About the Event

The Asia and Pacific region has witnessed rising prosperity in the past half century. Many countries are now in the middle-income category, an increasing number are now upper middle-income countries, and some have marched on to join the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), a grouping of rich nations. The region has grown faster than any other developing region, and, in the process, a few of its economies have undergone rapid and remarkable transformation from agriculture to manufacturing and services.

Yet the region continues to house half the world’s poor, mostly in the lower middle-income economies, while the middle-class has grown rapidly, and its rising aspirations pose more development challenges.

In many economies, agriculture is still the largest employer and workers moving out of agriculture tend to go into low-productivity, low-wage services, bypassing manufacturing. Because of this trend, one of the key avenues to pursue inclusive economic growth—quality jobs—remains underutilized. ADB estimates indicate that to make the leap from a middle-income economy to a high-income economy requires attaining a manufacturing (or industrial) output and employment share of 18% or more for a sustained period. If a country has industrialized both in output and in employment, the probability that it will become a high-income economy is 42%. But without reaching this industrialization threshold, the probability is less than 5%. And while it is the private sector that will be the driver of inclusive growth and the source of employment, there is an important role for governments in guiding the process of structural transformation, for example by providing incentives for innovation.

Additional challenges that MICs are facing relate to the region’s vulnerability against exogenous shocks, not only in terms of disasters, but also in terms of vulnerability against the volatility of the global economic climate and financial markets.

This event aims to discuss the various challenges and opportunities that face middle-income countries in Asia and the Pacific. It will lay out a frank assessment of the problems and top priorities associated with MICs, and will also present cutting edge solutions and promising experiences.

The sessions will be organized around (i) the importance of second generation structural reform and innovation; (ii) the role of the private sector and private sector development; (iii) regional cooperation and regional public goods; and (iv) the role and importance of subnational governance in development planning.
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<td>8:30 a.m.–9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration (Ballroom Lobby)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.–9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
<td><strong>Marvin Taylor-Dormond</strong>&lt;br&gt;Director General, Independent Evaluation, Asian Development Bank</td>
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<td>9:15 a.m.–9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Keynote Speaker</td>
<td><strong>Surakiart Sathirathai</strong>&lt;br&gt;Chairman of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council (APRC), Thailand; former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand</td>
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| 9:30 a.m.–11 a.m. | **The Importance of Second Generation Structural Reform and Innovation** | **Panel Speakers**<br>**Wencai Zhang**<br>Vice President (Operations 1), Asian Development Bank  
**Praipol Koomsup**<br>Professor, Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University; former Vice Minister of Ministry of Energy  
**Nagesh Kumar**<br>Director of Social Development Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)  
**Kolone Vaai**<br>Co-Managing Director, KVAConsult Ltd; former Finance Secretary, Government of Samoa  
**Moderator**<br>**Nitinant Wisaweisuan**<br>Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and Dean of Pridi Banomyong International College, Thammasat University |
| 11 a.m.–11:30 a.m. | Snack Break (Ballroom Lobby)                                            |                                                                                                |
| 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m. | **The Role of the Private Sector and Private Sector Development**       | **Panel Speakers**<br>**Jesus Felipe**<br>Advisor, Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department, Asian Development Bank  
**Cosette Canilao**<br>Managing Director - PPP Advisory, Atkins Acuity  
**Manop Thamsirianunt**<br>Managing Director, Silicon Craft Technology, Thailand  
**Shuji Hashizume**<br>Senior Investment Specialist, Private Sector Operations Department, Asian Development Bank  
**Iwan Jaya Azis**<br>Professor, Dyson Cornell SC Johnson College of Business, Cornell University  
**Moderator**<br>**Marvin Taylor-Dormond**<br>Director General, Independent Evaluation, Asian Development Bank |
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<td>Lunch (Grand Ballroom 1)</td>
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<td>1:45 p.m.–3:15 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Regional Cooperation and Regional Public Goods</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Emmanuel Jimenez</strong></td>
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<td>3:15 p.m.–3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Book Launch: Climate Change and Natural Disasters</td>
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<td>Coffee Break and Book Sale</td>
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<td>3:45 p.m.–5:15 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>The Role and Importance of Subnational Governance in Development Planning</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Boonchai Charassaangsomboon</strong></td>
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<td>International Economic Advisor, Fiscal Policy Office, Ministry of Finance, Thailand</td>
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<td><strong>Lauren Sorkin</strong></td>
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<td>Regional Director, Asia Pacific, City and Practice Management, 100 Resilient Cities</td>
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<td><strong>Michael Kim McQuay</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sakon Varanyuwatana</strong></td>
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<td>Professor, Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University; former Dean Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University</td>
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<td><strong>Farzana Ahmed</strong></td>
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<td>Lead Evaluation Specialist, Independent Evaluation, Asian Development Bank</td>
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<td>5:15 p.m.–5:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Closing Remarks and Invitation to Cocktails</td>
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<td><strong>Chayun Santivasadakarn</strong></td>
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<td>Dean, Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University</td>
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<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Cocktails and Dinner Reception (Grand Ballroom 1)</td>
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Keynote Speech by Surakiart Sathirathai, Chairman of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council (APRC), Thailand; former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.
Structural Transformation in Middle-Income Countries
Asia and the Pacific has grown faster than any other developing region over the last 4 decades. Most countries in the region have transitioned from low- to middle-income economies, accompanied by a reduction in poverty and higher living standards. But income inequality remains. Many people in middle-income countries still live below the poverty line. And many of countries are vulnerable to natural disasters because their natural resources have been overused.

