VIJAYENDRA RAO

Curriculum Vitae — November 2026

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CURRENT APPOINTMENTS

Distinguished University Fellow, National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bangalore, November 2026–present

Roberta Buffett Distinguished Scholar-Practitioner in Residence, Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, Northwestern University, March 2026–present

Chair, Advisory Committee, Boundaries, Membership and Belonging Program, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR), 2019–present

Board Member, Advocates for Community Alternatives (ACA), 2026–present

CURRENT AFFILIATIONS

Non-Resident Fellow, Center for Global Development, Washington DC, 2024–present

Research Associate, Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy (CAGE), University of Warwick, 2010–present

Life Member, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, 2009–present

PAST APPOINTMENTS AND AFFILIATIONS

Lead Economist, Development Research Group, The World Bank, February 1999–June 2026

Head, Social Observatory, The World Bank, 2011–2021

Member, Advisory Committee, Successful Societies Program, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR), 2007–2019

Special Member of the Graduate Faculty, University of Maryland, 2013–2015

Research Fellow, Brown University (on sabbatical leave from Williams College), September 1997–January 1999

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Williams College, September 1994–December 1998

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, and Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan, September 1992–September 1994

Hewlett Post-Doctoral Fellow, Committee on Demographic Training, and Associate, Committee on Southern Asian Studies, University of Chicago, October 1990–September 1992

Research Assistant to Professors Jere Behrman and Anil Deolalikar on the Economics of Nutrition, University of Pennsylvania, September 1985–September 1987

EDUCATION

Ph.D. (Economics), University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, December 1990

B.A. (Economics, with Statistics and Sociology), St. Xavier's College, University of Bombay, June 1984. Aguiar Award for best student in the arts and humanities

HONORS

Fellow, International Economic Association — elected Lifetime Fellow, 2021

EDITORIAL ACTIVITIES

Editorial Advisory Board, World Development

Editorial Board, Journal of Development Studies, 2008–2021

Editorial Board, World Bank Economic Review, 2012–2016

Associate Editor, Economic Development and Cultural Change, 2002–2015

Associate Editor, International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches, 2008–2016

Editorial Board, Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 2008–2011

PUBLICATIONS

Authored Books

Revolution by Stealth: How Women's Groups Catalyzed a Cultural Transformation in Bihar (with Shruti Majumdar and Paromita Sanyal), Cambridge Elements in Development Economics, Cambridge University Press and UNU-WIDER, 2026

Oral Democracy: Deliberation in Indian Village Assemblies (with Paromita Sanyal), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2018

Localizing Development: Does Participation Work? (with Ghazala Mansuri), World Bank Policy Research Report, World Bank, Washington DC, 2013

World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development (member of core team of authors), World Bank and Oxford University Press, 2005

Edited Books

Deliberation and Development: Rethinking the Role of Voice and Collective Action in Unequal Societies (edited with Patrick Heller), World Bank, Washington DC, 2015

History, Historians and Development Policy: A Necessary Dialogue (edited with C.A. Bayly, Simon Szreter and Michael Woolcock), Manchester University Press, 2011

Development in Karnataka: Challenges of Equity, Governance and Empowerment (edited with Gopal K. Kadekodi and Ravi Kanbur), Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2008

Culture and Public Action (edited with Michael Walton), Stanford University Press, Palo Alto, 2004

Articles in Refereed Journals

1. "Qualitative Analysis with Large-N: A New Method with an Application to Aspirations in Bangladesh," (with Julian Ashwin, Monica Biradavolu, Aditya Chhabra, Afsana Khan, Nandini Krishnan and Arshia Haq), *Economic Journal*, 2026
2. "Using Large Language Models for Qualitative Analysis Can Introduce Serious Bias," (with Julian Ashwin and Aditya Chhabra), *Sociological Methods and Research*, 2025

