



REPORT

Parliamentary Delegation at the International Conference on Family Planning 2022

European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights

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Introduction

From the 14th to the 17th of November 2022, global policymakers, researchers, NGOs, donors, private sector, young leaders, advocates, and practitioners gathered in Pattaya City (Thailand) for the International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP). Among this diversity of attendants, 23 members of parliament (MPs) from across the globe attended the conference under the name of the Global Parliamentary Alliance (GPA). The GPA staff facilitated the participation of 23 MPs from 19 countries at the 2022 ICFP in Pattaya City (Thailand): 14 from high-income countries, and 9 from low- and middle-income countries with a particular focus on East Africa and Asia-Pacific. MPs had the chance to discuss their legislative work on family planning (FP) in front of the reproductive health community during three ICFP-invited panels; to engage with UN agencies and civil society organisations during bilateral meetings; and to fuel peer-to-peer dialogue during the two cross-regional parliamentary forums.

This report will highlight the insightful discussion that took place both among parliamentarians and between parliamentarians and the FP community. The presence of high-level leadership participation from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organisation (WHO), FP2030, the Gates Foundation and Organon during the discussions with MPs underscored the importance of building a broader support base for universal access to sexual and reproductive health. Thanks to these collective efforts, MPs enjoyed a unique experience as well as acquired new knowledge that will boost their efforts to realise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely in the areas of sexual health and human rights, within their respective national parliaments.

The European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (EPF) is grateful for the financial support received by UNFPA and WHO through its Human Reproduction Programme (HRP) to organise this event.



The GPA Delegation





Overview

Pre-Conferences

UNFPA Supplies Partners Assembly and IBP Network Session

The GPA delegation attended the thematic roundtable discussions of the UNFPA Supplies Partners Assembly on: (a) moving towards sustainable FP programming; (b) improving equitable access for marginalised women and girls; and (c) strengthening partnerships. The GPA team also attended the IBP Network Session hosted by WHO and UNFPA which dealt with innovative approaches to implementation such as south-to-south learning, digital technologies, and engaging marginalized populations in the field of FP.

The GPA team connected with UN agencies and other stakeholders such as Global Health Canada, USAID, the governments of Sweden, Norway, and Australia, and exchanged on how to create future synergies. One of the points that was stressed during the Assembly was the relationship between public and private entities. These relationships pose new challenges for the FP community and there is a need for every initiative to be transparent and accountable to stakeholders. Another important point stressed during the IBP meeting was the importance of creative techniques such as storytelling and multimedia to document evidence about FP programs.



On the left, Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of UNFPA. On the right, Prof. Pascale Allotey, Director of SRH/HRP at WHO.





ICFP-invited panels

Role of Parliamentarians, intergovernmental organisations, and the private sector in advancing Family Planning programmes in both low- and middle-income countries and in donor countries' development policies

During the conference, the GPA delegations took part in a multi-stakeholder panel to exchange good practices and strategies on how to improve access to contraception for women and adolescent girls. Michael Pergine, Head of Global Policy, Government Relations and ESG Strategy at Organon, showcased the commitment that Organon, a pharmaceutical company, has taken to go beyond product research by partnering with EPF to conduct policy research. Hon. Liekens (MP, Belgium) stressed the importance of governments investing in SRHR programmes from UNDP, WHO and UNFPA, therefore strengthening the power of multilateralism. And according to Baroness Sugg (MP, UK), these governmental development programmes need to involve private sectors too, because 'around 40% of women and girls rely on the private sector'. To ensure high-quality FP services, policymakers need to take into account several factors: rely on a comprehensive SRHR education package, engage with courageous activists, and involve the community as a whole. As Hon. Liekens (MP, Belgium) underlined during her speech at the first ICFP invited panel: 'All the community will benefit from access to SRHR'. SRHR is key to the progress of all SDGs. 'Donor countries face challenging economic crisis' says Baroness Sugg (UK) during the first ICFP invited panel – 'We need to join efforts and accept, as well, an increase in funding from the private sector'.



