



INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC &  
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
(ISIS) MALAYSIA

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PUSAT PENYELIDIKAN KESEJAHTERAAN SOSIAL  
Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC)

Multi-stakeholder policy dialogue

# The sandwich generation crisis: easing dual burdens on Malaysian families

12 March 2025 | 0900-1230 | Auditorium, ISIS Malaysia





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## The sandwich generation crisis: easing dual burdens on Malaysian families

The "sandwich generation" refers to individuals who are caring for ageing parents while supporting their own children. This demographic trend is increasingly prevalent in Malaysia because of an ageing population, rising life expectancy and strong cultural expectations that children care for elderly parents. As the proportion of senior citizens grows, the responsibilities of the sandwich generation intensify, placing substantial economic and emotional pressure on working adults. The dual role of supporting parents and dependent children places significant financial strain on the sandwich generation. Balancing the cost of their children's education with the medical and living expenses of their elderly parents is a daunting challenge.

This roundtable aims to gather key stakeholders and thought leaders to explore policy options, rights-based approaches and strategies to alleviate the sandwich generation's burden.

# Programme

0900-0930

## **Arrival and registration**

*Lobby, Ground floor, Block B*

0930-0935

## **Opening remarks**

### **Datuk Prof Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah**

Chairman  
ISIS Malaysia

0935-0940

## **Stage-setting and background**

### **Calvin Cheng**

Fellow  
ISIS Malaysia

0940-0955

## **Addressing pension gaps for Malaysia's sandwich generation: case for consumption-based Contributory pension**

### **Dr Amjad Rabi**

Visiting Expert  
Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC)

0955-1005

## **Break**

1005-1020

## **Ageing and the labour market: lessons from global experience**

### **Dr Matthew Dornan**

Senior Economist  
World Bank

1020-1035

## **Investing in children in ageing society**

### **Dr Juanita Vasquez**

Chief of Social Policy  
UNICEF Malaysia

1035-1120

## **Panel discussion 1: Social protection and ageing**

Moderator: **Professor Datuk Dr Norma Mansor**  
Director  
Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC)

Speakers: **Dr Matthew Dornan**  
Senior Economist  
World Bank

**Dr Amjad Rabi**  
Visiting Expert  
Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC)

**Dr Juanita Vasquez**  
Chief of Social Policy  
UNICEF Malaysia

1120-1135 **Caring for Malaysia's caregivers: investments in care economy**

**Lee Min Hui**  
Gender Consultant  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

1135-1150 **Retirement, wellbeing and work**

**Calvin Cheng**  
Fellow  
ISIS Malaysia

1150-1235 **Panel discussion 2: Wellbeing, care and ageing**

Moderator: **Chai Sen Tyng**  
Senior Research Officer  
Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing (myAgeing)

Speakers: **Lee Min Hui**  
Gender Consultant  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

**Calvin Cheng**  
Fellow  
ISIS Malaysia

1235-1250 **Closing remarks**

**Calvin Cheng**  
Fellow  
ISIS Malaysia

1250 **End**

# Profiles



## **Datuk Prof Dr Mohd Faiz Abdullah**

ISIS Malaysia Chairman

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 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 author of books on jurisprudence, public policy and strategic management.



## **Dr Amjad Rabi**

Visiting Expert

Social Wellbeing Research Centre

Dr Amjad has extensive experience in providing advisory services to governments on the reform of individual social security schemes and national systems. He is also a technical adviser to EPF and lecturer on human security at University of Nottingham (Malaysia campus) and Balsillie School of International Affairs (Canada). He previously held senior positions in United Nations' country offices in Iraq, Malaysia, Nepal, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Argentina. His extensive background in policy reform is highlighted by his numerous publications on the subject.



## **Calvin Cheng**

Fellow

ISIS Malaysia

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



### **Chai Sen Tyng**

Senior Research Officer  
Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing (myAgeing)

Chai joined the Institute of Gerontology in 2003. A mid-career researcher in social gerontology, he was part of a few internationally and locally funded research projects or consultancies at the institute, with regular publications in journals, books and print media on ageing. He is a life member of the Gerontological Association of Malaysia and is active in studies related to population and household dynamics, aged care and social protection for older people.



### **Dr Juanita Vasquez**

Chief of Social Policy  
UNICEF Malaysia

Dr Vasquez has been working on advancing child rights in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Myanmar, prior to moving to Malaysia. Her current areas of work focus on child poverty and child wellbeing and their linkages with social protection, as well as advancing child rights at the local level through the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative and generating solid evidence to support sufficient and adequate resources for children in Malaysia.



### **Lee Min Hui**

Gender Consultant  
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Lee is a former senior analyst in the Social Policy and National Integration programme at ISIS Malaysia. Her research interests centre around issues of social inclusivity, primarily gender equality, welfare, care economy, ageing and family-friendly workplace policies.



### **Dr Matthew Dornan**

Senior Economist  
World Bank

Dr Dornan's work focuses on migration and labour mobility. He has both researched and supported projects that facilitate the movement of temporary migrant workers from Papua New Guinea and Pacific Island countries to Australia and New Zealand. He is a former academic researcher at Australian National University and had worked for the Australian aid programme.



### **Prof Datuk Norma Mansor**

Director  
Social Wellbeing Research Centre (SWRC)

Dr Norma has been the SWRC director at Universiti Malaya since 2013. She is a former secretary of the National Economic Advisory Council; dean of Faculty of Economics and Administration; and executive director of International Institute of Public Policy and Management. She served as president of the Malaysian Economic Association until last year. She is the author of numerous books and scholarly journals in the areas of public and social policy, ageing and social protection. She was recently named CUEPEC's Woman Icon of the Year 2024.

Scan for more information




**INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
(ISIS) MALAYSIA**

No. 1, Persiaran Sultan Salahuddin, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

 603 2693 9366  [info@isis.org.my](mailto:info@isis.org.my)

 [www.isis.org.my](http://www.isis.org.my)

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