3. "Is There an Underside to Economic Growth? A Mixed-Methods Analysis of Malaysia," (with Niaz Asadullah, Monica Biradavolu and Ken Simler), *World Bank Economic Review*, Vol. 39, No. 4, November 2025, pp. 867–892
4. "Money vs. Kudos: The Impact of Incentivizing Local Politicians in India," (with Ghazala Mansuri, Nethra Palaniswamy and Slesh Shrestha), *Journal of Public Economics*, Vol. 224, August 2023
5. "Fractal Inequality in Rural India: Class, Caste and Jati in Bihar," (with Shareen Joshi and Nishtha Kochhar), *Oxford Open Economics*, March 2022
6. "Relief from Usury: Impact of a Community-Based Credit Intervention in Rural India," (with Vivian Hoffmann, Vaishnavi Surendra and Upamanyu Datta), *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 148, January 2021
7. "Evidence-Based Development Needs a Diversity of Tools, with a Bottom-Up Process of 'Embedded' Dialogue," *World Development*, Vol. 127, March 2020
8. "Process-Policy and Outcome-Policy: Rethinking How to Address Poverty and Inequality," *Daedalus*, Vol. 148, No. 3, Summer 2019, pp. 181–190
9. "Deliberative Democracy in an Unequal World: A Text-as-Data Analysis of South India's Village Assemblies," (with Ramya Parthasarathy and Nethra Palaniswamy), *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 113, No. 3, August 2019, pp. 623–640
10. "Flies Without Borders: Lessons from Chennai on Improving Municipal Public Health Services," (with Monica Das Gupta, Rajib Dasgupta, P. Kunganathan, T.V. Somanathan and K.N. Tewari), *Journal of Development Studies*, May 2019
11. "Unheard Voices: The Challenge of Inducing Women's Civic Speech," (with Ramya Parthasarathy and Nethra Palaniswamy), *World Development*, Vol. 115, March 2019
12. "Social Safety Nets and Natural Disaster Mitigation: Evidence from Hurricane Phailin in Odisha," (with Paul Christian, Eeshani Kandpal and Nethra Palaniswamy), *Climatic Change*, Vol. 153, No. 1, March 2019, pp. 141–164
13. "How Women Talk in Indian Democracy," (with Paromita Sanyal and Umang Prabhakar), *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 42, No. 1, 2019
14. "The Anatomy of Failure: Integrating Ethnography with a Randomized Control Trial to Evaluate an Attempt to Deepen Democracy in Rural India," (with Kripa Ananthpur and Kabir Malik), *World Development*, Vol. 99, November 2017, pp. 481–497
15. "Who Should Be at the Top of Bottom-Up Development? A Case Study of the National Rural Livelihoods Mission in Rajasthan, India," (with Shareen Joshi), *Journal of Development Studies*, 2017
16. "The Regulation of Land Markets: Evidence from Tenancy Reform in India," (with Timothy Besley, Jessica Leight and Rohini Pande), *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 118, 2016, pp. 72–97
17. "Can Participation Be Induced? Evidence from Developing Countries," (with Ghazala Mansuri), *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 2013
18. "Who Has Voice in a Deliberative Democracy? Evidence from Transcripts of Village Parliaments in India," (with Radu Ban and Saumitra Jha), *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 99, No. 2, November 2012, pp. 428–438
19. "Just Rewards: Local Politics and Public Resource Allocation in India," (with Timothy Besley and Rohini Pande), *World Bank Economic Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 2012, pp. 191–216

