



INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC &
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
(ISIS) MALAYSIA

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Pusat Penyelidikan Kesejahteraan Sosial
Social Wellbeing Research Centre
(SWRC)

Roundtable

29 July 2024, Monday

0900-1230hrs

Level 2, Auditorium,
ISIS Malaysia

Creating fiscal space for constructing Malaysia's social protection floor

Is Malaysia willing to invest in its future?

The nation's sustainable development requires fiscal support for key social investments, especially in child-sensitive social protection measures.

The national budget is pivotal in advancing societal objectives but can Malaysia's fiscal landscape support more funding for education, healthcare and social protection without compromising long-term fiscal stability?

Join ISIS Malaysia, UNICEF and SWRC-UM at this roundtable and policy paper launch to explore strategies to expand the fiscal space in the face of Malaysia's demographic challenges.

The roundtable will analyse the fiscal envelope and draw on global evidence and best practices, including funding a social protection floor (SPF) via improved taxation policies and expenditure reprioritisation.





Agenda

0900-1000 hrs	Registration
1000-1015 hrs	Opening remarks Datuk Prof Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah
1015-1035 hrs	Social protection in Malaysia: situation analysis and international best practices Farqani Mohd Noor
1035-1055 hrs	Malaysia's fiscal landscape: challenges and opportunities Dr Amjad Rabi
1055-1115 hrs	Policy issues in advancing social and economic progress Calvin Cheng & Lee Min Hui
1115-1215 hrs	Discussion and Q&A Moderator: Prof Emeritus Datuk Dr Norma Mansor Speakers: Dr Amjad Rabi Farqani Mohd Noor Calvin Cheng Lee Min Hui
1215-1230 hrs	Closing remarks Sanja Saranovic
1230 hrs	End



Role players



Datuk Prof Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah

Chairman

Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

Datuk Prof Faiz leads the institute's policy development and Track-Two diplomacy, including through the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC). He is also the Malaysian representative to the ASEAN Regional Forum Experts and Eminent Persons (ARF EEP) meeting and Co-Chair of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP). His diverse career spans media, law enforcement, education, corporate law and public interest litigation, as well as strategic and international affairs advisory to federal and state governments. He is the founding dean of Selangor Business School (UNISEL) and the author of books on jurisprudence, public policy and strategic management.



Calvin Cheng

Fellow

Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

Cheng is a fellow in the Economics, Trade and Regional Integration programme. His research interests span issues in applied economics, centring around jobs, social protection, economic development and the design of social-transfer programmes.



Lee Min Hui

Senior Analyst

Institute of Strategic & International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia

Lee is a senior analyst in the Social Policy and National Integration programme. Her research interests centre around issues of social inclusivity, primarily gender equality, welfare, care economy, aging, labour protections, urban poverty and planning.



Dr Amjad Rabi

Visiting Expert

Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC)

Dr Amjad is a social security economist with experience across many countries at different stages of development. Prior to joining SWRC, he was the chief technical adviser on social security for the International Labour Organisation office in Iraq. He had earlier served as social security adviser to the Employees Provident Fund (EPF).



Prof Emeritus Datuk Dr Norma Mansor

Director
Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC)

Prof Norma has held the SWRC director post since 2013. She has served as an adviser and consultant to various organisations, including the United Nations Development Programme, World Bank, International Labour Organisation, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, European Union, Asian Development Bank and numerous Malaysian public agencies. She is also the author of numerous books and journal articles on public and social policy, aging and social protection. She is a fellow of the Academy of Sciences Malaysia and president of the Malaysian Economic Association.



Farqani Mohd Noor

Social Policy Specialist
UNICEF

Farqani's Mohd Noor's background is in economic policy. Having worked with the Social Security Organisation (PERKESO) for six years, he has been researching, advocating, and implementing social-protection policies at the national level. He led negotiations with the Ministry of Finance to implement the wage-subsidy programme to cushion economic shocks and prevent retrenchment during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Sanja Saranovic

Deputy Representative
UNICEF

Saranovic has more than 20 years of UNICEF experience in several regions (Europe and Central Asia, Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Asia). Her expertise lies in building and leading programme teams in public and private partnerships, integrated policy development, programme analysis and evaluation. She is dedicated and committed to advancing the rights of children, youth and adolescents in humanitarian and development contexts.


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