



Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference

BANGKOK, 15–17 NOVEMBER 2023

Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference

Agenda item 3. Thematic discussion on achievements, challenges, gaps and emerging issues in the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, as well 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

Thursday, 16 November 2023 (09:00-10:30 UTC+7)

Bangkok and online

Round table 1

Population dynamics, sustainable development and climate change

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Introduction

Population and development considerations are paramount to sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific. The region is home to 4.7 billion people, some 60 per cent of the world's population. The region is experiencing transitions from high to low fertility and mortality levels, and to increased migration, resulting in older and more urban populations. Life expectancy at birth stood at 65.1 years for men and 69.5 years for women in 2000, which, due to improvements in health services increased to 72.4 years for men and 77.6 years for women in 2023. The total fertility rate was at 2.6 children per woman in 1995 and stands at 1.9 children per woman today, which is considered as below replacement level. Although population growth continues at the regional level and there is much diversity, growth rates have been declining for decades. The demographic transition has also led to shrinking working-age populations in several countries. In fact, in some of them, there are already more older persons than children.

Demographic trends have been identified as one of the megatrends affecting sustainable development. Other trends refer to climate change and increased frequency of disasters, inequality, urbanization and digital transformation. As stated in the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, inequalities and vulnerabilities of the population have been exacerbated by "multiple and interrelated crises, including...climate change and the loss of biodiversity, all of which have increased vulnerabilities and inequalities and have adversely affected development gains" (paragraph 20).

The Ministerial Declaration emphasises that "population dynamics are all-important for development" (paragraph 22). Therefore, the region must address population dynamics in the face of new and continuing challenges and opportunities. This round table will therefore discuss population dynamics at the regional, subregional, national and subnational levels in Asia and the Pacific. It will further explore how population trends are affected (and affect) socio-economic development. The round table will focus on good practices, lessons learned and a way forward.

This round table will discuss general population trends in Asia and the Pacific and their interrelation with sustainable development and climate change and identify other emerging trends. The discussion will also focus on challenges, opportunities and gaps in implementation of the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration, 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. Gender considerations, as well as reflections regarding technology and the availability of data and statistics, will be mainstreamed in the discussion.

2. Objectives

The round-table discussion is expected to provide insights into progress and challenges with regard to population dynamics, sustainable development and climate change. The round table will:

1. Identify challenges and opportunities presented by the interrelation of population dynamics, sustainable development and climate change. The round table will also focus on new and continuing challenges and opportunities.
2. Discuss the region's progress and share lessons learned and good practices surrounding the interplay between population dynamics, sustainable development and climate change.
3. Identify gaps in implementing the Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration, 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, with recommendations for the region to overcome these gaps.

3. Content and format

The round-table discussion will consist of a moderated discussion among panellists, Q&A with meeting participants and concluding remarks by the panellists. The following guiding questions will be addressed:

1. How do population dynamics affect sustainable development and vice versa?
2. What are some of the new and continuing demographic trends that present challenges and opportunities for sustainable development?
3. How can policy and programme implementation address some of the challenges and harness opportunities? What has not worked? Are there any good practices and lessons learned from countries in the region?
4. In light of demographic and environmental challenges, what concrete steps and actions should the region take to meet its commitments under the 2013 Asian and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

During the Q&A, participants will be invited to speak from the floor and provide comments and any further reflections. The recording of the round-table discussion will be posted on the meeting website. A summary of the round-table discussion will be included in the Chair's summary of the meeting.

4. Agenda

09:00-09:05	Welcome and opening remarks, moderator
09:05-09:25	First round of questions, panellists
09:25-09:45	Second round of questions, panellists
09:45-10:15	Q&A
10:15-10:25	Concluding remarks, panellists
10:25-10:30	Closing 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

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

¹ Report of the Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference
<https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Report%20of%20APPC%202013.pdf>.

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.

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 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)

³ E/2022/25-E/CN.9/2022/7.

- [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

Mr. Napaphat Satchanawakul, Social Affairs Officer, Sustainable Demographic Transition Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP (napaphat.satchanawakul@un.org).

Ms. Wassana Im-em, Regional Technical Specialist on Population and Development, UNFPA, Asia-Pacific Regional Office (im-em@unfpa.org).