20. "Why and How Does History Matter for Development," (with Michael Woolcock and Simon Szreter), *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 1, January 2011, pp. 70–96 (Honorable Mention, Dudley Seers Prize)
21. "Revisiting Between-Group Inequality Measurement: An Application to the Dynamics of Caste Inequality in Two Indian Villages," (with Peter Lanjouw), *World Development*, 2011
22. "Dignity Through Discourse: Poverty and the Culture of Deliberation in Indian Village Democracies," (with Paromita Sanyal), *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 629, May 2010, pp. 146–172
23. "The Political Economy of Village Sanitation: Capture or Poor Information?," (with Radu Ban and Monica Das Gupta), *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 4, 2010, pp. 685–700
24. "Book Review of Mixed Method Data Collection Strategies by William Axinn and Lisa Pearce," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, February 2010
25. "Tokenism vs. Agency? The Impact of Women's Reservations on Village Democracies in South India," (with Radu Ban), *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, February 2009
26. "Disciplinary Monopolies in Development Research," (with Michael Woolcock), *Global Governance*, December 2007
27. "P.N. Mari Bhat: An Intellectual Tribute," (with Monica Das Gupta, Samuel H. Preston and T.V. Sekhar), *Economic and Political Weekly*, September 8, 2007, pp. 3611–3615
28. "Governance and the 'Karnataka Model of Development'," (with Gopal K. Kadekodi and Ravi Kanbur), *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 24, 2007
29. "The Political Economy of Gram Panchayats in South India," (with Timothy Besley and Rohini Pande), *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 24, 2007
30. "Governance in the Gullies: Democratic Responsiveness and Community Leadership in Delhi's Slums," (with Saumitra Jha and Michael Woolcock), *World Development*, 2007
31. "Book Review of Twenty-First Century India by Tim Dyson, Robert Cassen and Leela Visaria (Oxford University Press, 2004)," *Population and Development Review*, June 2006
32. "Participatory Democracy in Action: Survey Evidence from Rural India," (with Timothy Besley and Rohini Pande), *Journal of the European Economic Association*, Vol. 3, Nos. 2–3, April/May 2005, pp. 648–657
33. "The Social Impact of Social Funds in Jamaica: A 'Participatory Econometric' Analysis of Targeting, Collective Action, and Participation in Community-Driven Development," (lead author, with Ana María Ibáñez), *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 5, July 2005, pp. 788–838
34. "The Determinants of Gender Equity in India: Examining Dyson and Moore's Thesis with New Data," (with Lupin Rahman), *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 30, No. 2, June 2004, pp. 239–268
35. "The Politics of Public Good Provision: Evidence from Indian Local Governments," (with Timothy Besley, Rohini Pande and Lupin Rahman), *Journal of the European Economic Association*, Vol. 2, Nos. 2–3, 2004
36. "Community-Based (and Driven) Development: A Critical Review," (with Ghazala Mansuri), *World Bank Research Observer*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2004, pp. 1–39

37. "Wedding Celebrations as Conspicuous Consumption: Signaling Social Status in Rural India," (with Francis Bloch and Sonalde Desai), *Journal of Human Resources*, Vol. 39, No. 3, Summer 2004
38. "Sex Workers and the Cost of Safe Sex: The Compensating Differential for Condom Use in Calcutta," (lead author, with Indrani Gupta, Michael Lokshin and Smarajit Jana), *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 71, August 2003, pp. 585–603
39. "Experiments in Participatory Econometrics: Improving the Connection Between Economic Analysis and the Real World," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 37, No. 20, May 18, 2002, pp. 1887–1891
40. "Terror as a Bargaining Instrument: A Case Study of Dowry Violence in Rural India," (with Francis Bloch), *American Economic Review*, Vol. 92, No. 4, September 2002, pp. 1029–1043
41. "Statistical Discrimination and Social Assimilation," (with Francis Bloch), *Economics Bulletin*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2001
42. "Celebrations as Social Investments: Festival Expenditures, Unit Price Variation and Social Status in Rural India," *Journal of Development Studies*, October 2001
43. "Poverty and Public Celebrations in Rural India," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 573, 2001, pp. 85–104
44. "The Marriage Squeeze Interpretation of Dowry Inflation: Response," *Journal of Political Economy*, December 2000
45. "Price Heterogeneity and Real Inequality: A Case Study of Poverty and Prices in Rural South India," *Review of Income and Wealth*, Series 46, No. 2, June 2000, pp. 201–212
46. "Can Economics Mediate the Link Between Anthropology and Demography?," *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 23, No. 4, December 1997, pp. 833–838
47. "Wife Beating in Rural South India: A Qualitative and Econometric Analysis," *Social Science and Medicine*, Vol. 44, No. 8, April 1997, pp. 1169–1180
48. "The Marriage Squeeze and the Rise in Informal Marriage in Brazil," (with Margaret E. Greene), *Social Biology*, Vol. 42, Nos. 1–2, Spring 1995. An earlier version was published in Portuguese as "A Compressão do Mercado Matrimonial e o Aumento das Uniões Consensuais no Brasil," Revista Brasileira de Estudos de População, Vol. 9, No. 2, July–December 1992
49. "The Rising Price of Husbands: A Hedonic Analysis of Dowry Increases in Rural India," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 101, No. 4, August 1993
50. "Dowry Inflation in Rural India: A Statistical Investigation," *Population Studies*, Vol. 47, July 1993
51. "Diet, Mortality and Life Expectancy: A Cross-National Analysis," *Journal of Population Economics*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1988, pp. 225–233

