



VINOD THOMAS

VISITING PROFESSOR

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As Director General of Independent Evaluation at Asian Development Bank, Vinod Thomas led changes at the institution successfully. He assumed the position in August 2011 for a term of five years. He reported to ADB's Board of Directors through the Development Effectiveness Committee. His work was to assess ADB's development effectiveness while providing lessons to help inform ADB's actions. This work in evaluation was instrumental in making green growth and action on climate change more integral to ADB's strategy.

Dr Thomas was responsible for evaluating policies, programs, projects and technical assistance, as well as thematic issues at the regional, country, and sector levels. Taken together, the reviews addressed the effectiveness of ADB's strategies, policies, practices, and procedures. He also headed the review and selective validation of project and program completion reports from operational departments. He was in charge of tracking the response to evaluation recommendations, as well as building evaluation capacity in countries. External partnerships are vital to this work.

He was Director-General Evaluation, Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) and Senior Vice President at the World Bank Group, reporting directly to the WBG's Board of Directors as part of the governance of the WBG. He led changes and impact there successfully. As DGE, he has emphasized both the accountability and knowledge aspects of independent evaluation. His strategy to increase the development effectiveness of the WBG through independent evaluation has helped shape sector and corporate policies. He oversaw a trilogy of flagship reports on climate and the environment.

In this role, he unified the three separate evaluation units of the World Bank, IFC and MIGA, and pulled them together as one under a new name, IEG. He has spear-headed initiatives at international cooperation in impact evaluation and evaluation harmonization. In 2009, he chaired the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the multilateral development banks. IEG has under his leadership been responsible for several highly influential evaluations, among them, Trade, Natural Disasters, Gender and Development, Primary Education, Environment, Climate Change and Africa's agriculture. He was oversaw a trilogy of reports on climate change and the environment.

During this time as DGE, there was a renewal at IEG – at the management level, at the level of the staff, in terms of the work and its impact. IEG initiated a number of new cutting edge evaluations, more joint evaluations across the WBG, initiated common work with ECG, and strengthened external partnerships, outreach and dissemination.

Dr. Thomas was formerly Country Director for Brazil and Vice President of the World Bank, where he led the transformation of the Brazil program. In this capacity, he managed the Bank's US\$ 2 billion lending and non-lending portfolio in Brazil, helped shape the dialogue with the government and the Bank's Brazil Country Assistance Strategy, and participated in key



events with the government. Environmental sustainability was introduced as one of three pillars of the country strategy (in addition to economic growth and social inclusion). He led the World Bank's work supporting a number of analytical and financial initiatives of the Lula administration in macroeconomic, social and environmental areas. The lending program was expanded to some US\$ 2 billion a year, with a great deal of stress on external partnerships and financing.

As Vice President of the World Bank Institute (WBI), he tripled the funding and programs and launched a new Institute. He sharpened the Institute's focus and quality and expanded its mandate and impact, including partnerships and co-financing. He transformed the former Economic Development Institute into WBI – an organization that was three times larger in financing, with a far greater outreach and impact, especially in health, education, governance, women's enterprise management, finance and trade. He established the Global Distance Learning Network, programs in global governance and development, oversaw the Joint program with African Development Bank and supported the African Virtual University

He also held positions as Chief Economist for the World Bank in the combined Asia Region and the East Asia and Pacific Region. During this time, he led analytical work relating to the enormous success of the East Asian economies, as well as their threats in the areas of finance, social progress and environmental protection.

Dr Thomas was the Director of the 1991 World Development Report, entitled "The Challenge of Development", working with the then Chief economists Stanley Fischer and Larry Summers. The report assessed the world's development experience. It signaled the role of market friendly reforms, trade reform, freedom and liberties, health, education, the environment, and summarized the desirable balance in governance— noting in the important role of the state to complement the role of markets.

He was also Chief of Trade Policy and Principal Economist for Colombia. As Chief in the Trade Policy Division, he established a new work program of research, policy analysis and operational support. He was Co-Director of a UNDP-financed technical assistance project for trade expansion and Co-Director of a Board Report on Adjustment Lending and a Board Paper on Trade Policy.

Dr. Thomas authored books, articles, and reports on macroeconomic, social and environmental issues, among them, Climate Change and Natural Disasters, Multilateral Banks and the Development Process (with Xubei Luo), The Quality of Growth, From Inside Brazil, and forthcoming Climate Change and Natural Disasters, The Fury of Natural Disasters. His op-ed articles have been featured in national and international newspapers including New York Times, Philadelphia Inquirer, San Francisco Chronicle, Los Angeles Times, Philippine Daily Inquirer, China Daily, South China Morning Post, Korea Herald, the Hindu, and The Guardian.

SESSIONS

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