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As Senior Program Specialist at International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada, Samar Verma managed the Think Tank Initiative (TTI) program in South Asia (and more recently a similar support to think tanks in Myanmar) which provides core support and technical capacity building to independent, not-for-profit think tanks for strengthening institutions and informed policy-making. TTI is a multi-donor, global program managed by IDRC.

Before joining IDRC, he was the global head of economic justice policy team at Oxfam Great Britain, based at Oxford, UK. He was also the founder, director and chairman of Consortium of Trade and Development, a non-for-profit think tank. Previously, he had been Oxfam's South Asia advisor on trade policy. He has also worked as a Senior Fellow with the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and has published widely on international trade and competitiveness. Most recently, with Prof Sukhadeo Thorat, he jointly edited a seminal book published by Oxford University Press on 'Social Science Research in India; Status, Issues and Policies'.

He began his career as an economist in the corporate sector, working with a textile company. With over two decades of professional experience in corporate sector, conducting policy research, international development and research grant management based in India and in the UK, Samar holds a PhD in Economics and an MBA.