

## Side Event during the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development

**Title:** Optimizing Southeast Asian Population Dynamics through South-South and Triangular Cooperation(SSTC)

**Date and Time:** May 1, 2024 | 1315 – 1430 EDT

**Room:** Conference Room 7, UN HQ, pre-register: <https://forms.gle/VeePUnTbvDZcJc4Y7>

**Organizers:** Commission on Population and Development, Philippines; Ministry of Public Health, Thailand; National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN), Malaysia; the Permanent Missions of the Republic of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand

**Co-organizer:** UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Country Offices of the Philippines, Thailand, and Malaysia and United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)

**Target Audience:** On-site participants of the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the CPD and livestreaming audience

**Format:** A 75-minute in-person event featuring presentations from ASEAN Member Country Speakers and the UNFPA to be moderated by an expert to be concluded by an open forum / discussion.

### CONCEPT NOTE

#### Background

The 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (CPD) focuses on the assessment of the status of the 30-year implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The review takes place around key multilateral processes and moments, including the global review of the SDGs at the 2023 High Level Political Forum (July 2023), the 2023 SDG Summit (September 2023), the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December 2023) and the 2024 Summit of the Future (September 2024).

While population dynamics at the global level is generally characterized by steadily increasing older persons, the population dynamics in Southeast Asia has remained disparate. The Southeast Asia, consisting of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam, comprises a population of 650 million people spread over 4.5 million square kilometers across 20,000 islands and landmasses (Wang, 2017). Populations range from less than 0.5 million in

Brunei Darussalam to over 250 million in Indonesia, and span a wide range of peoples, histories, languages, religions and cultures (ASEAN Stats, 2020). Moreover, Southeast Asian countries are diverse in terms of their economic, social and cultural development. Such heterogeneity exists within states as well as between states, and cuts across regional, urban-rural, gendered, ethnic, and other forms of social divides (ASEAN, 2021).

The ASEAN Development Outlook (2021) recognized that the regional demographics or population is one of the key drivers of socioeconomic progress in the region as well as in each country. Based on UN projections, Southeast Asia, where a burgeoning young population was a key development driver of the latter half of twentieth century, is expected to have an ageing workforce over the next 20 years. Should the United Nations high growth scenario prove accurate, an ASEAN population in excess of one billion would put unsustainable strain on the region's resources.

A major change in the age composition of the population in the region is likely to accompany the overall decline in the number of people across the region. While currently, the over-64 age group accounts for 7 percent of the ASEAN population, this is projected to rise to 21 percent by 2100. In the case of Singapore and Thailand, the over-64 age group will constitute 30 percent of the population by 2050, of which one-third will be older than 80. The majority of the over 80 population will be women. Similar changes in population structure will also be evident in the case of Brunei, Malaysia and Viet Nam by the 2070s (UN DESA, 2020). The ageing of population in other countries likewise is already affecting the population dynamics specifically movement of human resource (i.e., for employment) in countries with relatively younger population (e.g., Philippines).

The joint impact of changes in climate and demography will affect the ability of policy makers to realize the vision of an inclusive, participative and dynamic community. As such, as the Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) commits to improve the quality of life in the region through activities that are people-oriented and people-centered, with the aim of providing opportunities to collectively deliver and fully realize the capacity for human development, there is a need to seize opportunities and meet challenges posed by its interconnected demographicsituation.

Within this context, there is a need to provide a platform for the discourse and discussion of the current population situation and its potential impact on regional and national socioeconomic development. Given the diversity of the population dynamics in each country, their experiences in optimizing and addressing population issues can be a rich source of information for policy and program formulation. A knowledge-sharing platform for the most of the ASEAN countries can likewise elicit potential collaboration or technical cooperation within the region or between or among interested countries.

In this context, the proposed side event to be jointly organized by countries in Southeast Asia aims to create a knowledge-sharing platform on the evolving population dynamics and its implication to national development of each participating country. It aims to share country-

specific demographic trends and patterns, implications to development, and existing policy and program interventions. The exchange of each country's experience will provide opportunities to learn from their experiences and replicate best practices.

### Specific Objectives of the Side Event

1. For each participating country to share the trends, patterns and current situation of their population as it impacts on their socioeconomic development, existing population and development policies particularly within the context of the ICDP Programme of Action, lessons learned and good practices and continuing challenges; and
2. To broadly discuss possible areas of region-wide south-south triangular cooperation or sustained knowledge-sharing mechanism among interested countries in Southeast Asia.

### Agenda

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| 13:15 – 13:25<br>(10 Mins) | <p>Preliminaries</p> <p>Welcome Remarks<br/><b>Mr. ANTONIO M. LAGDAMEO</b>, <i>Permanent Representative, Philippine Mission</i></p> <p>Remarks<br/><b>Mr. PIO SMITH</b>, <i>Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, UNFPA</i></p>  |
| 13:25 – 13:30<br>(5 mins)  | <p>Solidarity Message<br/><b>Ms. DIMA AL-KHATIB</b>, <i>Director, UNOSSC</i></p>   |
| 13:30 – 14:10<br>(40 mins) | <p>Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malaysia<br/><b>Mr. MOHD FIRDAUS BIN MAZALAN</b><br/><i>Statistician, Population and Family Research Division, LPPKN</i></li> <li>• Thailand<br/><b>Dr. BUNYARIT SUKRAT</b><br/><i>Director, Reproductive Health Bureau, MoPH</i></li> <li>• Republic of the Philippines<br/><b>Dr. LISA GRACE BERSALES</b><br/><i>Undersecretary and Executive Director, CPD</i></li> </ul> |
| 14:10 – 14:25<br>(15 mins) | Open Forum / Question and Answer   |
| 14:25 – 14:30<br>(5 mins)  | Synthesis / Video Presentations  |