



## **Brussels Policy Briefing n. 48**

### **Strengthening rural livelihoods in the face of rapid urbanisation in Africa**

*Organised by CTA, BMZ/GIZ, ACP Secretariat, European Commission (DG DEVCO), and Concord*

20<sup>th</sup> March 2017, 14h00-18h00

ACP Secretariat, (Avenue Georges Henri 451, 1200 Brussels)

<http://brusselsbriefings.net>

## **BIODATA OF THE SPEAKERS**

### **Thomas Allen – Economist and Consultant, Sahel West Africa Club/OECD Secretariat**

Thomas Allen is an economist with the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) Secretariat at the OECD. Thomas has been working on modelling issues related to food policies for the past ten years. His research, geared towards strengthening food security, focuses mainly on the analysis of food demand and systems, with a particular interest in economic modelling that integrates nutritional indicators. The Club du Sahel was formed in 1976 at the initiative of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and several Sahelian and OECD member countries to mobilize international support in response to the devastating droughts in the Sahel. In 2011, its geographic focus was expanded to all of West Africa and it became the Sahel and West Africa Club. The Secretariat undertakes independent studies to foster policy dialogue and promote better policies. It recently launched a work program dedicated to understanding the ongoing food system transformations in West Africa and promoting innovative approaches to food security.

### **Isolina Boto – Manager, CTA Brussels Office**

Isolina Boto is the Manager of the CTA Brussels Office. Isolina has more than 20 years of experience in development. She worked for the European Commission, various ACP embassies and NGOs in areas related to food security, rural development and trade. Within CTA, she worked in various positions at headquarters, in the Netherlands, especially on co-funded technical programmes on Agriculture and Rural Development implemented at regional level. Since 2004 she heads the CTA Brussels Office, dealing with policy issues related to the ACP-EU cooperation in the field of agricultural and rural development and leads CTA policy group on regional trade. She coordinates and organizes the regular Brussels Development Briefings on topical development policy issues (<http://brusselsbriefings.net>). The office produces a daily news service on key policy areas of ACP-EU cooperation on trade, fisheries, climate change, food security and development policy (<http://brussels.cta.int>).

### **Viwanou Gnassounou – Assistant Secretary General, ACP Secretariat**

Viwanou Gnassounou, from Togo, is an economist, financial expert and project manager with 17 years of experience in agricultural and natural resource policy formulation, aid programming, sectoral commodity export strategies, and trade. Before joining the ACP Management Team, he was co-manager of a Consulting firm, which provides support in the areas of development policies. He also set up and managed an agricultural products industrial processing company based in Togo. Mr. Gnassounou holds a Master's degree in Economic Analysis and Policy, a Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (DEA) in Development Economics (MPhil equivalent), and a Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS) in Economic Development and Development Project Management (MSc equivalent) from the Centre for Research and Studies in International Development at the Université d'Auvergne, France. He is fluent in English, French and Mina (Togo), with basic knowledge of German. Mr. Gnassounou took office on 1 April 2015.

### **Michael Hailu – Director, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)**

Michael Hailu, an Ethiopian national, is the Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) based in the Netherlands. CTA is a joint institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Union working under the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. Mr. Hailu has over 25 years of professional experience in agricultural research and development in Africa and Asia. Prior to joining CTA in mid-2010, he held senior leadership positions at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) based in Nairobi, Kenya and at the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in Indonesia. Mr. Hailu has led the development and implementation of CTA's 2011-2015 strategic plan refocusing the Centre's work on three priority themes—supporting agricultural policies and strategies; enhancing inclusive value chains; and strengthening capacities of ARD institutions and networks in knowledge management and ICTs. He has degrees from the University of Pittsburgh and Addis Ababa University. He has also been trained in strategic leadership at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

### **Petra Jacobi – Project Manager, GIZ**

Petra Jacobi is heading the Project “Rural Development” (GIZ), based in Bonn, Germany. She joined GTZ, now GIZ more than 20 year ago, and since then she has been involved in the design, management and evaluation of Rural Development projects of German Development Cooperation. An agronomist by profession, her first assignments were in Asia, before her regional focus shifted to Africa. She has managed projects in Tanzania, Nigeria and Kenya covering rural and local economic development, natural resource management as well as climate change and resilience. Since 2014 she has been in her current position, providing advisory services to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in the area of rural development.

