

ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL PROTECTION WEEK 2026

Empowered Lives, Resilient Futures

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ADB

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



Sweety Kalbesang
Alternate Governor for the Republic of Palau in ADB
Chief of the Division of Budget and Management
Bureau of Budget and Planning, Ministry of Finance
Republic of Palau

Sweety Kalbesang serves with Palau's Bureau of Budget & Planning under the Ministry of Finance, where she supports national budgeting, fiscal policy coordination, and long-term planning. Her work focuses on analyzing government programs, guiding resource allocation, and ensuring that public funds align with national priorities.



Dinar Dana Kharisma
Director of Social and Economic Independence
Ministry of National Development Planning
Government of Indonesia

Since 2008, Dinar Dana Kharisma has helped design national social protection programs, including the conditional cash transfer Program Keluarga Harapan, the Integrated Social Service and Referral System (SLRT), and the National Social Security System (SJSN). He is currently developing the Affirmative Empowerment Card to expand equal economic opportunity for the poor and vulnerable. He is also formulating the Grand Design of Community Empowerment to integrate Indonesia's various social and economic empowerment programs, to further enhance economic independence, social agency,

and community resilience in the face of risks and transitions. His previous policy products include Desa Cemara, a capacity-building model for local and village governments to support a more affirmative planning process, and the award-winning Integrated Older People Care in five cities in Indonesia. As an academic, Dinar is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Padjadjaran, focusing on social policy analysis. He received his BA in Economics from the University of Indonesia, MA in Law and Diplomacy from Tufts University, USA, and MA and PhD in Social Policy from Brandeis University, USA.



Agus Hasan Hidayat
Disability Rights, Social Inclusion
and Equity Specialist
Indonesia Revolution and Education for Social
Inclusion (REMISI)

Agus Hasan Hidayat is a disability activist who fights for the rights of youth groups with psychosocial disabilities. Born on August 5, 1991, Agus has been promoting the rights of Psychosocial Disability Groups in Indonesia since 2015. He works a lot with young psychosocial disabilities through peer support group programs, social media campaigns, and advocacy for the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities, as well as campaigns to increase public awareness in various events that aim to raise the issues about the enjoyment of the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities to the public.

Agus developed a psychosocial disability organization that focuses on community-based support programs and advocacy for the rights of people with psychosocial disabilities with his colleagues called REMISI. Previously, Agus also contributed to the Bipolar Care Indonesia foundation as vice chairman and was involved with various other disability organizations to write CRPD alternative reports that focused on marginalized groups with disabilities. Agus and his friends in Remisi also wrote alternative UN CEDAW and UPR reports. He involved in promoting issues of psychosocial disability groups through research and writing. For example, he is one of the researchers and the author of the book “Parents Handbook Knowing Children with Psychosocial Disabilities”, in collaboration with the Indonesian Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection in 2018.

In addition, he is also involved in various advocacy with other disability organizations, such as Advocacy for the rights to vote for Persons with Psychosocial Disabilities in the 2019 Indonesian election and Advocacy on Government Regulations on the Habilitation and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities in 2020, the 2021 Sexual Violence Law, and many others. Agus also spoke about disability and youth in various international forums, including the Conference of the State Parties and dialogue with the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations. He is also the country leadership committee on the Global Mental Health Peer Network, a founding member of Transforming Communities for Inclusion (TCI), and he represents TCI on the youth committee of the International Alliance of Disabilities. In 2022 Agus was nominated for the Indonesia Volunteer Awards Awards and the D-30 Disability Impact list by Diversability.



Maria Fe "Anafe" Maravillas
President
Las Piñas Federation of Persons with Disabilities
Philippines

An advocate for the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities)since 2009.. A graduate of DLSU, her life is a symbol of resilience. Having lived with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis for over 30 years, Maria Fe has drawn from her experiences to lead, uplift, and support the disability community.

As a leader, she is the President of the Las Piñas Persons with Disability Federation, Inc. (LPPWDFI), Former President of the Federation of Persons with Disability - NCR and former Secretary General of the National Federation of Persons with disabilities.

CLOSING REMARKS



Shamit Chakravarti
Director
Human and Social Development Sector Office
Sectors Department 3
Asian Development Bank

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.