Transformations in sectors as varied as agriculture, manufacturing and services lifted the region to its higher income status. But the pace of that transformation has been slow. This is partly a reflection of poor education systems and outcomes. Innovation, technology, infrastructure, and information systems must be developed to promote inclusive growth. Moreover, economic diversification can help countries escape the middle-income trap.

Structural reforms in the energy sector: The path to renewables
Energy has created problems and opportunities across the world. Oil price fluctuations have affected the economies of countries. Climate change has become the biggest global concern, and economic growth must be addressed without harming the environment. Energy reform can drive growth in the following four ways:

• Energy must be suitably priced and price distortions need to be removed. Wasteful subsidies on oil products should be replaced by sponsoring clean energy, and making clean energy affordable to the poor.
• Efficient energy pricing and fiscal regimes that promote renewable
energies is important for oil-importing countries to secure foreign exchange and integration in the global economy.

- Industry needs to be encouraged to adopt new technology for clean energy and energy producing and storage devices (batteries) for example, for electric cars.
- Promoting biotechnology in industry, including the use of biofuels such as ethanol and biodiesel, which is part of Thailand’s S-curve as a new engine of growth.

All these reforms can push countries toward a higher income status by promoting industrial growth and improving the quality of life.

Reforming social protection systems in Asia and the Pacific
Social protection is vital for pulling a country out of a middle-income trap. Even if poverty has been reduced, income inequality does not necessarily follow if no progress is made on reducing inequalities in access to education and infrastructure, and marked urban–rural divides persist.

Population aging has become a mega trend in Asia, the result of decreasing fertility and higher life expectancy. Income support is needed and social protection policies are needed to tackle population aging. Modernizing social protection systems guarantee a minimum standard of living for all in education, health, and nutrition; and provide inclusive social security, including for the disabled and unemployed.

Environmentally sustainable growth and climate change action
Environmental and energy reforms are particularly relevant for the Pacific region. Pacific island countries have unique geographical characteristics, and their own particular challenges that need to be addressed (though their remoteness is a common thread). Most Pacific island countries are low-to-middle income. These counties generally have small populations and limited resources, which could lead to structural problems if growing economies are moving to a higher income status. Moreover, Pacific island countries are the most vulnerable to natural disasters. In Samoa, a series of natural disasters hit economic growth. Even so, plenty of opportunities are open to low-income Pacific island countries to make the transition to a higher income status, and ADB investments—for example, in communications—are helping them make the transition.
The Role of Private Sector and Private Sector Development

Does the middle-income trap really exist?
The notion of a middle-income trap is much debated worldwide, especially since many countries at this income level face declining economic growth. That said, the very existence of a middle-income trap continues to be open to question, and is disputed by many.

Making the transition high income is not easy. On average, it has taken countries 55 years to grow from lower middle-income to upper-middle income status, and an additional 15 years to get from upper-middle to high income. The Netherlands was the first country to be considered high income, with the transition from middle income taking 120 years. Thailand has spent 30 years in the middle-income bracket, and the Republic of Korea could make the transition to high income over the next 20 years. The high growth in the People’s Republic of China—which could not be indefinitely maintained—has started to slow, but not to any alarming effect. Not a single country in the region has spent longer in the middle-income bracket than the global, historical average. So, is a middle-income trap perhaps just a normal stage that a country must face in its economic development?

As countries grow richer, high growth is more difficult to reach and maintain. An even bigger issue is how a middle-income country can make the transition to high income. The usual path is structural change, by diversifying production or producing more sophisticated products providing high value-added.

Role of private and public sector
The private sector plays a key role in providing employment and in producing goods and services; the public sector alone could not produce as much,
as efficiently. However, due to the market failures such as the “free rider” problem and asymmetric information, there is no guarantee that market mechanisms alone can function effectively. Moreover, the private sector needs a conducive environment—political stability, stable inflation, and so on—in which to make investments. To this end, regulations are needed, but too many regulatory interventions may distort the market, which is clearly not good for economic growth.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) estimates that Asia requires $26 trillion in infrastructure spending over the next 10 to 20 years—a level that neither governments nor official development assistance can meet. The private sector will be essential to fill the region’s infrastructure gap, and governments can work with the sector through public–private partnerships (PPPs).

Many think that PPPs only cover investments in infrastructure, such as roads and railways. But in fact, infrastructure PPPs can help increase access to services like ICT, water, electricity, healthcare, and education, which can reduce inequality; create more mobility (by improving transportation systems that encourage the movement of labor); and reducing uncertainty (disaster-resilience infrastructure, for example). PPPs can also stimulate investor demand by helping create an enabling environment for business through reduced barriers to investment (as well as facilitating increased investment, for example by supporting the repatriation of capital and reducing the nationality requirement).

PPPs act as a bridge between the public and private sector. To function effectively, PPP programs need to be well managed. In Philippines, for example, a coordinating unit was set up to enhance the policy process, manage project risks, and to provide effective institutional arrangements to support the work. Both the private and public sectors should work together to promote PPPs. For its part, the government is responsible for effective planning implementation, and filling the gaps that the private sector is unable to fill.

The role of innovation

Productivity is the key to transition from middle to high income—and science and technology can enable that productivity. But there are obstacles to developing technological innovation. In Thailand, lack of funding and lack of promotion are the two main constraints that discouraged innovation. Before 2006, funding for technological innovation was scarce, there was no policy support from government, and the importance of venture capital for the technology sector was scarcely recognized. Since then, government injections of venture capital have enabled Thai tech companies to compete internationally. Thailand’s 4.0 Policy promotes technology development, but the country has scarce human resources in this area, which needs addressing.

