

Olmedo José Varela Quirós was born in 1957, Penonomé, Coclé, Republic of Panama. He holds a **Ph.D.** with specialization in **Urban and Regional Development** from the University of Wisconsin, United States. He also holds **Master and Bachelor degrees in Sociology** from Western Kentucky University, United States and from the Universidad Santa María La Antigua, Republic of Panamá, respectively.

During the last two decades, Dr. Varela has served as an **international expert** and **senior adviser** in public policy and development evaluation in the **United States** and in the **Republic of Panama**. As a result of his professional merits, Dr. Varela has been awarded various distinctions.

He has been honored as an invited speaker at conferences hosted by **The White House**, United States and as a special speaker at the **President's Cabinet** in the Republic of Panama. He is frequently invited to **international meetings** to dissertate on strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation.

He is a **High-Level Expert for Consultation on the Elaboration of Criteria and Operational Sub-Criteria for the Implementation of The Right to Development** chosen by the Office of the **United Nations** High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in cooperation with the Harvard Kennedy School of Government at **Harvard University**. Other distinctions include the **Fulbright** Scholarship, the **Ford/MacArthur** Fellowship, the Honors program of the **American Sociological Association** and the University of Wisconsin **2007 Scott Greer Award**.

His most recent publication, "Contratando Presidentes y Alcaldes para Servir al Bien Común", (**Hiring Presidents and Majors for the Common Good**), offers scientifically substantiated and internationally established standards, for the design and evaluation of national and local development agendas.