From the left to the right, Baroness Liz Sugg (MP UK), Hon. Esther Passaris (MP Kenya), Neil Datta (Executive Director, EPF), Hon. Goedele Liekens (MP Belgium), Dr. Ayman Abdelmohsen (UNFPA Supplies Partnership Programme Leader), Michael Pergine (Head of Global Policy, Government Relations and ESG Strategy at Organon).





Generating Political Leadership on Family Planning: Cross-regional Perspectives on the Challenges for Funding

Throughout the entire conference, there was a clear focus on the dichotomy of the funding-financing relationship. The ICFP 2022's theme shows the approach expected to be taken into account to make FP funding sustainable and less dependent on external aid. Similarly, EPF capitalised on ICFP's theme by launching its first edition of the SRHR Funding Atlas which presents accessible information on how donor countries are performing in relation to their commitments to funding SRHR programmes. Importantly, if governments (both LMICs and donor countries) embrace the vision of SRHR and FP as a fundamental part of UHC, they will be able to ensure appropriate funding and enhance SRHR. Also, donor countries will need to embrace a more holistic approach that aims to strengthen LMICs' national capacities and thus, creates fertile ground for national financing for health issues, including SRHR. The climate crisis, and more generally, human-made crises create inequity and backlash in reducing unmet needs as well as unintended pregnancies. Thus, sustainable funding is still an issue when it comes to FP and SRHR, but together, public, and private sector, donor countries and LMICs should enhance their efforts to make sustainable funding the present and the future for FP.





From the left to the right, Hon. Oleksiy Zhmerenetskyi (MP Ukraine), Baroness Lindsay Northover (MP UK), Dr. Jérémie Zoungrana (Nigeria Country Director), Hon. Catalin Tenita (MP Romania), Hon. Dr. Ruth Labode (MP Zimbabwe), Hon. Chaudhry-Mazhar Iqbal (MP Punjab Assembly Pakistan).





The Power of Community: New Investments, Vibrant Voices and Collective Action to Advance Access to Family Planning

This plenary focused on the investments being made as they relate to advancing FP access from both the supply and demand side through a community-led lens. It also created a conversation on what else is needed, where financing for FP must be enhanced and why, and the importance of sustaining and leveraging these investments to accelerate commitments and actions. Honorable Ntara (MP, Tanzania) was invited by President & CEO of PAI, Nabeeha Kazi Hutchins, to speak about the government commitments to access to contraceptives and other SRH services and Tanzania's commitment to FP2030. The Honourable spoke about how the government needs to rely more on the power and voice of CSOs at national and subnational levels to drive demand and efficient collaboration.



From the left to the right, SM Shaikat (Executive Director at SERAC-Bangladesh), Supriya Madhavan (Senior Health Specialist, Global Financing Facility/World Bank), Dr. Samukeliso Dube (Executive Director of FP2030), Hon. Thea Medard Ntara (MP Tanzania), Nabeeha Kazi Hutchins (President & CEO at PAI), Amos Mwale (Founder and Executive Director Center for Reproductive Health Education Zambia)

GPA Forum

One of the main achievements of the MPs delegation at ICFP 2022 has been the opportunity to engage directly with UN agencies in conducive and effective discussions behind closed doors. UNFPA, WHO, FP2030, and Organon hosted the two GPA parliamentarian forums held in a private meeting room where MPs had the chance to speak freely about the FP and SRHR situation in their own countries and at the parliamentary level. To facilitate this conversation between MPs and UN





agencies, MPs received a few information sheets displaying the latest figures and facts on FP around the world. These sheets were helpful in guiding the dialogue to specific hot topics that needed to be addressed, such as framing of FP language, sustainable funding, male responsibility, and employing a human-rights-based approach.



