

THOMAS DEBASS

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OVERVIEW: Senior executive with extensive experience and networks in foreign policy, strategic foresight, entrepreneurship, innovation, public private partnerships, and project finance. Dynamic and passionate entrepreneur in public service with demonstrated ability to catalyze innovation and drive lasting impact. Over 20 years of leadership creating significant public benefit using innovative partnerships in addressing grand global challenges. Extensive expertise in partnering with both the private and public sectors. *2020 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals Finalist.*

EXPERIENCE

NOVEMBER 2010 - PRESENT

Office of Global Partnerships

U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.

Managing Director/Chief Partnerships Officer (10/2019 – Present)

Acting Special Representative for Global Partnerships (5/2016 – 9/2019)

Deputy Special Representative for Global Partnerships (11/2010 – 9/2019)

- Lead the Department's private sector engagement and partnership efforts to advance foreign policy objectives.
- Manage a team of diverse partnership professionals and diplomats to drive the Department's next generation of strategic engagement with the private sector.
- Provide thought leadership and serve as the lead public private partnership expert for economic growth, entrepreneurship, innovation, sustainability, and global finance.
- Coordinated the leveraging of over \$3 billion commitments from public and private institutions.
- Regularly give talks and lectures about the intersection of foreign policy, business, and society.

JUNE 2020 – PRESENT

School of Business, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Adjunct Professor

- Teach graduate courses on strategic foresight, startups, and resilience.

JUNE 2009 - NOVEMBER 2010

U.S. Development Finance Corporation (DFC), Washington, D.C.

Lead Economist/Deputy Director

- Coordinated and managed the policy monitoring and evaluation activities of the Agency.
- Served as the lead expert for analysis of U.S. economic effects and host country development impact of the Agency's projects.
- Led the Agency's development knowledge management and dissemination efforts.
- Collected and analyzed macroeconomic data on emerging and frontier markets and prepare policy decision memos regarding new markets and products.
- Provided advice on the intersection between private investment and development to senior management.

AUGUST 2007 – JUNE 2009

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington, D.C.

Senior Technical Advisor

- Built and managed public-private partnerships with local, regional and global financial institutions to promote private sector development.
- Designed and structured partial credit guarantees with local financial institutions (for private education loans, health insurance, and access to credit to MSMEs)
- Managed the underwriting and monitoring of USAID/Microenterprise Development Office's transition to private capital portfolio (loan guarantees to microfinance institutions and investment vehicles).
- Provided technical assistance and intellectual leadership to USAID country missions in their design and review of public private partnership strategies and activities.

DECEMBER 2001 – AUGUST 2007

U.S. Development Finance Corporation (DFC), Washington, D.C.

Senior International Economist

- Developed the Agency's socio-economic development impact methodology.
- Conducted due diligence on all proposed projects (involving SME Finance, Structured Finance, Political Risk Insurance, and Private Equity) to measure for adverse U.S. effects as well as socio-developmental impacts, financial viability, and sustainability.
- Performed on-site monitoring of previously funded OPIC projects; and produced evaluation reports and disseminate findings.
- Oversaw and supervise the work of other economists and junior staff.

MARCH 2001 – NOVEMBER 2001

National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI)

Ministry of Agriculture, Asmara, Eritrea

Consultant

- Coordinated a joint International Food Policy and Research Institute (IFPRI) – International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) Agricultural Research & Technology Indicators (ASTI) initiative for Eritrea.
- Conducted a survey of Eritrea's public and private agricultural research investments and co-produced a publication of survey results.
- Formulated strategies to attract foreign investments into the agricultural sector.
- Assisted NARI in formulating an outreach program to strengthen its ties with international and regional research organizations.

SEPTEMBER 1998 – DECEMBER 2000

Office of International Research and Development (OIRD), Virginia Tech, Blacksburg

Research Assistant

- Designed a framework for assessing economic impact of USAID-funded Integrated Pest Management-Collaborative Research Support Program (IPM-CRSP) strategies in Bangladesh and Uganda.
- Performed empirical analysis of potential impact of IPM technologies for eggplant/cabbage and maize/bean production in Bangladesh and Uganda, respectively.
- Traveled to the sites and conducted surveys to elicit adoption constraints and farmers' perception about IPM and its components.
- Built a Geographic Information System (GIS) model to examine the transferability (spillover) of the IPM technologies to other regions beyond the primary sites in accordance with intra- and cross-border trade issues.

EDUCATION/TRAINING:

M.S. **Applied Economics**, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, 2000.

B.A. **Economics**, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia, 1997.

Certificate. **Strategic Foresight and Futures Thinking**. Institute for the Future (IFF). Palo Alto, CA. December 2017.

Certificate. Executive Leadership Program. **UC-Berkeley Haas School of Business**. Berkeley, CA December 2016.

Executive Certificate. **International Business Management**. Georgetown University. Washington, D.C. February 2004.

STARTUP PORTFOLIO

Founder, *Ouatup* – June 2022- Present.

Co-Founder, *Pitch & Flow* - September 2017 - Present.

Founder/Curator, *SmartPhilm* – June 2016 - Present.

Co-Founder/CEO, *Afridigital* – June 1998- December 2000.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Startup Mentor, *Unreasonable Group* - January 2017 - Present.

Board Member, *Guild of Future Architects (GoFA)* – January 2021 – Present.

Co-Founder/Chair, *Institute for African Futures (IF/AF)*, January 2020 - Present.

Founding Dean and Trustee, *Awesome Foundation - NoVA* – February 2016 - Present.

Co-Founder/Chair, *Startfield* – January 2014 – December 2020.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

2020 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals (Sammies Awards) Finalist.

2018 United Nations SDB Action Award - Unreasonable Goals partnership.

2016 D&DA Wood Pencil Award for Innovative Use of Mobile Technology - mFish partnership.