



Plenary Panel Discussion: How is Asia and the Pacific Coping?

Moderator



Ramesh Subramaniam

Director General and Group Chief, Sectors Group
Asian Development Bank

Ramesh Subramaniam has been with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for over 26 years. He is now Director General and Chief of the Sectors Group, under the New Operating Model (NOM). The Group is responsible for the delivery of all lending and technical assistance operations in seven sectors across the Asia and the Pacific Region, working closely with all regional, private sector-related and other support departments within ADB. In this new capacity, Ramesh and the Sectors Group, with 7 Sector Offices in its structure, will help ADB achieve the 4 shifts of NOM: Climate; Private Sector Development; Solutions; and New Ways of Working.

Trained as an economist, his work at ADB has focused on economic policy reforms, infrastructure financing and urban development. He has worked on shaping ADB's engagement overall and in selected sectors in 23 countries directly. From 2007, he has held various senior positions; and from 2015-17, he served as ADB's Director General for Procurement and Financial Management; from July 2017-March 2023, he served as the Director General of Southeast Asia Department (at SERD). At SERD, he had established the ASEAN Policy Network and the Green Finance Hub and oversaw ADB's efforts to help the Southeast Asian countries overcome the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He is quite passionate about helping developing countries avoid and overcome economic crises as well as manage disasters caused by natural hazards. Ramesh has served on various Global Future Councils of the World Economic Forum (WEF) since 2012, including as co-chair of the WEF Sustainable Development Investment Partnership ASEAN Hub.

Speakers



Rex Gatchalian

Secretary

Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD),
Republic of the Philippines

Having experience in both the executive and legislative branches of government as a former Representative and Mayor of Valenzuela City, Secretary Gatchalian was able to steer Valenzuela City as a livable and disaster resilient city, which led to several citations including three of the Top 10 Outstanding Local Governance Programs of the 2021 Galing Pook Awards.

He was a Representative of the 1st District of Valenzuela during the 14th Congress wherein he became Vice-chairman for the Congressional Committee for Overseas Workers' Affairs. He was the principal author of Republic Act No. 10022, which amended the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995. He introduced new policies for the further protection and genuine representation of migrant workers. At the same time, he also principally authored Republic Act No. 9576, which increased the maximum deposit insurance coverage and further strengthened the financial capability of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation.

From 2013-2022, Secretary Gatchalian served as Mayor of Valenzuela City and championed the "Five Pillars of Good Governance" by prioritizing the delivery of essential programs and services in relation to education, health and social services, housing, employment generation, and trade and industry. Some of the notable programs during his tenure were: The Valenzuela Paspas Permit, Valenzuela LIVE Streaming School, Tagalog Fishing Village, the Allied Local Evaluation and Emergency Response Teams Center or ALERT Center, and the 3S Centers, among others.

As the current Secretary on Social Welfare and Development, he vows to prioritize the ease of doing social welfare and

development services through streamlining and digitization of social protection services and improve disaster management and response operations by creating additional response hubs around the country.



Yusuf Khan

Secretary

Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety
Government of Pakistan

Yusuf Khan is an officer of Pakistan Administrative Service, specializing in public sector reform and social protection. He is currently working as Secretary to the Federal Ministry of Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety. Earlier, he worked as Secretary, Benazir Income Support Program, where he headed the implementation of Pakistan's largest social protection initiative covering 9 million families, with an annual budget of \$1.47 billion.

He spearheaded the establishment of the Dynamic Socio-Economic Registry in the Pakistan, currently operational at BISP. Earlier, Yusuf also supervised the implementation of Emergency Cash Transfers during the Covid lockdown and later as a result of the catastrophic flood of 2022.

Yusuf holds an MPhil in Development Studies, at the University of Cambridge, UK. He speaks nine languages and is an avid painter and calligrapher.



Anne-Marie Herman

Secretary

Ministry of Internal Affairs
Cook Islands

Anne-Marie Herman has been the Head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for five years. During that time her focus has been on digitalization of the Cook Islands Social Welfare System and a more targeted approach to welfare through improved service delivery, increased awareness among beneficiaries and the wider community and policy development to improve decision making at the highest level.