

Leveraging Inclusive Finance and Technology to Increase Resilience at the Bottom of the Pyramid

**Thierry van Bastelaer**

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Monday, December 8 | 5–6 pm

R 1240 | Ross School of Business | 701 Tappan St

Reception immediately following

Households living at the Base of the Pyramid demonstrate remarkable skills in dealing with the variety of risks that threaten their health and livelihoods on a daily basis. Too often, however, they are doing so without the benefit of financial tools that, if they were widely available, affordable and flexible, would dramatically decrease these families' vulnerability and increase their long-term resilience. In particular, insurance products are struggling to keep pace with the increasing costs of health care and the effects of climate change on agriculture. The talk will examine how a portfolio of inclusive financial products and services—such as commitment savings and microinsurance—are giving low-income families across the developing world more tools to ensure that shocks do not push them further into poverty. Using examples such as health savings, micro health insurance, and index-based weather insurance, the talk will suggest how the combination of technology and financial services has the potential to give low-income families a stronger handle on their economic and personal wellbeing.

Thierry van Bastelaer is Principal Associate at Abt Associates, where he helps design and develop the company's portfolio of private health finance activities. In addition to his work on health insurance and savings in Africa, Thierry is the founder and co-director of Abt's Risk and Resilience Methods Center, and was named one of Abt's Senior Fellows. He currently serves as the Technical Deputy to the Vice President of the International Health Division.

Before joining Abt, Thierry was Associate Vice President for Economic Opportunities and Senior Director of Livelihoods Innovation at Save the Children, and the Director of the Enterprise Development Group at the IRIS Center at the University of Maryland (where he also earned his doctorate in Economics.) Thierry currently serves as Adjunct Professor at American University, where he teaches the graduate and undergraduate classes in inclusive financial services.

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