### **Ibrahim Assane Mayaki – CEO, Secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**

Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki of the Republic of Niger is the Chief Executive Officer of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Agency. He was appointed to the position in January 2009. A former Prime Minister of Niger, from 1997 to 2000, Dr. Mayaki has a Master' degree from the National School of Public Administration (Enap), Quebec, Canada and a PhD in Administrative Sciences from the University of Paris I, France. He worked as a Professor of Public Administration in Niger and Venezuela. From 1996 to 1997 he was appointed Minister in charge of African Integration and Cooperation and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Niger. In August 2000, he set up the Analysis Centre for Public Policy in Senegal. From 2000 to 2004, Dr. Mayaki was a guest Professor at the University of Paris XI, where he lectured on international relations. He also led research at the Research Centre on Europe and the Contemporary World within that university. In 2004, he served as Executive Director of the Platform in support of Rural Development in West and Central Africa, the Rural Hub, based in Dakar, Senegal.

### **Edson Mpyisi – Coordinator, ENABLE Youth, African Development Bank Group**

Edson Mpyisi is the Coordinator of the ENABLE Youth Programme at the African Development Bank Group (AfDB). The objective of the ENABLE Youth Programme is to empower youth as “agripreneurs” to set up agribusiness enterprises. Mr. Mpyisi has also been the Coordinator of the Agropoles and Agro-Industrial Zones Programme at the AfDB. Mr. Mpyisi has over 20 years of experience in Economic and Rural Development in Africa in various capacities. Prior to joining the AfDB, Mr. Mpyisi was the Acting Director of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture and Head of Division of Agriculture and Food Security at the African Union Commission for four years where he spearheaded coordination and implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). He also worked with Michigan State University as the Country Coordinator of the Food Security Research Project (FSRP) in Rwanda conducting national agricultural surveys and producing data and analysis on agricultural and rural economic development and publishing sub-sector economic studies on fertilizers, coffee, rural labour, etc. He was also an Economist with the UNDP Rwanda where he led the process for writing and publishing the first MDG country report for Rwanda and also worked as the Rwanda Country Representative for the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWSNet).

### **Omar Ouedraogo – Federation of Agricultural Professionals of Burkina (FEPAB)**

Omar Ouedraogo is from Burkina Faso. He is in charge of programs at FEPAB. He is a specialist in communication for the development, advocacy and management of information and communication programs and projects. He holds a Master's Degree in Development Policy and Practice at the Graduate School in Geneva, Switzerland and a Master's Degree in Information and Communication Sciences and Technology from the University of Ouagadougou. He has been working for more than 10 years on knowledge management in farmer's organizations, the facilitation of farmers' organizations networks and the implementation of communication actions both in NGOs and in public services. Omar Ouedraogo worked from 2013 to 2017 in the communication and press department of the Burkinabe Ministry of Agriculture. He was also from 2006-2013 responsible for communication of the Confédération Paysanne du Faso. member of the West Africa Farmer's Organisation (ROPPA) in Burkina Faso, which mission is to advocate for improved agricultural policies.

### **Denis Pesche – Deputy Director, Research Programme ART-Dev 'Actors, Resources and Territories in Development', CIRAD**

Denis Pesche is a sociologist. Researcher at CIRAD since 2003, he was deputy director of UMR ART-Dev between 2011 and 2014. Prior to joining CIRAD, he led for more than 12 years think tanks on cooperation issues and rural development policies in sub-Saharan Africa. Since 1992, he works on farmer's organizations and rural movements in West Africa. In 2016, he coordinated the production of an Atlas on the Transformations of the Rural World in Africa.

### **Dimakatso (Nono) Sekhoto – Managing Director, Makolobane Farmers Enterprises and African Farmers' Association of South Africa**

Dimakatso Sekhoto (Nono) started her career in the financial services industry and worked 7 years. Nono joined her father at their family commercial farm and is currently the Managing Director. The farm is on 2100 ha working with beef cattle; apple orchard; planting sunflower. Nono has been awarded scholarships to study business courses and Introduction of Agricultural Enterprise Management, and was selected for Professional Fellows Program for Empowering Aspiring Entrepreneurs at Oklahoma State University. Nono is a leader of AFASA as the youth representative and she has established GrowthShoot, a company focused on empowering youth in agriculture. Her ideas on how to empower the youth agriculture have given Nono the opportunity to present on various platforms such as TEDxWomen, GCARD3, Stockman School and RUFORM. She was interviewed on BBC Africa Focus identified as one of the interesting young African farmer.

### **Steve Wiggins – Research Fellow, Agricultural Development and Policy, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)**

Steve Wiggins has worked extensively on rural markets throughout his 35-year career, above all those that apply to smallholders in Africa, their operation of rural labour markets, the rural non-farm economy and specific application of market analysis to crises of food insecurity, providing the basis for policy recommendations on pro-poor market development. He has led ODI's work on food price dynamics in national, regional and international markets since 2008, analysing drivers and impacts of price spikes and assessing policy responses.