For small and medium-sized enterprises, efforts are underway to upgrade skills, but progress has been slow. Thailand has about 1,000 PhD students from abroad, but is unable to tap their potential for the country’s private sector. To escape the constraints associated with the middle-income trap, knowledge and skill upgrading will be essential, and the Thai government should focus on how to leverage design and technology.
The Asian Development Bank’s role in private sector development
ADB is prioritizing infrastructure since it will be the basis for inducing private sector investment. Given the region’s huge infrastructure gaps, ADB also wants to increase its investments in private sector infrastructure projects. Infrastructure has two main characteristics. The first is the inherent public sector element, since any big infrastructures involving PPPs contains national or regional public goods that need to be coordinated by the public and private sectors. And second, infrastructure needs upfront capital and a return on investment in the long-term.

Interventions by development institutions in middle-income countries tend to be more complex than those for low-income ones. Thailand, for example, already has a well-developed banking system and long-term loans are available, but access to its bond market and capital markets is generally limited to high-grade issuers. Here, ADB can improve access by providing bond guarantees to raise bond ratings.

The importance of regional trade
Trade in Asia is made up of intraregional and interregional trade. The former within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is increasing; the latter is decreasing because of cyclical and structural changes. Asia’s adoption of a liberal trade policy has supported the region’s very strong trade performance—and there is no reason to change that policy.

Trade within ASEAN is increasing while trade with countries outside the region is decreasing. For decreasing in inter trade are less relevant to 2008 global financial crisis. In his opinion, this decrease comes from both cyclical or structural change.

For trading within ASEAN, most people consider the trading trend after late 2001 as one of Japan decreasing its influence in ASEAN countries and the People’s Republic of China beginning its rise in power. This is a misunderstanding. According to the evidence, it is true in so far as the volume and value of trade. But, in fact, Japan changed its strategy from exports to direct investments, which caused the trade data from Japan to drop. But Japan still holds its high influence among ASEAN.
Participants asking questions to the panelists.
Regional Cooperation and Regional Public Goods

Countries will need effective policies for technological and human capital development to get out of the middle-income trap. Many of these policies will require deepening regional and global cooperation and integration, politically, administratively and economically.

How integrated is Asia?

Asia’s economic growth over the past decade has amazed many investors and economists. One of the reasons for the region’s success is that many countries in Asia are well-integrated with the global economy, especially in terms of trading. Exports to Europe and other regions have become leading drivers of growth and development for many Asian countries, resulting in a rising number of countries in attaining middle- and high-income status. Despite a high level of integration with the global economy, intraregional integration within Asia still needs to be deepened; doing so would promote development across the region.

The inadequate level of intraregional economic integration increases financial and fiscal instability in many countries because their growth was heavily dependent on demand from Europe and the US. This problem came into sharp focus in the way the 2008 global financial crisis affected Asia, highlighting the need for deeper integration—in trading, investment, human capital, infrastructure, energy, and technology—to reduce the region’s dependency on Europe and the US.

Although aggregate intraregional trade in Asia is not high, some countries, including Thailand and Vietnam, are turning in double-digit annual growth of about 11%, led by GDP growth and export. Trading integration in the future

Speakers

Vinod Thomas
Visiting Professor, National University Singapore and Asian Institute of Management; former Director General, Independent Evaluation, Asian Development Bank

Jan Willem van der Kaaij
Inspector General, European Investment Bank

Pimchanok Vonkorpon
Director General, Trade Policy and Strategy Office, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand

Emmanuel Jimenez
Executive Director, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)

Moderator

Veronique Salze-Lozach
Deputy Director General, Independent Evaluation, Asian Development Bank
will look very different from today. For example, tariff-integrating policies are already beginning to be ineffective and going against the grain of the trend for free trade. Digital technology is starting — albeit occasionally — to have a big influence on trade and investment. And today, skilled labor and a high level of human capital is needed more than ever. Ministries of commerce and stakeholders in trading integration must start taking all these issues into consideration.

**Some lessons from Europe’s integration process**

First, all dimensions of integration do not have to proceed at the same speed. European counties still need to develop greater integration in the financial and monetary arena and, most importantly, political integration — and this is not all going to take place at the same time. Some areas such as trading integration will likely proceed at a fast pace, but others, notably political integration, will take longer.

Second, integration policies need the support of citizens (without this, they will almost certainly fail). Governments therefore need to ensure that integration is done in democratic way, and that institutions dealing with integration processes are accountable to the public.

And third, integration should be based on the principle of subsidiarity. In other words, that decisions should be taken by the smallest and least centralized authority — depending on the issue, this can be at the local, the national or regional level. What can be done locally, should be done locally. To do this, an understanding is needed of which activities can be done at which level. In terms of costs and benefits, some activities will be better handled at the regional level, others at the local level — and this will vary from country to country.

The notion that integration is always positive has been turned on its head by Brexit and the impact of the 2008 financial crisis on Europe. Both have raised concerns over fragmentation in the integration process, which could lead to problems of inclusivity and disparities. Because of this, the process of integration needs to be inclusive and a force for social and economic cohesion.

**The cost of integration**

Projects and programs that are regional in nature, are by definition more complex because they involve more parties. This means that the costs of preparing and implementing them also tend to be higher. However, evaluative evidence also found that the benefits of these more complex initiatives outweigh the added costs. Also, the average success rate of regional projects and programs is higher than the success rate of non-regional projects.

**Public goods’ problems**

Increasing productivity is one way for middle-income countries to make the transition to a higher income status. There are numerous ways of increasing productivity, including investing in research and development, creating value-added products, and increasing creativity. The problem is that these kinds of investments usually suffer from the public-goods problem, because it is almost impossible to prevent others from benefiting from them, especially for knowledge goods. As a result, the private return per investment on
productivity could be low, leading to a low level of private investment.