The GPA Delegation including Ragaa Said (UNFPA Strategic Partnerships Advisor for CSOs and Parliamentarians, Strategic Partnerships Branch)

For UN agencies, MPs represent an important part of the equation for their work in both donor countries and LMICs. In donor countries, MPs have the legislative power to advocate for increased funding for UN agencies, while in LMICs, parliamentarians can facilitate the work in the field of those agencies by implementing rules and laws accordingly. To complement the advocacy material from UN agencies, EPF staff distributed a contraception-themed chocolate box and a European Contraception Policy Atlas to each MPs. These Organon-funded research tools are useful advocacy tools that European MPs can use in their national parliaments to show the disparities that exist in different countries around the region. EPF also announced the need and the opportunity to go global with the soon-to-be-created Global Contraception Policy Atlas: an advocacy research tool that will support MPs' legislative work to accelerate progress in contraception access around the world.

During the GPA Forum, MPs had the time to discuss together with high-level leadership from both WHO and UNFPA on the issue of funding; with the understanding that national governments decide





which multilateral agency receives certain funding. On the one hand, MPs recognise the need of having UN agencies such as WHO and UNFPA work with them in a more consistent way. On the other hand, Dr Natalia Kanem and Dr Pascale Allotey stressed the role of MPs in making governments accountable for the work that these agencies do, as these agencies are primarily funded by governments. Therefore, MPs have the power to make governments understand that investing in FP has an enormous – and beneficial – impact on society and therefore needs to be prioritised to realise the rights of the citizens.



On the left, Michael Pergine (Head of Global Policy, Government Relations and ESG Strategy at Organon), Dr. Samukeliso Dube (Executive Director of FP2030), Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of UNFPA. On the right, Prof. Pascale Allotey, Director of SRH/HRP at WHO.

A few MPs said that men and religious leaders should be part of the actions to advance FP so that they can also understand the importance of spacing pregnancies and safe access to contraceptives. Thanks to Hon. Dr. Malunga Phiri (MP, Malawi), this conversation focused on the role that young boys and men have in promoting FP and contraception. And for this to happen, the FP conversation must go digital, as underlined by Hon. Passaris (MP, Kenya) when she explained that she has managed to build massive support from the youth via Twitter and Instagram, where such communication channels allow her to speak to the most vulnerable populations in Kenya.

Another important point is knowing how to frame certain challenges surrounding FP language. For example, the experience that Hon. Dr. Abla El Alfi shared with peers during the GPA forum was particularly poignant. She told the audience that in Egypt, when the official FP advice was to tell women and men to only have one or two children no one was listening to them. However, when the





language shifted to explaining the importance of dedicating time and money to one child at a time, then the entire community reacted positively to FP and spacing pregnancies for the health of the mother and child.



The GPA Forum (day 1)



The GPA Forum (Day 2)

Throughout the conference, all the MPs from the GPA delegation learned by listening to the best practices of other countries as well as sharing their own concerns and problems at the national level with their peers. The value of north-north, south-south, and north-south exchanges remains of vital





importance for all the parliamentarians who took advantage of the parliamentary forum sessions as well as of bilateral conversation.

Global Contraception Policy Atlas

Technical Working Session on the Global Contraception Policy Atlas

Every year, EPF produces the <u>Contraception Policy Atlas Europe</u>, a comparative map that investigates what European states are doing to ensure access to contraceptive supplies, consultation, and information. Based on this impactful, EPF, jointly with a diverse range of stakeholders, decided to scale up the project to cover additional geographic regions, and create a Global Contraception Policy Atlas.

ICFP was a good opportunity to organise a technical working session with all the potential partners for this project. EPF Executive Director Neil Datta presented the Goal and Expectations of the project and its regional phases. Partners from Action Canada, ARROW, Fòs Feminista, Women Deliver, FP2030, UNFPA, and WHO, shared their feedback on how to work efficiently together on such a project. There are different opportunities on the horizon to present the Global Contraception Atlases such as:

- Women Deliver (an international conference gathering 5000 participants focused on women's health and rights) in July 2023
- International Parliamentarians Conferences such as the International Parliamentarians'
 Conference on Implementing the ICPD Programme of Action (IPCI/ICPD) and G7 and G20 parliamentarians' conferences.



