

My job in international cooperation

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Age

47

Current position

Division Chief, Operations Financial Management and Procurement Services, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C.

Education

Master in Economics, University of St. Gallen

Most significant positions to date

Division Chief in Vice Presidency of Countries (IDB, current), Advisor to Executive Vice President (IDB), Unit Chief in Vice Presidency of Finance (IDB)

How I started

As part of my Masters studies in Economics at the University of St. Gallen, I was looking for an Internship in the US, Latin America or the Caribbean. A friend told me about the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), an International Financial Institution (IFI) located in the US that works exclusively with Latin America and the Caribbean. It combined the three experiences I was looking for and I sent a letter inquiring on possible opportunities for an unpaid internship. A few months later, I started my work at the IDB.

« Start as a consultant. This is a great way to access IFIs, learn about opportunities, and build a network. »

My motivation

Working in an institution that improves lives and supports the social and economic development in Latin America and the Caribbean is highly motivating. In addition, being able to interact with people from 48 nations and embrace diversity on a daily basis is exciting, challenging, and rewarding at the same time.

Stages of my career

I started out as a consultant for three years, supporting a small unit in charge of the IDB's financial planning. After three years, I was hired as a staff, and became the manager of a small team in the Finance Department. In 2001, I was promoted to Chief, Strategic Risk Management and Financial Planning Office, and in 2005, I was appointed Advisor to the Executive Vice President. Two years later, I was asked to lead a challenging change management assignment - my current job.

My current job

As Chief, Operations Financial Management and Procurement Services Office, I am in charge of transforming the IDB's fiduciary function into a risk-based and results-oriented operation. With a workforce of about 100 staff located in 27 countries, I am responsible for overseeing 30,000 procurement processes and more than \$8 billion in disbursements in Latin America and the Caribbean per year. We are a highly decentralized and diverse group: our staff represents 33 nationalities with eight different mother tongues, and ranges from ages 23 to 62.

My job is to create an environment that allows each staff to thrive and provide the best possible service to our clients. My day-to-day job varies considerably. One day, you may find me on an airplane travelling to meet authorities, lead a workshop, or speak at a conference. On another day, you may see me with my management team discussing human resource and communications strategies, or proofreading our latest publication.

My personal situation

I am married with three children, two dogs, a cat and many other pets. I work from home occasionally, especially when I have phone calls with people who need career advice or want to discuss a personal issue.

The rewards and challenges

As our team is spread throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, my main challenge is to foster a shared vision and common objectives that connect our work for the benefits of our clients. We challenge ourselves to be constantly rethinking our service as part of our efforts to enhancing the IDB's value proposition.

My advice to people interested in working for an IFI

Start as a consultant. Consultancies are a great way to access IFIs, learn about opportunities and build a network. I would recommend learning about the IFI's structure and profiles; and connect with current IDB staff on LinkedIn and other social media.

Portrait completed February 2016