



Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference

BANGKOK, 15–17 NOVEMBER 2023

Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference

Agenda item 2. Review of progress made towards the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well as of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation in Asia and the Pacific

Wednesday, 15 November 2023 (09:30-10:30 UTC+7)
Bangkok and online

High-level panel discussion

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Introduction

Asia and the Pacific has been undergoing momentous demographic change, from high to low fertility and mortality, and increased migration, resulting in older and more urban populations. Home to 60 per cent of the world's population, the region's population dynamics and their linkages to sustainable development crucially affect global trends. In recent decades, countries have made considerable progress in socioeconomic development. They now face new and continuing challenges, such as shrinking labour forces, population ageing, climate change impacts and increased internal and international migration. Many people face persistent socioeconomic inequalities (including gender inequalities), human rights violations and ageism. Inequalities and vulnerabilities have been exacerbated by climate change, disasters, conflicts, the COVID-19 pandemic and digital transformations, including disruptions due to the Fourth Industrial revolution.

In 2023, ESCAP members and associated members will meet for the seventh time since 1963 to discuss all aspects of population questions and their impact on social and economic development. The Conference will coincide with important events and developments, such as the 75-year anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human rights; the 60-year commemoration of the first Asian Population Conference, held in December 1963 in New Delhi, India; the 10-year anniversary of the adoption of the 2013 Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development; and the half-way mark to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the

Pacific. Looking ahead, the Conference will also inform discussions at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 28) in November/December 2023, the 30-year review of the Programme of Action at the 57th session of the Commission on Population and Development in 2024, the Summit of the Future in 2024, the World Social Summit in 2025 and any other discussions about the future development agenda.

The Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration noted that population considerations are integrally linked to global efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development (paragraph 22). The freedom and ability to make informed and responsible decisions, moreover, empower individuals to fulfil their potential and participate fully in economies and societies (paragraph 23). It is in this context that the high-level panel discussion will focus on population trends in Asia and the Pacific and their interrelation with sustainable development now and in the future. Rather than focusing on one aspect of these interlinkages, the panel will focus on broader themes and relate them to the global level. Gender considerations, as well as reflections regarding technology and the availability of data and statistics will be mainstreamed in the discussion.

2. Objectives

The high-level panel discussion will focus on the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in Asia and the Pacific. It is intended to set the stage for the ensuing general debate. The high-level panel will:

1. Discuss progress and new and continuing challenges in achieving the priority actions of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration and the related objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in Asia and the Pacific.
2. Identify any good practices and lessons learned in building a more inclusive, just and sustainable future with people in all their diversity at the center in Asia and the Pacific.
3. Discuss how emerging issues, such as the coronavirus disease, climate change, the food crisis, and digital transformation, including disruptions due to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, have affected population and development achievements and what additional actions are required to address them.
4. Look ahead and discuss projected demographic changes and their intersectionalities with other socio-economic changes and political trends that affect population and development in Asia and the Pacific the future.

3. Content and format

The high-level panel discussion will consist of two rounds of moderated questions, followed by concluding remarks of the panelists and the moderator. The following guiding questions will be addressed:

1. Ten years after adopting the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development and 30 years after adopting the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, what have countries in Asia and the Pacific achieved, and what remains to be done?
2. Are there any good practices and lessons learned in addressing challenges and opportunities in population and development?
3. Behind the backdrop of projected demographic change towards slower population growth, more people living in urban areas, smaller family sizes and increased migration, and overall demographic diversity in the region, what are the emerging issues that affect people in the region, in particular those in vulnerable situations? How do we address them?
4. In a time of political, economic and social uncertainty and turmoil, how can we make sure that, for example, young and old, women and girls, persons with disabilities and of different gender identities today and tomorrow are not left behind? What must be done at the regional, subregional and national levels?

4. Agenda

09:30-09:35	Welcome and opening remarks, moderator
09:35-09:55	First round of questions, panellists
09:55-10:15	Second round of questions, panellists
10:15-10:25	Concluding remarks, panellists
10:25-10:30	Concluding remarks, moderator

5. Organizing team

The round table is being organized by ESCAP in collaboration with UNFPA, Asia-Pacific Regional Office.

6. Background

According to resolution 74 (XXIII) of 17 April 1967 of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, the Asian Population Conference was established as a statutory organ of the Commission, to be convened every ten years synchronizing with the decennial population and related censuses, for the consideration of all aspects of population questions and of their impact on economic and social development. Since its first session in 1963, the Asian and Pacific Population Conference has been convened six times. The sixth Conference was held from 16 to 18 September 2013 at ESCAP, and members and associate Members adopted the Asian-Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development by vote.¹

¹ Report of the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference (16-20 September 2013, Bangkok)
<https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Report%20of%20APPC%202013.pdf>

In 1994, United Nations Member States adopted the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Egypt. The Programme of Action, which was extended by the General Assembly in 2010 beyond 2014 (resolution 65/234),² undertook a people-centered and rights-based approach to sustainable development. It emphasizes that achieving sustainable development requires that interrelationships between population, resources, the environment and social and economic development are fully recognized, properly managed and brought into a harmonious and dynamic balance. Population dynamics are both drivers and outcomes of sustainable development at national and sub-national levels, but also at regional and global levels. In order to achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, policies, including population-related policies, should be developed and implemented in order to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future generations. Since 1994, the Commission on Population and Development, a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, has reviewed and appraised the implementation of the Programme of Action in regular intervals.

In 2022, the Commission decided that the theme of the 57th session in 2024 would be “Assessing the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.”³ Thus, the Commission will undertake another review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action at the global level in 2024.

7. Suggested reading

- Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). (2014). [Report of the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference \(16-20 September 2013, Bangkok\)](#).
- United Nations. (1995). [Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994](#) (Sales No. E.95.XIII.18, chap. I, resolution 1, annex).
- [Review of progress made towards the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well as of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation in Asia and the Pacific](#) (ESCAP/APPC(7)/2)
- [The impacts of climate change on population and development in Asia and the Pacific](#) (ESCAP/APPC(7)/3)
- [Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well as of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development](#)

² Resolution adopted by the General Assembly (65/234 Follow-up to the International Conference on Population). A/RES/65/234

https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_65_234.pdf.

³ E/2022/25-E/CN.9/2022/7.

[and the key actions for its further implementation in Asia and the Pacific: a summary of the outcomes of stakeholder consultations](#) (ESCAP/APPC(7)/INF/1)

- [Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well as of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation in Asia and the Pacific: a summary of the results of voluntary national surveys reported by member States](#) (ESCAP/APPC(7)/INF/2)
- [Gender equality and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in Asia and the Pacific](#) (ESCAP/APPC(7)/INF/3)
- [Universal health care in Asia and the Pacific](#) (ESCAP/APPC(7)/INF/4)
- [Data and statistics to monitor the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well as of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation in Asia and the Pacific](#) (ESCAP/APPC(7)/INF/5)

8. Contact persons

Sabine Henning, Chief, Sustainable Demographic Transition Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP (hennings@un.org)

Madusha Dissanayake, Regional Programme Specialist, UNFPA, Asia-Pacific Regional Office (mdissanayake@unfpa.org)