To solve this, many governments have imposed regulations, such as on patents and trademarks, to prevent free use. But this is still a problem at the regional level, because patents and trademarks are infringed by other countries. As a result, protective regulations need to be effective at regional level.

(Evaluative) knowledge as a regional public good
Evaluating the success of a private sector undertaking can be done by analyzing just a few indicators, such as sales and revenue. But evaluating the impact of public sector undertaking requires more complex matrices, because governments have to achieve wider objectives than the private sector.

Public sector evaluations have many benefits. They can increase the accountability of a government in the eyes of its citizens, which is good for social cohesion. And the knowledge generated from such evaluations can be used regionally. For example, Mexico’s education subsidy scheme in the 1990s has been adopted by many countries in the region. The role of the evaluating organization or institution is important, and these agencies should receive more support. It is also vital that the evaluating institution or organization is independent to prevent self-fulfilling evaluations and corruption.

Misconceptions over climate change action
Climate change and environmental problems can only be solved at the global level. Despite a wealth of scientific data confirming global warming, many people still believe that climate change will happen far in the future or that it will only affect others. In fact, many examples already exist of climate change affecting economic growth in Southeast Asia, and, if not addressed, will make it impossible for the region to achieve growth of 5%–6%.

To counter this, it will be necessary to prioritize what kind of climate support each country needs. For example, cheaper and accessible energy will be needed for countries with large numbers of poor. But for more developed countries, air pollution may become a critical environmental problem. This could be solved by taxing harmful forms of energy and subsidizing cleaner ones. This would also reduce price differences between the two, and make clean energy more competitive. The onus is on governments to provide the main support for climate action, as the load will be too heavy for the private sector.
Thailand’s approach to fiscal equalization and the financing of local government

The Government of Thailand plans to align its 20-year development objectives with the Sustainable Development Goals. Economic growth must be inclusive, and fiscal equalization measures, including tax reforms, can assist in achieving this critical development goal.

Local government services are vital in promoting inclusiveness, and strengthening the capacity of local governments can develop human resources in a way that enables the delivery of services to better respond to local conditions. For local governments to cover the cost of public services, adequate financing is required and a balanced local budget is considered ideal.

The Decentralization Plan and Procedures Act of 1999 requires the central government to allocate revenue to local governments, and to set up a Local Government Administration Committee, which decides on the devolution of specific public sector functions from central government to local governments.

Thailand is doing quite well on decentralization, with 29% of government income delegated to local governments, compared with a target of 35%. The decentralization plan has been around for some time; the challenge is how fast central government can delegate power and money to local governments.
The importance of strengthening urban resilience in middle-income countries

About 200 million people worldwide migrated from rural areas to cities from 2001 to 2010. As a result, middle-income cities have had to deal with the same issues that middle-income countries encounter, yet they have less capacity to do this. Typically, the most vulnerable groups settle in urban areas that are the most prone to disasters. City planners not only have to promote economic growth but also manage the risks faced by vulnerable groups.

The 100 Resilient Cities Organization—whose members include educational institutions and private corporations—aims to prevent stagnant economic growth taking hold of middle-income cities by sharing best practices in city planning. These cities face three main challenges: climate change, urbanization, and globalization. The organization works with cities to develop institutional capacity and a long-range vision to strengthen urban resilience. Its 30-year strategy aims to guide cities in their efforts on both fronts. An effective solution is to link cities to strategies that have been successful elsewhere, and to adapt these strategies to a particular city.

Getting financial resources to the local level and turning them into smart, inclusive investments

There are two major decentralization challenges: getting financial resources to local areas, and making smart investments—and three useful approaches to these challenges: political economy, technical capacity, and visions.

1. Getting resources to local areas

Political economy. Greater metropolitan areas such as Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur usually have a bigger voice to influence the process of resource allocation. The next phase of development is to spread the wealth concentrated in greater metropolitan areas to other regions, but the influence of the cities is hindering the allocation of public expenditure to other regions.

Technical capacity. Even if the political economy challenges can be overcome, technical capacity is still a problem. Local government actors usually lack technical capacity to deal with often complex financing issues; for example, conducting cost–benefit analysis.

2. Smart investments

Political economy. Research by the Asia Foundation shows that local politics tend to be oppositional to the central politics. Political parties often allocate resources in such a way that they gain votes, yet this leads to inefficiencies.

Technical capacity. Systems are needed to monitor decisions in the implementation of local government inspection capacities, and for
citizens to engage in oversight and monitoring to push for the needed technical capacities.

Visions. Decentralized governance requires innovation and transformational change. The example of high-income Asian countries show that local governments started with infrastructure-led development, which later shifted to a more holistic pattern of development that incorporated quality of life as its goal.

**Thailand’s shifting policies on regional development**

Getting out of a middle-income trap requires distributing the income to provide better social welfare. Thailand’s strong economic growth has lifted large numbers out of poverty, but inequality still exists, as does the disparity between Bangkok and other regions.

The Decentralization Plan and Procedures Act of 1999 promotes better quality public services to local governments. But local governments are almost always faced with a financing gap, i.e., their own revenues are rarely sufficient to finance assigned responsibilities, which means that they are (partly) dependent on funding from the central government. In Thailand’s this is done through revenue-sharing arrangements, but there is a lack of transparency regarding the factors determining the amount of financing each local government needs and gets allocated.

Local governments typically demand for increased fiscal autonomy. This is a trust issue for the central government, which argues that it has been let down by the fiscal performance of some local governments. But distrust is impeding the decentralization process in Thailand, which lacks capacity building for local governments. Fiscal responsibilities are ceded to local governments without assistance from the central government to carry them out.