Leaflet of the Global Contraception Policy Atlas





The Exhibition Centre

The GPA delegation also had the opportunity to liaise with a wide range of stakeholders including, advocates, researchers, and practitioners working to innovate and progress FP programming.



Appearing in the pictures: Hon. Catalin Tenita (MP Romania), Hon. Esther Passaris (MP Kenya), Baroness Liz Sugg (MP UK).



In the center, Hon. Josephine Veronique Lacson-Noel (MP Philippines) during the UNFPA Day of 8 Billion event





Learning outcomes and improvements

Strengthening the ties between UN agencies and MPs

During the GPA Forums, it was clear how useful these closed-door meetings are for MPs and the organisations that attend. However, to benefit fully from these discussions, it would be helpful to find avenues for the technical profiles of UNFPA and WHO to be better integrated. One possibility is for the high-level leaders to give an inspirational speech which could then be subsequently complemented by a more practical speech from a technical profile that would tackle a specific issue such as task sharing or male contraception, or any other topics that urge to be discussed. This combined profile of each organisation would allow MPs to have both a more institutional narrative as well as give more food for thought to what can be concretely achieved on these hot topics that are discussed within the reproductive health community.

Digitalisation of the GPA Forum



EPF launched the Global Parliamentary Alliance for Health, Rights, and Development (GPA) in November 2019 which aims to 'provide a platform for parliamentarians from around the world to advocate for better health care, expanding human rights and to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) both in their home countries and abroad'. In 2020, EPF launched a smartphone application entitled GPA App which connects these parliamentarians to each other and provides upto-date, expert data on global health, development, and human rights issues accessible via their smartphones. EPF envisages working on the digitalisation of the GPA Forum to go towards a more sustainable development of its activities. MPs will be encouraged to download the app, create a profile and consult material, info sheets, agendas, and pictures from the app. This will be a sustainable action where MPS will have an easily accessible place to get all the most updated information before, during, and after the conferences.

Concluding remarks

This was the first ICFP to be attended – in-person – since the Covid pandemic. By allowing for this interaction, there was a renewed energy to affect change, network and explore innovative solutions for the plethora of challenges surrounding FP stakeholders. The GPA parliamentary delegation was active throughout ICFP whether it be in invited sessions or in the closed-door forums attended by members from the leadership of UNFPA and WHO. Furthermore, Hon. Prisca Thévenot (MP,





France) was invited to speak on behalf of the GPA delegation during the <u>closing ceremony</u>; her powerful speech was well-received by the audience, and showed the commitment parliamentarians have towards FP.

As we conclude 2022 and look to the future, it is important to be aware of the rapid approaching SDG deadline of 2030. There is still much work to be done in FP, and the role of parliamentarians is central to making sure that no woman or girl must endure an unmet need. Parliamentarians need to be aware – and more importantly, engaged – of what their own parliaments are discussing with respect to FP as well as how future development aid budgets are drafted. Furthermore, partnerships with organisations such as the UNFPA and WHO, as well as private entities, are crucial to parliamentary work being effective implemented in the field.



