



ASIA-PACIFIC
SOCIAL PROTECTION WEEK 2023
Social Protection in a Changing World

The logo features a stylized umbrella with a blue and orange canopy. Inside the umbrella are icons representing various groups of people: a person in a wheelchair, a family of four, a person with a cane, and a person pushing a shopping cart.

26–28 September • ADB headquarters, Manila, Philippines

Session 6A: Responding to the Needs of the Informal Sectors/Workers

Moderator



Markus Ruck

Senior Social Protection Specialist, Decent Work Technical Support Team for Asia and the Pacific
ILO

Markus Ruck is Specialist on Social Protection at the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific, based in Bangkok. Before joining the ILO Decent Work Team in Bangkok in 2018, he served for nearly nine years as Social Security Specialist at the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team for South Asia based in New Delhi. Prior to his assignment in New Delhi, he worked for nearly six years as Social Security Specialist at the ILO Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa in Harare, Zimbabwe. Prior to his assignment in Harare, he worked for eight years at the ILO Sub-Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe in Budapest, Hungary, as Social Security Specialist. Before joining the ILO Office in Budapest, he worked at the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as Social Security Specialist. He holds a Master's Degree in Socio-economics from the Friedrich-Alexander University, Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany.

Panelists



Benjo Santos M. Benavidez

Undersecretary, Workers' Welfare and Protection Cluster
Department of Labor and Employment
Philippines

Benjo Santos M. Benavidez has been Undersecretary of the Department of Labor and Employment since July 2020, and has made significant contributions to the department's mission to promote the welfare and rights of Filipino workers.

Prior to this, Benjo has held various key positions within the Department of Labor and Employment. He served as the OIC-Undersecretary from February to June 2020 and November 2018 to February 2019, as well as the Assistant Secretary from February 2019 to February 2020. In addition, he worked as the OIC-Assistant Secretary from May to October 2018 at other government agencies and boards such as the Employees Compensation Commission (ECC), Social Security Commission (SSC), and Council for the Welfare of the Children Board (CWC), among others.

He holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Nueva Caceres and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science degree from Bicol University College of Arts and Sciences.



Mizuho Okimoto-Kaewtathip

Regional Team Leader – Inclusive Growth and Prosperity
Advisor, Bangkok Regional Hub
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Mizuho Okimoto-Kaewtathip is the Regional Policy Advisor on Inclusive Growth at the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub as the Regional Team Leader & Advisor, Inclusive Growth. Prior to this, she was the Chief of Social Policy and Governance Programme at UNICEF Viet Nam overseeing socio-economic policy analysis. She also worked with UNICEF Oman as the Programme Coordinator, as Chief of Social Policy at UNICEF Lao PDR and served in various positions in Indonesia, Timor-Leste and UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Mizuho holds MPhil in Development Studies from the Institute of Development Studies and BA in International Relations and Political Science from the International Christian University.

**Aura Sevilla**

Focal Person for South East Asia and Older Workers
Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing
(WIEGO)

Aura Sevilla is the Focal Person in Southeast Asia and Older Workers of Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) working on improving aging and social protection policies, gathering evidence, providing technical advice to the government, networking, and building the capacity of older people and workers in the informal economy to affect institutional change both at the national and regional levels. She specializes in gender-responsive and life-course approaches to social protection, and the intersection of gender, ageing, and informal employment. She holds a master's degree in Community Development from the University of the Philippines.