Population aging in rural areas is a big issue for Thailand. The bulk of the country’s labor force is not in rural areas as younger generations move to towns and cities, and this is affecting local economic development.
Photos during the cocktail party hosted by the Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University, Thailand.
Speaker Profiles

**Surakiart Sathirathai** is Chairman of the Asian Peace and Reconciliation Council (APRC). He also served as the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance, including Advisor to several Prime Ministers of Thailand. In academia, he served as Dean of the Faculty of Law of Chulalongkorn University; Visiting Professor at the Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University, USA; Senior Fellow of Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government; Visiting Scholar at Harvard Law School; and a Distinguished Scholar of Chulalongkorn University for five terms. He is currently a member of Honorary Council of the Institute for Global Law and Policy of the Harvard Law School; member of the Asian Advisory Group of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, USA. In the private sector, he was Chairman of PTT Exploration and Production Plc., Thai Oil Co., Ltd., Securities Exchange Commission of Thailand, as well as board director in a number of other companies. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Siam Premier International Law Office Co., Ltd., Chairman of Pepsi-Cola (Thai) Trading Co., Ltd. as well as Advisory Chairman for Asia and Member of the International Strategic Advisory Board, SICPA S.A. Switzerland. He received his Bachelor of Law with Honours from Chulalongkorn University, Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and a Doctorate and Master of Law from the Harvard Law School.

**Chayun Tantivasadakarn** is Dean of the Faculty of Economics at Thammasat University. His specialization includes international trade, environmental economics (climate change) and economics of corruption. Chayun had several experience in the academic setting, among others, Director of Policy Research Center on Green Economy, Vice Dean for Research, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, Director of Research at the Economic Research and Training Center, all based in the Faculty of Economics at Thammasat University. He received the Teacher of the Year Award for Social Science in 2010 in Thammasat University. He is a committee member of Toyota Thailand Foundation Award and Subcommittee on Economic Corruption Prevention under the National Anticorruption Commission. Chayun has a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Economics from Thammasat University, and MA and PhD from the University of British Columbia under Canada-Thailand Rattandkosin Scholarship.

**Wencai Zhang** is the Vice-President (Operations 1) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). He joined ADB in December 2013. Mr. Zhang is responsible for operations in the South Asia Department and the Central and West Asia Department. Prior to joining ADB, Mr. Zhang was the Director General of the Department of External Economic Cooperation at the Ministry of Finance (MOF) of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). He served as the Deputy Director General for the International Department of MOF from July 2004 to July 2012, where he worked with various multilateral initiatives, including the Group of 20 (G20), Association of Southeast Asian Nations+3 (ASEAN+3), and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation. From April 2007 to September 2009, Mr. Zhang was the Executive Director for the PRC at ADB, where he was the Chairman of the Budget Review Committee and a member of the Development Effectiveness Committee and the Ethics Committee of the Board of Directors. From December 1993 to May 1996, he was the Advisor to the Executive Director of China at the World Bank in Washington, D.C. Mr. Zhang holds a PhD in Finance from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He earned his Master’s Degree and Bachelor’s Degree in International Economics from Nan Kai University in Tianjin, PRC.
Praipol Koomsup is an independent researcher and policy consultant to government agencies in industry, energy, international economic affairs, and state enterprise reform. He was a Vice Minister of the Ministry of Energy and a member of the National Reform Council from 2014-2015. Prior to that, he was a member of faculty of economics of Thammasat University where he taught economic theory, the Thai economy and energy economics from 1973-2013. He was also the Dean from 1986-1988 and a Monetary Policy Committee Member of the Bank of Thailand from 2008-2011. He was an independent director of several private sector companies. He was a speaker in various training programs for both public and private organizations such as the Bank of Thailand, the Ministry of Industry, the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand, the Bank of Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives, Kasikorn Thai Bank, National Defense College, and King Prachadhipok Institute, among others. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from University of Western Australia, Master’s degree in Economics from Thammasat University and PhD in Economics from Yale University.

Nagesh Kumar is Director of Social Development Division of United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Bangkok. He has earlier served as the ESCAP Chief Economist and Director, Macroeconomic Policy and Development Division and Head of ESCAP’s South and South-West Asia Office. Before joining UNESCAP in 2009, Dr. Kumar was Director-General of the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), a New Delhi based policy think-tank of the Government of India. He has also served on the faculty of UNU-MERIT in Maastricht, the Netherlands (1993-1998). Dr Kumar has served on the boards of the Export-Import Bank of India, the International Centre for Trade & Sustainable Development (ICTSD), Geneva, among other institutions. A PhD from the Delhi School of Economics, Dr Kumar is recipient of the Exim Bank of India’s first International Trade Research Award and the Global Development Network’s Research Medal. Dr. Kumar has researched extensively on different aspects of economic development, resulting in the publication of 17 books and over 100 peer-reviewed papers.

Kolone Vaai is Co-Managing Director of KVAConsult Ltd, an international consulting firm which has had experience in financial and economic reforms in the Pacific region since it was set up in 1991. He has had high-level past experience in Samoa’s public sector (Financial Secretary, Central Bank, the Public Service Reforms Steering Committee, the Development Bank of Samoa, National Provident Fund and the Unit Trust of Samoa. He also has extensive investment experience in the private sector in tourism, financial and insurance services in the Pacific.

