ministers and senior officials from 47 countries were among nearly 500 country delegates and civil society representatives attending the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference (6APPC) in Bangkok, Thailand. The 2013 Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development - a progressive and visionary agenda for the region - was adopted at the 6APPC. It reaffirms gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as indispensable to sustainable development, which was also underscored in the subsequent global Framework of Actions for the follow up to the ICPD Beyond 2014.

The Declaration is noteworthy for its comprehensive, gender sensitive and human rights based approach, bridging silos and addressing inequalities in a holistic manner. It emphasises the interconnectedness and indivisibility of all human rights, and their universality – as it is duty of all states to uphold them regardless of political, cultural, or economic context.

It reaffirms that gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are indispensable to sustainable development, strongly focuses on the rights of young people and their needs, including comprehensive sexuality education, and access to contraception including for the unmarried.

Holding governments to account!

Civil Society wants the commitments of the Declaration translated into action and our rights fully realized. Thus, critically reviewing the implementation of the ICPD Agenda and the Declaration is necessary. Putting in place accountability mechanisms to accurately monitor the progress of implementation of the Cairo Agenda and the Declaration at all levels is essential.

It is of utmost importance to ensure that the Declaration remains high on the political agenda and that the strong leadership that governments displayed translates to action and reaches out to influence other regional and international spaces. The prioritization on advancing gender equality and the human rights of women and girls, the rights and participation of young people, and SRHR for all, needs to be reflected throughout the final post-2015 framework negotiations, the Beijing+20 reviews, and other global, regional, and national policy discussions.

The Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA), in collaboration with partners, produced six factsheets on the main outcomes of the 6APPC on different topics: Women and Girls, Adolescents and Young People, Migrants, SOGI, Aging, and Modalities of Implementation. They can be used to continue the momentum at the local, national, and regional level, in addition to strengthen progressive commitments at the international level.



The aims of the factsheets are to

Raise awareness of the commitments made at the 6APPC among governments, civil society, development partners and other duty bearers in Asia and the Pacific, as well as its importance for taking these forward to the post-2015 agenda;

Provide communities with tools for advocacy efforts and to strengthen accountability for the commitments made in the Ministerial Declaration;

Highlight civil society perspectives for governments, the broader civil society movements, development partners and other duty bearers on how to best implement commitments made.

The Asia Pacific Alliance for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (APA) brings together nongovernmental organisations, donors and other stakeholders with common goals to build a strong network to ensure everyone's right to health is fully achieved through the promotion and inclusion of SRHR in development agendas.

The factsheets were guided by Civil Society Statements including the Joint APPC Civil Society Declaration and the Asia-Pacific Youth and Adolescent Regional Call to Action Youth Statement during the regional ICPD Review process. APA would like to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of: ACHIEVE, AFPPD, APCOM, ARROW DAWN, HelpAge, ICOMP, IPPF ESEAOR, IPPF SARO, IWRAW, Raks Thai Foundation, SARYN, Youth Coalition, YouthLEAD, and 7sisters.



The ICPD agenda builds on agreements and commitments made in a number of international human rights and policy documents and instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Child, the Vienna Declaration, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and Agenda 21. It also links strongly to the Beijing Platform for Action, and underpins the principles outlined in the Millennium.



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