

Pacific Conference of Parliamentarians for Advocacy on ICPD beyond 2014

Tonga: Parliamentary Advocacy on Population and Development



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Outline

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Tonga's support to advocacy on population and development in the region

- 1997 – Tonga became a member the Pacific Parliamentary Assembly on Population and Development (PPAPD). PPAPD is a Pacific regional body of Parliamentarians from all 14 Pacific Island countries whose goal is to promote population and development issues, such as the combat of HIV/AIDS, Reproductive Health and Gender issues in the Pacific region. As a member of PPAPD, Tonga pledged commitment to sharing experiences and resources to address common challenges in the area of population, environment and food security.
- 1998 – Tonga met other Pacific Ministers to formulate the Pacific response to the ICPD Plan of Action. This was shared in the UN General Assembly Special Session on ICPD at Hague in the Netherlands. The meeting highlighted the need for improved data collection and analysis on population and development.

Tonga's support to advocacy on population and development in the region

- 2002 – Tonga participated in the first Meeting of the PPAPD was held in Sigatoka, Fiji. The meeting acknowledged the important role Pacific Island Governments and Parliamentarians can play in advocating for population and development issues in the Pacific. PPAPD Constitution and By-Laws updated, and PPAPD membership included all Forum islands counties.
- 2004 – Tonga participated in the 1st Conference for Pacific Parliamentarians on “The Role of Pacific Parliamentarians in the Fight Against HIV/AIDS.” held at the Tradewinds Convention Centre in Lami, Fiji. The Meeting provided a forum for informing Parliamentarians about basic facts on HIV/AIDS – what it is, how it is spread, its effect on the infected person and its wide psycho-social, cultural and economic impact on individuals, families and nations.

Tonga's support to advocacy on population and development in the region

- 2007 – Tonga participated in the 2nd PPAPD Biennial Conference and the thematic conference on “Safeguarding Pacific Youths: Accelerating Action Through Partnership with Pacific Parliamentarians” in Samoa.

Tonga's advocacy at the national level

- The PPAPD/FPOCC Secretariat circulated a Guideline for the establishment of Parliamentary Groups on Population and Development to all member Parliaments around the region.
- In November 2008, the Parliament of the Kingdom of Tonga established their Parliamentary Group on Population and Development with the following members:
 1. Hon. Tu'ilakepa - Speaker of the House
 2. Hon. Lasike - Noble Representative
 3. Sunia Fili (MP) - Peoples' Rep.
 4. Sione Feingatau 'Iloa (MP) - Peoples Rep.
 5. Sione Teisina Fuko (MP) - Peoples' Rep.

Role of Tonga's Parliamentary Group on Population & Development advocacy

The overall goal of the Parliamentary Group on Population and Development - to improve the living standards, security and well-being of people of Tonga by promoting practical actions by parliamentarians in advocacy for population and development issues.

The objectives included:

- ❖ Supporting / initiating the enactment and/or amendment of legislation on key population and development issues;
- ❖ Utilizing the legislatures oversight processes to encourage the Executive to effectively tackle priority population ad development issues
- ❖ Using parliamentary processes and fora to help shape national policy by facilitating informed debate and sharing of information on population and development issues, including sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS & STIs, youth development, gender equity and sustainable use of natural resources.

Tonga support to Population and Development advocacy

- ❖ In 2008, Tonga endorsed the National Reproductive Health Policy and Strategy 2008-2011.
- ❖ In November 2009, for the commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the ICPD Programme of Action, Tonga's Ministry of Health prepared a briefing paper and delivered this paper at the Regional Symposium on Population and Development, at the University of the South Pacific,
- ❖
- ❖ In 2012, Tonga participated in the Pacific Regional ICDP Review
- ❖ In 2012, Tonga youth participated in the NZ Family Planning Open Hearing for Pacific Parliamentarians with special focus on Youth SRH.

Malo au pito