Hon. Prisca Thévenot (MP France) during the ICFP closing ceremony





Programme

Sun 13 th	Mon 14 th	Tue 15 th	Wed 16th		Thu 17 th
Arrivals		08:30-10:00 ICFP Plenary FP + UHC: Innovate. Collaborate. Accelerate PEACH Plenary Hall	08:30-10:00 ICFP Plenary Committed to Progress: Building a Stronger Family Planning Movement, Grounded in Rights PEACH Plenary Hall		08:30-10:00 ICFP Plenary Youth Leaders Make Bold Moves: Young People Innovate, Collaborate & Accelerate PEACH Plenary Hall
	10:30-11:30 Welcome and orientation meeting (Sapphire A)	10:15-11:35 ICFP 1st Invited Panel Role of Parliamentarians, intergovernmental organisations and the private sector in advancing Family Planning programmes PEACH Pattaya 3	10:15-11:35 ICFP 2 nd Invited Panel Generating Political Leadership on Family Planning: Cross- regional Perspectives on the Challenges for Funding PEACH Pattaya 11		10:15-11:35 ICFP Invited Panel The Power of Community: Investments, Voices and Collective Action to Advance Family Planning PEACH Plenary Hall
12:00 - 16:30 UNFPA Supplies Partners Assembly (Send an email to secretariat@epfweb.org if interested in attending)	12:30-14:30 <u>Lunch with Leaders</u> Royal Summit Chamber A&B	12:30-14:00 ICFP Buffet Lunch at Royal Cliff Beach Hotel (Foyer A & B)	12:30-14:00 ICFP Buffet Lunch at Royal Cliff Beach Hotel (Foyer A & B)		13:25-15:00 ICFP Lunch and Closing Ceremony PEACH Plenary Hall
		14:30-16:00 1st GPA session - Best practices in developing policies to secure sustainable access to safe, voluntary family planning (Sapphire A)	14:30-16:00 2 nd GPA session - Creating cross party consensus in ensuring adequate financing of family planning commodities and services (Sapphire A)		
Arrivals		16:15-17:35 Parliamentarians are invited to select a session from the official programme	16:15-17:35 Parliamentarians are invited to select a session from the official programme		Departures
	16:30-18:00 Opening Ceremony PEACH Plenary Hall	17:45-19:00 The ICFP Red Carpet Celebration PEACH Plenary Hall 19:00-20:00 UNFPA Day of 8 Billion	18:00-21:00 ARROW/GPA Launch of the partnership for the Asia-Pacific Contraception Atlas (Phratamnak Ballrom		
		event (Phratamnak Ballrom InterContinental Hotel)		High Impact Practice Strategy and Roadmap	
	18:00-20:00 Welcome Reception	20:00-21:30 GPA Dinner at Cabbages and Condoms	Intercontinental (PEACH Pattaya 11)		





Participants

The GPA staff facilitated the participation of 23 Members of Parliament from 19 countries at the 2022 ICFP in Pattaya City (Thailand).

Belgium Hon. Goedele Liekens, MP
Canada Hon. Leah Gazan, MP

Croatia Hon. Katica Glamuzina, MP
Egypt Senator Prof. Abla El Alfi
France Hon. Prisca Thevenot, MP

Indonesia Hon. Andi Fauziah Pujiwatie Hatta, MP

Indonesia Hon. Sri Wulan, MP

Kenya Hon. Esther Passaris, MP

Malawi Hon. Dr. Benson Malunga Phiri, MP

New Zealand Hon. Louise Upston, MP
Norway Hon. Silje Hjemdal, MP
Norway Hon. Maren Grøthe, MP

Pakistan (Punjab) Hon. Chaudhry-Mazhar Igbal, MP

Philippines Hon. Josephine Veronique Lacson-Noel, MP

Portugal Hon. Lina Lopes, MP
Romania Hon. Catalin Tenita, MP
Spain (Basque Country) Hon. Maitane Ipiñazar, MP

Tanzania Hon. Dr. Thea Medard Ntara, MP
Ukraine Hon. Oleksiy Zhmerenetskyi, MP
United Kingdom Baroness Lindsay Northover, MP
United Kingdom Hon. Tommy Sheppard, MP
United Kingdom Baroness Liz Sugg, MP

International Organisations:

Zimbabwe

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):

Dr. Natalia Kanem. Executive Director

Dr. Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director

Dr. Gifty Addico, Chief of the Commodity Security branch in the Technical Division

Ragaa Said, Strategic Partnerships Advisor for CSOs and Parliamentarians, Strategic

Partnerships Branch (SPB)

Dr. Ayman Abdelmohsen, UNFPA Supplies Partnership Programme Leader

Hon. Dr. Ruth Labode, MP





World Health Organisation (WHO):