Articles in Edited Volumes

1. "250,000 Democracies: A Review of Panchayati Raj in India," (with Siddharth George and M.R. Sharan), in *Cambridge Companion to Indian Politics and Society* (Manali Desai and Indrajit Roy, eds.), Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2026
2. "Can Economics Become More Reflexive? Exploring the Potential of Mixed Methods," in *Handbook of the Economics of Discrimination and Affirmative Action* (Ashwini Deshpande, ed.), Springer, 2023

3. "Are Caste Categories Misleading? The Relationship Between Gender and Jati in Three Indian States," (with Shareen Joshi and Nishtha Kochhar), Chapter 16 in *Towards Gender Equity in Development* (Siwan Anderson, Lori Beaman and Jean-Philippe Platteau, eds.), Oxford University Press, 2019
4. "Deliberative Democracy in India," (with Ramya Parthasarathy), in *The Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy* (André Bächtiger, John Dryzek, Jane Mansbridge and Mark Warren, eds.), Oxford University Press, 2018
5. "Conducting Ethical Economic Research: Complications from the Field," (with Harold Alderman and Jishnu Das), in *Oxford Handbook of Professional Economic Ethics* (George DeMartino and Deirdre McCloskey, eds.), Oxford University Press, 2016
6. "Deliberation and Development: An Introduction," (with Patrick Heller), in *Deliberation and Development* (Patrick Heller and Vijayendra Rao, eds.), World Bank, Washington DC, 2015
7. "The Challenge of Promoting Civic Participation in Poor Countries," (with Ghazala Mansuri), in *Civic Studies* (Peter Levine and Karol Soltan, eds.), Bringing Theory to Practice Monographs, Washington DC, 2015
8. "History and Development Policy," (with Michael Woolcock and Simon Szreter), Chapter 1 in *History, Historians and Development Policy: A Necessary Dialogue* (C.A. Bayly, Vijayendra Rao, Simon Szreter and Michael Woolcock, eds.), Manchester University Press, 2011
9. "Sex Work," (with Manisha Shah), in *Oxford Companion to Economics in India*, Second Edition (Kaushik Basu and Annemie Maertens, eds.), Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2011
10. "Using Mixed Methods in Monitoring and Evaluation: Experiences from International Development," (with Michael Bamberger and Michael Woolcock), in *Handbook of Mixed Methods Research* (Charles Teddlie and Abbas Tashakkori, eds.), Sage, 2010
11. "El valor de la evaluación interdisciplinar: el análisis de programas de desarrollo basados en la comunidad," Chapter 5 in *El Análisis Experimental de la Ayuda al Desarrollo* (José García Montalvo, ed.), Fundación BBVA, Madrid, 2008
12. "The Great Motivator," Chapter 25 in *A Passionate Humanitarian: VKRV Rao* (S.L. Rao, N. Jayaram, V.M. Rao, M.V. Nadkarni and R.S. Deshpande, eds.), Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2008
13. "Decentralization and Elite Capture: The Selection of Leaders and Beneficiaries in Community-Driven Projects in Indonesia," (with Victoria Beard, Menno Pradhan, Randi Cartmill, Rivayani and Yulia Herawati), in *Planning and Decentralization: Contested Spaces for Public Action in the Global South* (Victoria Beard, Faranak Miraftab and Christopher Silver, eds.), Routledge, 2008
14. "Symbolic Public Goods and the Coordination of Collective Action: A Comparison of Local Development in India and Indonesia," Chapter 10 in *Contested Commons: Conversations Between Economists and Anthropologists* (Pranab Bardhan and Isha Ray, eds.), Wiley-Blackwell, 2008
15. "Assessing the Karnataka Model of Development," Chapter 1 in *Development in Karnataka: Challenges of Equity, Governance and Empowerment* (Gopal K. Kadekodi, Ravi Kanbur and Vijayendra Rao, eds.), Academic Foundation, New Delhi, 2008
16. "Dowries," in *Oxford Companion to Economics in India* (Kaushik Basu, ed.), Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2006 and 2011
17. "Mixing Qualitative and Econometric Methods: Community-Level Applications," Chapter 13 in *Measuring Empowerment* (Deepa Narayan, ed.), World Bank, Washington DC, 2005

