

ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL PROTECTION WEEK 2026

Empowered Lives, Resilient Futures

6–8 October • ADB Headquarters, Manila



CLOSING SESSION Key Takeaways and Future Direction

OVERALL REFLECTIONS ON KEY TAKEAWAYS



Michael Samson
Director of Research
Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI)

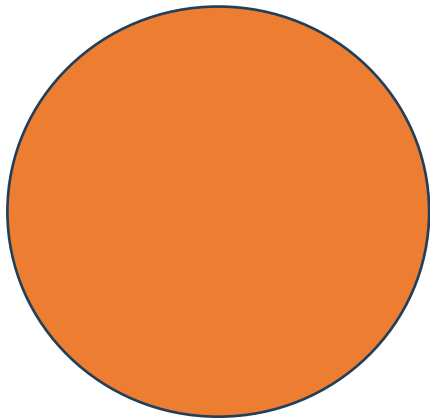
Dr. Michael Samson is Director of Research at the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI), a global research institute with offices in Bangkok, Cape Town and San Juan. A macroeconomist by training, with a Ph.D. in Economics from Stanford University, he has more than 40 years of experience in economic and social policy and has worked on social protection in 67 countries across Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Latin America. He specialises in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating social protection programmes, policies and systems, and has led or supported more than 150 impact evaluations and cost-effectiveness studies for governments, UN agencies and bilateral partners.

His work integrates the economic and social dimensions of structural transition and crisis response: he wrote the OECD's policy guidance on social protection and pro-poor growth, authored the European Commission's concept paper guiding its systems approach to social protection, contributed to the Asian Development Bank's Strategy 2030 Social Protection Directional Guide mapping strategic linkages to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and produced operational guidance for the African Development Bank. His quantitative toolkit spans micro-simulation and fiscal modelling, quasi-experimental and randomised evaluation methods, benefit-cost and value-for-money analysis, and the integration of household micro-data with macroeconomic scenario modelling. His current work focuses on social protection's role in managing structural transitions — LDC graduation, climate change, conflict and digital transformation.

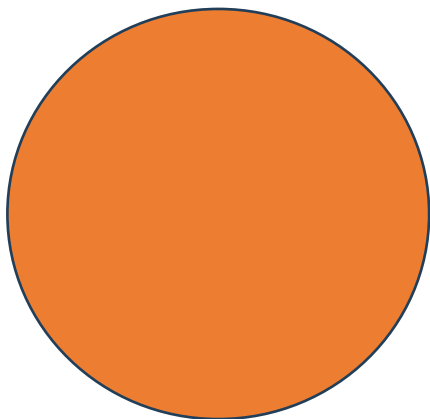
Dr. Samson has served as an advisor and a consultant to UNICEF, WFP, FAO, ILO, UNDP, UN-DESA, ESCAP,

the World Bank, ADB and AfDB, has served on DFAT's social protection expert panel since 2009, and has led projects funded by FCDO, USAID, Sida, GIZ, Irish Aid and the EU. He designed and leads the longest-running social protection course for global South policymakers (3,000+ participants since 2007) and the Sida-funded International Training Programme in Social Protection for Sustainable Development. He is on the economics faculty of the Williams College Center for Development Economics, where he teaches graduate courses in econometrics, macroeconomics, social protection, microsimulation modelling and crisis response.

PERSPECTIVES



<Bio to follow>



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CLOSING REMARKS



Shamit Chakravarti
Director
Human and Social Development Sector Office
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Mr. Chakravarti is currently serving as Director in the Human and Social Development Sector Office (SD3) at the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He has been with ADB since June 2003. He has worked across multiple departments and regions. He was Country Director, Bhutan Resident Mission, from 2021 to 2024 before taking over in the current role.

Shamit has over 30 years' experience in international development, public policy, and economics. Prior to joining ADB, he worked at the Fiscal Affairs Department of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) from 2000 to 2003 and the Operations Evaluation Department of the World Bank from 1998 to 2000.

Shamit holds a Masters' degrees in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics and George Washington University, and a Masters' in Public Policy from the University of Maryland, College Park.