Prof. Pascale Allotey, Director SRH/HRP
Dr. Manjulaa Narasimhan, WHO Scientist
Sarah Kessler, Technical Officer Partnerships and Communication
Rita Kabra, Family Planning Accelerator Lead
Nandita Thatte, Technical Officer

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:

Meg DeRonghe, Senior Programme Officer Dr. Jérémie Zoungrana, Nigeria Country Director

Bill & Melinda Gates Institute:

Jose "Oying" G. Rimon II, Director Kellie Welborn, Senior Programme Officer Darby Major, Programme Specialist Anastasia Pierron, Programme Officer

FP2030:

Dr. Samukeliso Dube, Executive Director Dr. Jason Bremner, Senior Data Director Anneka Claudio, Executive Coordinator

Women Deliver:

Dr. Maliha Khan, President and Chief Executive Officer Divya Mathew, Director of Policy and Advocacy Kinza Hasan, Manager, Policy and Advocacy Darcy Allen De Gracia, Manager, Policy and Advocacy

Population Action International:

Nabeeha Kazi Hutchins, President and CEO

Private Sector:

Organon:

Michael Pergine, Head of Global Policy, Government Relations and ESG Strategy
Noha Salem, Global Women's Health Policy Lead
Krzysztof Wojciechowski, Executive Director, EUCAN Public Policy Lead
Rafael Chaves Cardona, Global Policy, Gov Affairs and ESG (LAMERA) – Global Sustainable
Financing Lead

Other actors:





Action Canada – Kelly Bowden, Director of Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations

Action Canada – Insiya Mankani, Public Affairs Officer

Action Canada - Andrea Rodríguez, Policy and Advocacy Officer

ARROW - Sivananthi Thanenthiran, Executive Director

ARROW – Garima Shrivastava, Programme Manager

Fòs Feminista – Martín Gutiérrez, Associate Director, Partnership & Development

SEDRA – Federación de Planificación Familiar – Filomena Ruggiero, Head of Advocacy

Sex og Politikk – Tor-Hugne Olsen, Executive Director

UK APPG on Population, Development & Reproductive Health – Ann Mette Kjaerby, Researcher and Parliamentary and Policy Advisor

UK APPG on Population, Development & Reproductive Health – Mikki Francis-Lawton, Administrator and Researcher

Stephen B. Viste, Chief of Staff of MP Lacson-Noel

Hosts:

European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual & Reproductive Rights (EPF):

Neil Datta, Executive Director Marina Davidashvili, Head of Policy and Research Silvia Traina, Programme and Finance Coordinator Claire Poppelwell-Scevak, Advocacy Officer Federico Pipitone, Advocacy and Research Assistant

Communication outputs

As part of GPA's communication strategy, GPA's communication team developed a series of materials to promote GPA's activities and presence during the ICFP 2022. Some visual examples of the materials developed can be seen in *Annex I*.

EPF's website received during the week of the conference a total of 2 254 page views with an average time on the page of 2 minutes. Overall, **1 550 users visited our website**. These users were mainly from India, United States, Belgium, and Italy.

A **social media content calendar** was also prepared in advance to better facilitate communication output during the conference. It included the taglines for each post (that were to be adapted during the sessions according to what speakers were highlighting) as well as visuals and the handles for





the relevant representatives to be mentioned. This helped us to gain more **online visibility** throughout the conference.

Our social media toolkit shared with MPs in advance allowed more interaction on social media and some MPs were active in sharing and posting on social media during the event.

Live coverage was also carried out during the conference. Thanks to this, EPF tweets earned **16.4k impressions** over this period and we earned 2.3k impressions per day on average. For instance, we were retweeted by MPs, several APPGs and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research (SRH) programme at WHO. **Our top tweet had 2 232 impressions** (number of times users saw the tweet on Twitter) **and 66 engagements** (total number of times users have interacted with it). Some other examples of posts can be seen in *Annex II*.

Special thanks to UNFPA, WHO,
Organon, and Bill & Melinda Gates
Institute for having made this
Parliamentary Delegation to ICFP2022
possible!





Annexes











Annexes