18. "Culture and Public Action: Relationality, Equality of Agency and Development," (with Michael Walton), Chapter 1 in *Culture and Public Action: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on Development Policy* (Vijayendra Rao and Michael Walton, eds.), Stanford University Press, 2004
19. "Conclusion," (with Michael Walton), Chapter 16 in *Culture and Public Action: A Cross-Disciplinary Dialogue on Development Policy* (Vijayendra Rao and Michael Walton, eds.), Stanford University Press, 2004
20. "Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches in Program Evaluation," (with Michael Woolcock), in *Tool Kit for Evaluating the Poverty and Distributional Impact of Economic Policies* (François Bourguignon and Luiz Pereira da Silva, eds.), World Bank and Oxford University Press, 2003
21. "Potters and Slums: Two Qualitative and Quantitative Projects in India," in *Q-Squared: Qualitative and Quantitative Poverty Appraisal — Complementarities, Tensions and the Way Forward* (Ravi Kanbur, ed.), Permanent Black, 2003
22. "Wife Abuse, Its Causes and Its Impact on Intra-Household Resource Allocation in Rural Karnataka: A 'Participatory Econometric' Analysis," in *Gender, Population and Development* (M. Krishnaraj, R. Sudarshan and A. Sharif, eds.), Oxford University Press, 1998
23. "The Demand for Dowries and Bride Characteristics in Marriage: Empirical Estimates for Rural South-Central India," (with Anil Deolalikar), in *Gender, Population and Development* (M. Krishnaraj, R. Sudarshan and A. Sharif, eds.), Oxford University Press, 1998

Working Papers

1. "Do Elected Leaders Add Value? Evidence from a Natural Experiment in India," (with Abhishek Arora, Siddharth George and M.R. Sharan), June 2026. Revise and resubmit, *American Economic Review*
2. "The Cycle of Hate, and What We Can Do About It," (with Victoria Esses, Allison Harell, Matt Lowe, Hazel Markus, Aaron Mills, Manasi Rao, Stephen Reicher and Prerna Singh), World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, February 2026
3. "The Evolution of Local Participatory Democracy in Nepal," (with Thaneshwar Bhusal and Michael Breen), World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, 2025
4. "Ten Consequential and Actionable 'Social' Contributions to the Theory, Practice and Evaluation of Development," (with Michael Woolcock), World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, 2025
5. "Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Democracies: A Review of Village Government in India," (with Siddharth George and M.R. Sharan), World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, May 2024
6. "Recasting Culture to Undo Gender: A Sociological Analysis of the Jeevika Intervention in Bihar, India," (with Paromita Sanyal and Shruti Majumdar), World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, August 2015
7. "The Political Construction of Caste in South India," (with Radu Ban), mimeo, World Bank, October 2007
8. "The Gift of a Virgin: The Social Context of Child Marriage in Rural North India," (with Sonalde Desai and B.L. Joshi), mimeo, University of Maryland, July 1999
9. "Bargaining and Fertility in Brazil: A Qualitative and Econometric Analysis," (with Margaret Greene), Williams College Research Memorandum Series RM-153, February 1996. Revised version of "Marital Instability, Inter-Spouse Bargaining and Their Implications for Fertility in