Nitinant Wisaweisuan is the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and Dean of Pridi Banomyong International College, Thammasat University. Her research interests includes European enlargement, trade integration, non-tariff measures, market access for SMEs (ASEAN–Europe FTA), new economic order and implications on Thailand, ASEAN experiences to Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, spatial disparities, income inequality and economic development. She has previously held several positions within Thammasat University. She has a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from Thammasat University; Certificate in Finance from the London School of Economics and Political Science; and Master’s and PhD degrees from University of Cambridge, United Kingdom.
Jesus Felipe has been Advisor in the Asian Development Bank’s Economic Research and Regional Cooperation Department since 2012. He has been with ADB since 1996, and he is the Managing Editor of the Asian Development Review. He has also held academic positions with the Georgia Institute of Technology and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. His research interests spread across areas such as long-run growth in Asia, the dynamics of structural transformation, industrial policy, inclusive growth and full employment, the impact of technology on employment, productivity, technological progress, the functional distribution of income, business cycles, and the path of profit rates. He has published extensively in academic journals on different aspects of Asia’s development, productivity and structural transformation; as well as books on labor markets, structural transformation, industrial policy and the foundations of the aggregate production function.

Cosette Canilao is Managing Director for PPP Advisory. She has over 20 years’ experience in consulting and banking. She has advised numerous government institutions, banks and corporations in strategic planning, mergers, acquisitions and divestments, risk management, asset recovery, and loan portfolio management. She was a former partner of PwC Manila. Prior to joining Atkins, Cosette was the Executive Director of the Philippines’ Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Center where she had instituted structural reforms and spearheaded policy enhancements to create an effective platform to engage private sector in infrastructure delivery. She was instrumental in building the project pipeline of the government (airports, seaport, toll roads, rails, transport hubs, hospital, school buildings, water supply, etc) as well as in the successful bidding of 12 projects over a span of five and a half years. She is considered as one of the prime movers of infrastructure development and delivery in the Philippines. Cosette received her Masters of Science in Finance degree from the University of the Philippines and has attended executive programs at the Harvard Business School, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and Said Business School at the University of Oxford.

Manop Thamsirianunt is an entrepreneur. He founded Silicon Craft Technology in 2002 which is now a leading company engaged in design of integrated circuits. He is also co-founder of VERA automotive in 2015 which designs and manufactures electric vehicles and eco-friendly passenger cars. As an avid audio enthusiast, he also started XAV-Audio which provides high-end audio equipment and services to various industries. Prior to that, he is the Cluster Manager for RFID which led a consortia for RFID related business-entrepreneurs across different layers of the value chain. In 2005, he was Board of Directors of Software Industrial Promotion Agency (SIPA) under the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology. In 2006, he was honoured as one of the “35 Most Influential Thais Over the Past 35 Years” by the renowned “The Nation” media group, who contributed and had a significant impact on Thailand’s science sector. Early in his career, Manop was an integrated circuit design specialist and a program initiator of IC design incubator at the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center. Before that, he had over 15 years of experience in North America as IC design engineer at EXAR, PMC-Sierra and Mitel Semi. He earned his Bachelor of Engineering from King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology in 1988 and the Master of Engineering from Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada in 1993.
Shuji Hashizume is senior investment specialist of the private sector department of Asian Development Bank. He has over 12 years of working experience in infrastructure project financing, corporate financing, securitization and government advisory in East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia and Japan. His recent achievements include financing of a gas-fired power plant in Myanmar, the first utility-scale solar project in Cambodia, a connectivity infrastructure project in Myanmar, and municipal waste-to-energy facilities in the People's Republic of China, among other things. Other highlights in his career at ADB include financing of natural gas distribution, water supply, hydropower, transmission line, and agribusiness projects in various Asian countries. A national of Japan, Shuji obtained his Master's Degree (MPA/ID) from Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA in 2007; Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering from the University of Tokyo, Japan in 2001; and Bachelor in Engineering (Civil Engineering) from the University of Tokyo in 1999. He is also a CFA charterholder. Prior to joining the Asian Development Bank, Shuji has worked for J.P. Morgan in its Real Estate and Structured Finance group in Tokyo, Japan, and also worked as a research associate at the University of Tokyo, Department of Civil Engineering.

Iwan Azis has been teaching at Cornell since 1992, and was the Director of Graduate Study at the Regional Science program during 2006–2010. Before joining Cornell, he was a professor of economics and the Director of Inter-University Center for Economics, as well as the Chairman of the Department of Economics at the University of Indonesia. He has conducted research and consulting work for various international organizations and universities. He took up a TKW Distinguished Visiting Professorship at the Australian National University in 2016, and is currently Professor (adj) at the Dyson Cornell SC Johnson College of Business. In early 1998, he spoke before the Joint Economic Committee (JEC) of the US Congress on the Asian Financial Crisis, and received “Distinguished Scholar in Regional Science, Financial Economics, and Economic Modeling” award in July 2006. Among his recent publications are Managing Elevated Risk (Springer 2015); “ASEAN’s need to Rebalance More Regional than Global?” in Transpacific Rebalancing (Brookings Institution Press, 2015), and “Four-G Episode and the Elevated Risks” in Asian Pacific Economic Literature, Wiley (2016).

