"Why Ageing Population in Malaysia Matters"

Introduction

Malaysia will become an "aged" country in 2020, it is therefore important to increase the understanding of the demographic shift, the status of the older people and the challenges they meet. The case study on population ageing, which the International Council on Management of Population Programme conducted with support from the International Planned Parenthood Federation – East South East Asia and Oceania Region (IPPF-ESEAOR), highlighted the feminization of ageing. There are more women than men aged 70 and over in Malaysia. The health care is also saddled with a rapidly increasing number of older persons with deteriorating health or multiple illnesses. Furthermore, the geriatric care is still underdeveloped and available services could not meet the rapidly increasing demand.

Another major challenge in population ageing is the provision of adequate social protection. Older persons in Malaysia generally depend on income from work or savings, as well as financial support from children. The incidence of poverty is higher among older adults than the working age population. The Government of Malaysia has made strides in addressing the implications of ageing, yet there are lingering questions. Are the existing five pillars of social protection adequate in providing for the needs of the increasing number of older persons?

ICOMP together with IPPF-ESEAOR organized the Consultation on Ageing Population held in August, 2016 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to bring six (6) countries, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, China and Japan to discuss ageing and to learn from each other.

Suggested by the participants during the meeting that the concerned countries carry out national meetings and workshops to talk about ageing and their respective policies and programmatic responses. Thus, explains the dissemination meeting, which ICOMP, IPPF-ESEAOR and the Lembaga Penduduk Dan Pembangunan Keluarga Negara (LPPKN) are organizing on May 8, 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Objective of the meeting

At the end of the three-hour meeting, it is hoped that the participants will be able to:

1. Increase the understanding of population ageing in Malaysia, particularly the shift in the age structure, the challenges the older people meet, and what the Government of Malaysia and the Civil Society Organizations have done, thus far, in addressing the implications of ageing.
2. The exchange of knowledge and information from the stakeholders will bring to fore lessons that have been learnt and proven good practices in meeting the needs of the older people.