Brazil," Discussion Paper OSC (PRC) 91-3, Population Research Center, University of Chicago, 1991

10. "The Link Between Female Sterilization and Domestic Violence," (with Anne Waters), mimeo, University of Michigan, May 1994
11. "Does Prestige Matter? Compensating Differentials for Social Mobility in the Indian Caste System," Discussion Paper 92-6 (PRC), Economics Research Center, University of Chicago, July 1992

Public Writing

Blogs and Op-eds

"Whose Policy Counts?," *In Development*, November 2026

"Why Economists Don't Listen: Tales from an Anthropology Spy in Economics," *In Development* and Substack, August 2026

"Qualitative Analysis with Representative Samples," (with Julian Ashwin), World Bank Development Impact blog, April 2023

"When and Where is Community-Driven Development (CDD) Effective?," (with Marcus Holmlund), World Bank Development Impact blog, October 2021

"Oral Democracy," World Bank Let's Talk Development blog, January 2019

"Are Impact Evaluations Enough? The Social Observatory Approach to Doing by Learning," World Bank Development Impact blog, June 2014

"Learning by Doing," *Indian Express*, November 19, 2013

"How Can Participatory Development Be Improved?," *Devex*, March 11, 2013

"Localizing Development: Our Journey," (with Ghazala Mansuri), World Bank Let's Talk Development blog, November 2012

"The Past as a Foreign Country: Taking History and Historians Seriously in Development," World Bank Let's Talk Development blog, March 2012

"With Foreign Aid, Failure is Essential to Learning," *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto), January 23, 2012

"Deliberation and Poverty: Lessons from the Indian Experience," *Spotlight on Poverty*, September 6, 2011

Podcasts, Interviews and Recorded Talks

"Policy for the People," farewell public lecture at the World Bank, November 2025 (video)

"Can Economics Become More Reflexive?," *Everything is Everything* podcast, with Ajay Shah and Amit Varma, December 2024

"Biju Rao Won't Bow to Conventional Wisdom," *The Seen and the Unseen* podcast (Episode 392), interview with Amit Varma, July 2024

"Reflexivism: Reducing the Distance Between Citizens and Policy," keynote at the Pune Public Policy Festival, February 2024 (video)

"Democracy, Deliberation and Development," *Ideas of India* podcast, with Shruti Rajagopalan (Mercatus Center), Discourse Magazine, November 2020

"Oral Democracy," interview with Gautam Nair, Center for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania, October 2019

"Book discussion of Oral Democracy," Bangalore International Centre, May 2019 (video)

"On Oral Democracy and other subjects," *Thale Harate* podcast (in Kannada), IVM Podcasts, May 2019

"The Implications of Poverty," *SynTalk*, with Vikram Patel and Anup Surendranath, February 2018

"Innovations in Participation," *In the Field, India* (Episode 5), on Participatory Tracking, February 2018

"Deliberation, Culture, Context," *Real Democracy Now* podcast, January 2018

"Anthropology, Economics and Development," *The Familiar Strange* podcast (Episode 15), May 2018; reposted by AnthroPod, the podcast of the Society for Cultural Anthropology