Marvin Taylor-Dormond is Director General of Independent Evaluation at Asian Development Bank. Reporting to ADB’s Board of Directors, he is responsible for assessing ADB’s development effectiveness as well as for providing lessons to inform strategies, policies, programs, and projects, as well as thematic issues at the regional, country, and sector levels. Mr. Taylor-Dormond has had an extensive experience in the multilateral banking industry. Prior to joining ADB, he served as Director, Independent Evaluation for Finance, Private Sector and Sustainable Development in the World Bank Group’s Independent Evaluation Group (IEG). He was Director for Independent Evaluation of the International Finance Corporation, and subsequently led the IEG’s Private Sector Operations Department. Mr. Taylor-Dormond also had a long and successful career at the Central American Bank for Economic Integration where he held several leadership roles as Controller, Executive Vice President, Chief Economist and Chief of Evaluation. Mr. Taylor-Dormond also served as Vice Minister of Finance of the Republic of Costa Rica. Mr. Taylor-Dormond holds a Doctorate degree in Economics from Carleton University–University of Ottawa, Canada; a Master’s degree in International Affairs from Carleton University, Canada; a Licenciatura in Economics and a Bachelor’s degree in Economics, both from the University of Costa Rica.
Vinod Thomas is currently Visiting Professor at National University of Singapore and at Asian Institute of Management, Manila. Dr. Vinod Thomas was previously Director General of Independent Evaluation at the Asian Development Bank. Prior to that he was the Director General and Senior Vice-President of the Independent Evaluation Group at the World Bank Group. Dr. Thomas, an Indian national, has a PhD and MA in Economics from the University of Chicago and a BA from St. Stephen’s College, Delhi. His books include The Quality of Growth (2000, Oxford University Press), Multilateral Banks and the Development Process (2012, with Xubei Luo, Transaction Publishers) and Climate Change and Natural Disasters (2017, Transaction Publishers). He has taught at Vassar College, New York and the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, and has addressed numerous professional and academic fora.

Jan Willem van der Kaaij is the Inspector General of the European Investment Bank (EIB). In 2002 he became a Member of the Board of Directors of the EIB and assumed the post of Inspector General in 2007. In this position, he is responsible for Anti-Fraud & Anti-Corruption matters, Operations Evaluation as well as the external Complaints Mechanism. He brings 25 years of professional experience garnered from appointments which encompass working seven years in Washington DC in the posts of Executive Director of the World Bank; Executive Director, Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC); Financial Counsellor at the Royal Netherlands Embassy; and Advisor to the Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund. Previous posts also include Deputy Director Foreign Financial Relations Directorate at the Ministry of Finance, The Hague; Member of the Administrative Council for The Netherlands of the Council of Europe Development Bank, Paris; Head of Multilateral Banks Division of the Ministry of Finance, The Hague; and Economist at “De Nederlandsche Bank” (central bank of the Netherlands), Amsterdam. Mr van der Kaaij is a Dutch national. He attained a Master’s degree in History from the University of Groningen in 1985, specialising in ‘Contemporary and Economic History’. He has published articles on Evaluation issues, EMU, IMF and “De Nederlandsche Bank”.

Pimchanok Vonkorpon is Director-General of Trade Policy and Strategy Office at the Ministry of Commerce, Thailand. She is also the Spokesperson of the Ministry. Prior to this, Pimchanok was Minister (Commercial) and Head of Office of Commercial Affairs at the Royal Thai Embassy to Belgium and Luxembourg and Mission of Thailand to the European Union. She began her career at Ministry of Commerce in 1990. Her specialized areas are services, investment, trade and environment and Thailand international trade policy. Her negotiations experiences span from multilateral, regional and bilateral levels. While posted as Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the World Trade Organisation during 1999–2003 in Geneva, Pimchanok chaired the Committee on Specific Commitments under the Council for Trade in Services at the WTO. She served as Lead Negotiator for Thailand on services in numerous FTA negotiations. She was Deputy Lead Negotiator for Services and Investment in the Thai-US and Japan-Thailand FTA negotiations and was one of the Lead Negotiators on Trade and Sustainable Development for the Thai-EU FTA negotiations. Pimchanok received her Bachelor of Commerce and Administration from Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. She obtained her M.A. on Public Policy from Graduate Institute of Policy Studies in Japan. She attended training courses on Trade Policy at the WTO and Good Governance in Managing Public Policy at L’Ecole Nationale d’Administration (l’ENA) in France. In 2011, she attended an executive education course at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.
Emmanuel Jimenez is Executive Director of the International Initiative on Impact Evaluation (3ie). He came to 3ie early in 2015 after many years at the World Bank Group where he provided technical expertise and strategic leadership in a number of research and operational positions including as director of the bank’s operational program in human development in its Asia regions from 2000-2012. Before joining the bank, Dr Jimenez was on the economics faculty at the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada. He received his Ph.D. from Brown University.

Véronique Salze-Lozac'h is the Deputy Director General of the Independent Evaluation Department of the Asian Development Bank. She is an economist, with a strong political science background, and has worked for both the public and the private sector on foreign direct investments, inclusive growth, private sector development, and policy reforms in Africa and Asia. Prior to joining the ADB, Ms. Salze-Lozac'h was Senior Director of Economic Development and Chief Economist at The Asia Foundation, where she oversaw strategic planning for the Foundation’s economic activities and developed programs across 18 Asian countries in areas of policy reform, enabling business environments, regional cooperation, trade and women entrepreneurship. In this role she supported Asian initiatives to accelerate inclusive and sustainable economic growth and broaden economic opportunities. Prior to that, she worked on a variety of investment projects for both the public and private sectors in Africa, Europe and Asia. As the founder and managing director of VSL Consulting, she lead private investment projects in Africa and managed multicountry public–private partnerships for research and development industrial programs. Other areas of expertise included microfinance, value-chain analysis and trade. She finished M.A. (honors) in English/political sciences, Paris IV Sorbonne, France; M.A. in international affairs/economic development, the Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences-Po Paris), France; M.A. (honors) in public and international affairs and Ph.D. (all but dissertation) in economic development at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs of the University of Pittsburgh, United States.