SELECTED ONGOING PROJECTS

Book project: *Humanizing Policy: Citizens, Categories, and the Making of People-Centered Development*. A critique of the expert-centered logic shared by liberal, Keynesian and paternalist policy paradigms, and a constructive case — grounded in twenty years of fieldwork in South and Southeast Asia — for citizen-centered, deliberative and reflexive alternatives

Using natural language processing and large language models to understand and measure "narrative" well-being at scale, with applications in Bangladesh, Peru and Nepal

SELECTED OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE

1. Advisor, World Bank, Federalism in Nepal, 2018–2025
2. Head, World Bank Social Observatory for Anti-Poverty Projects, 2011–2021
3. Team Member, World Bank, Jeevika Livelihoods Project, Bihar, 2010–2017
4. Team Member, World Bank South Asia Social Development Department, Local Government Accountability in India, 2006–2010
5. Team Member, World Bank East Asia Urban Department, Evaluation of the Urban Poverty Project II (UPP2) in Indonesia, 2002–2007
6. Team Member, World Bank South Asia Rural Development Department, Analysis of Panchayat Reform in India, 2002–2006
7. Member, World Bank Social Development Board, 2002–2014
8. Member, World Bank Gender Board, 2002–2007
9. Co-Lead (with Michael Walton), World Bank Engagement on Culture and Development, reporting directly to President James Wolfensohn, 2000–2004
10. Team Member, World Bank Operations Evaluation Department, Evaluation of Social Funds in Jamaica, Nicaragua, Zambia and Malawi, 2000
11. Field assessments, evaluations and feasibility studies for Mrichakatika (NGO specializing in income generation among women potters in rural India), 1992–1994

LANGUAGES

English (fluent; read and write), Hindi (fluent; read and write), Kannada (fluent; spoken), Tamil (moderately fluent; spoken)

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

1. Knowledge for Change Program (World Bank), to develop machine-learning methods to understand well-being with qualitative interviews at scale, $200,000, 2021–2023
2. World Bank Research Department, to study village democracy in India, $130,000, 2020–2022
3. SAFANSI Trust Funds, for the World Bank Social Observatory, $2.5 million, 2012–2018
4. International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), to the Social Observatory for a mixed-methods evaluation of the Jeevika Livelihoods Project in Bihar (with Vivian Hoffmann and Paromita Sanyal), $400,000, 2012–2017
5. SAGE Trust Funds, for developing a Social Observatory for Rural Livelihoods Projects, $150,000, 2011
6. DFID, for research on deliberative democracy, $250,000, 2010
7. Knowledge for Change Program (World Bank), to prepare the Policy Research Report on local development (with Ghazala Mansuri), $200,000, 2007
8. SIDA, to study village governance in India, $200,000, 2007
9. DFID (via the World Bank Communications and Development Unit), to study deliberative democracy in India, $250,000, 2005
10. BNPP (Dutch Government), to study village governance in India, 2002
11. World Bank Research Department and ASEM Trust Funds (with Vivi Alatas, Victoria Beard and Menno Pradhan), to evaluate the impact of an urban CDD project (UPP2) in Indonesia using mixed methods, $200,000
12. World Bank Research Department and DFID (with Timothy Besley and Rohini Pande), to study the impact of village decentralization (Panchayat reforms) in India, $250,000, 2000
13. Dutch Government (with Michael Walton), to edit a volume on culture and development, $100,000, 2002
14. Norwegian Trust Fund, to evaluate the impact of social funds in Zambia, Nicaragua and Jamaica, $100,000, 2000
15. World Bank Research Grant and Dutch Trust Fund (with Michael Woolcock), for a multidisciplinary analysis of urban poverty, risk protection and kinship in Delhi, $50,000, 1999
16. Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, to study the impact of property rights and cultural systems on inter- and intra-household inequality in rural India, $30,000, 1997
17. Rockefeller Foundation (with Sonalde Desai), to study fertility and household decision-making in India, $100,000, 1995–1996
18. Mellon Foundation Fellowship, University of Michigan, to study women's status, decision-making and demographic transitions in rural South India using economic, demographic and anthropological methods, 1993–1994
19. Hewlett Foundation Fellowship, University of Chicago, for post-doctoral training in economic demography, 1990–1992
20. Compton Foundation Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania, 1987–1989

KEYNOTES, INVITED LECTURES AND CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

1. Keynote Panel, Hopkins India Conference, Johns Hopkins University, May 2025
2. Public Lecture, Social Science Baha, Kathmandu, June 2024
3. Keynote, Pune Public Policy Festival, March 2024
4. Public Lecture, Madras Institute of Development Studies, February 2024
5. Invited Speaker, Bangalore Literature Festival, January 2020
6. Keynote Panel Speaker, Sustainability and Development Conference, University of Michigan, October 2019
7. Co-organizer, South Asian Political Science Conference (held with the American Political Science Association meetings), World Bank, October 2019
8. Co-organizer, International Conference on Globalization: Content and Discontent, World Bank, Kuala Lumpur, January 2019
9. Keynote Speaker, IDEA-GREThA Joint Conference, "A World United: Alliance and Collective Action for an Ethical Development," Bordeaux, June 2018
10. Presidential Panel, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, August 2017
11. Keynote Speaker, Conference on Social Inclusion and Poverty Eradication, Harvard University, November 2016
12. Public Lecture, Aga Khan Foundation, Ottawa, May 2016
13. Special Plenary Address, First International Conference on Territorial Peace, Bogotá, February 2016
14. Keynote Speaker, DIAL Development Economics Conference, Paris, June 2015
15. Keynote Speaker, Oxford Forum for International Development, Oxford University, February 2013
16. Keynote Speaker, Australasian Development Economics Workshop, Monash University, 2012
17. Special Keynote Address, Annual Conference of the Political Studies Association (UK), Belfast, 2012
18. Invited Lecture (with Amartya Sen), Conference on New Frontiers in Global Justice, University of San Diego, 2012
19. Keynote Speaker, Mapping Local Landscapes: Community Approaches to Peace, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, January 2011
20. Organizer, Conference on Deliberation and Development: New Directions, World Bank, November 2010
21. Keynote Speaker, European Sociological Association Conference on Culture and the Making of Worlds, Bocconi University, Milan, October 2010
22. Keynote Speaker, Aspirations and Poverty Conference, University of Warwick, December 2009
23. Co-organizer, Conference on History and Development Policy, University of Manchester
24. Invited Speaker, Conference on Democracy in India, University of California, Berkeley, May 2007
25. Invited Speaker, Conference on Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, 2006

26. Co-organizer (with Ravi Kanbur and Gopal Kadekodi), Conference on Development and Public Action in Karnataka, Bangalore, November 2005

27. Co-organizer, Conference on Culture and Public Action, World Bank, June 30–July 1, 2002

SEMINARS AND TALKS, 2021–2026

University of Pennsylvania; University of Washington; Think City, Kuala Lumpur; World Bank; National Law School of India University, Bangalore; Northwestern University; University of Pittsburgh; WPI; Stella Maris College; Azim Premji University; IIT Bombay; Oxford University; London School of Economics; Indian Institute of Public Administration; Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC); National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER); Brown University; Martin Chautari, Kathmandu

RECENT TEACHING

"How to Bring Policy Closer to People," elective, National Law School of India University, November-December 2026–

"How to Bring People into Policy," undergraduate seminar, Northwestern University, Spring 2026

PHD COMMITTEES

1. Etienne Breton (Demography), Princeton University (placed at Cornell University)
2. Upamanyu Dutta (Agricultural and Resource Economics), University of Maryland, 2014 (placed in the Poverty Global Practice, World Bank)
3. Saumitra Jha (Economics), Stanford University, 2006 (placed at Stanford Graduate School of Business)