Boonchai Charassaangsomboon is the International Economic Advisor at the Fiscal Policy Office of the Ministry of Finance, Thailand since December 2015. Prior to that, he was the Director of International Economic Policy Bureau of the same office. He was the Alternate Executive Director for Southeast Asia Group at the World Bank Group from 2013-2015. He also held the position of Minister (Economic and Financial) at the Office of Economic and Financial Affair of the Royal Thai Embassy in London, United Kingdom. Before that, he held several positions within the Fiscal Policy Office of the Ministry of Finance. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of TSFC Securities Public Company Limited, Bangkok Dock Company, Thailand Tobacco, and Thailand Post Company. At present, he is a member of the Board of Directors of Sukhumvit Asset Management Company, and Government Savings Bank. He is also Director of the Board at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank based in the People’s Republic of China. Boonchai has a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Chulalongkorn University, graduate degrees in Development Economics at the National Institute of Development Administration, Thailand, and Economics from Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.
Lauren Sorkin is the Regional Co-Director of Asia Pacific for 100 Resilient Cities and is an environment and knowledge management specialist. Lauren spent six years working with the Asian Development Bank promoting climate responsive development in the Asia Pacific region. Lauren’s assignment included overseeing the development of the ADB’s first organization-wide Climate Change Implementation Plan and corresponding staff development program. Lauren also served in the ADB Viet Nam Resident Mission in Hanoi where she managed the integration of climate resilience into the Bank’s $7 billion investment portfolio in country. Prior to this, Lauren worked through the USAID Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon to promote green growth in the region as well as with the USAID Eco-Asia Clean Development and Climate Program facilitating in-person and virtual knowledge sharing between clean energy experts in China, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. Lauren has also worked with the European Commission and the World watch Institute where she published work on biofuels, trans-boundary water management, climate change, infant mortality and HIV/AIDS. Lauren holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Tufts University and a Master of Science in Environment and Development from the London School of Economics. She is also a certified holistic health counselor and yoga instructor. Lauren speaks fluent Spanish and Hebrew.

Michael Kim McQuay is Managing Director of The Asia Foundation’s Program Specialists Group (PSG). From his base in Bangkok, Kim leads a team of 18 technical specialists in governance and law, women’s empowerment, economic growth, environment, conflict mitigation, and technology for development who provide expert advice and technical assistance to Asia Foundation country offices in program design and implementation, fundraising, and forging strategic partnerships. He previously served as the Foundation’s country representative to Thailand (2010–16), managing programs that promoted peaceful conflict resolution, greater citizen engagement in political processes and governance reform, more responsive and transparent systems of governance, and Thailand’s emerging role as a non-traditional Asian donor. Prior to this, Kim served as the Foundation’s Bangkok-based director of law and justice programs (2009-10) and country representative to Bangladesh (2003-09). His latter program responsibilities included co-leadership of a three-country regional project on Legal Empowerment for Women and Disadvantaged Groups for the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Kim’s additional field experience with the Foundation spans Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Indonesia. As special assistant to former Asia Foundation president William Fuller (1999–2001), he worked closely with senior executives and the board of trustees on a range of institutional policy issues and coordinated the Foundation’s regional human rights programs. Kim holds a B.A. and LL.B. from Queen’s University and LL.M in Public International Law from the University of Cambridge.

Sakon Varanyuwatana is Lecturer and former Dean (2014–2017) at the Faculty of Economics at Thammasat University. His fields of interest are in public finance, fiscal decentralization, public program evaluation, and macroeconomic analysis. He has published numerous reports and publications, the most recent on the Linkage of Provincial and Local Development Plan (2014), and Fiscal Decentralization in Thailand: from Theory to Practices (2013). He is a currently a member of the Committee on Tax Reform under Ministry of Finance; Sub-Committee on Tax and Budget Reform under National Reform Council; and Sub-Committee on Fiscal Decentralization, Budget and Personal Transfer to Local Government, Under National Decentralization Committee. He is a member of the editorial review board of Global Business and Finance Review under the auspices of Indiana State University. He received his Bachelor’s degree at University of Thai Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok and his MA and PhD at Syracuse University, New York USA.
Farzana Ahmed is Lead Evaluation Specialist at the Independent Evaluation Department (IED) of the Asian Development Bank. Amongst other evaluation roles, Ms Ahmed leads the evaluation capacity development function at IED. Ms Ahmed joined the ADB in 1998 and prior to joining IED, held positions in ADB Operations that included a country posting in Indonesia and a secondment as an Advisor to the Australian Agency for International Development. Before joining ADB, Ms Ahmed worked in various financial positions in the private sector in the United Kingdom and Australia. Bangladeshi by origin, Ms Ahmed graduated from Oxford University, UK and is a qualified chartered accountant.

Hans Van Rijn has 20 years of experience as a public administration and public finance expert, with a special niche in decentralization reform and the financing of local governments. In this capacity, he has worked across Asia and the Pacific, working for a range of bilateral and multilateral development agencies. He also worked for 5 years in Ghana, as an in-house advisor to the Ministry of Local Government. Hans joined the Asian Development Bank in 2007 and has since worked on a wide range of public sector reform and ICT programs in various countries South and South East Asia and the Pacific region. For the past 2.5 years, Hans has been working in the Office of the Director General of the ADB’s Independent Evaluation Department, where he manages the Department’s communication; outreach and knowledge work, and contributes to selected evaluation studies.
About the Asian Development Bank

ADB’s vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region’s many successes, it remains home to the majority of the world’s poor. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.

About Independent Evaluation at the Asian Development Bank

The Independent Evaluation Department evaluates the policies, strategies, operations, and special concerns of ADB relating to organizational and operational effectiveness. It contributes to development effectiveness by providing feedback on performance and through evaluation lessons.