

Innovation, Inclusion, Inspiration

**Opportunities for Youth Employment & Entrepreneurship
Development International Conference 2021**

19-20 OCTOBER 2021 | SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



OYE International Conference 2021 | speaker information

19 October | introduction



Worku Behonegne

Country Director SNV in Ethiopia

I have been working for SNV since 1974 in different national and international positions. Currently, I am working as the Country Director for SNV in Ethiopia, based in Addis Ababa. Prior to this position, I worked as a project manager for the global SNV Leadership Enhancement Action Program (LEAP+) project, which involved 19 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Before that I worked for seven years as a Regional Director for SNV East and Southern Africa, based in Nairobi. In 2004 - 2005, I worked as a Country Director SNV Ghana. I have also worked for SNV in different other positions: Regional Advisor for East and Southern Africa, based in Zimbabwe, and Management Advisor for SNV Botswana.

I started my career in 1974, working for SNV Ethiopia as a project assistant in the Kobblo Lalibela Road Construction Project. I have also worked as a project officer for SNV Ethiopia, before I took international positions. I feel privileged working for this wonderful organisation, which is committed "...to a society in which all people, irrespective of race, class or gender, enjoy the freedom to pursue their own development". It is an organisation, which provides the space and freedom for all staff to come up with ideas and innovate in all what we do. It is blessed in attracting and maintaining highly passionate and committed staff at all levels. SNV advocates change and keeps on changing and remains relevant in addressing poverty. I had the privilege to be part of the change process given the fact that I have worked all my career for this wonderful organisation

OYE International Conference 2021 | speaker information

19 October | plenary opening session



Henk Jan Bakker

Ambassador of the Netherlands to Ethiopia

Mr. Bakker joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1992. After a 3 year period at the United Nations Department of the Ministry, he was posted to the Netherlands embassy in South Africa in 1995 as deputy head of development cooperation.

In 1998, he returned to the Netherlands, to be seconded to the Ministry of Economic Affairs where he became responsible for Dutch bilateral economic relations with China. In 2001 he returned to Foreign Affairs for a one year posting at the human rights department.

He was subsequently posted as economic counsellor at the Netherlands Permanent Representation to the OECD in Paris, where in 2004 he was elected chairman of the Working Party of the Trade Committee.

In 2006 he was appointed head of the economic division at the Netherlands embassy in London. In 2010 he returned to the Netherlands to become head of business environment in the Department for Sustainable Economic Development at the MFA. A year later he was appointed Deputy Director for Human Resources.

From 2014 to 2016 Henk Jan Bakker was Ambassador to Afghanistan, and from 2016 until 2020 Ambassador to Uganda.

Since August 2020 he is Ambassador of the Netherlands to Ethiopia, and Permanent Representative to the African Union.

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Hans Henric Lundqvist

Ambassador of Sweden to Ethiopia, Permanent Representative to AU, IGAD and UNECA

Ambassador Hans Henric Lundqvist was born 22 August 1974 in Örnsköldsvik, the norther part of Sweden. He studied political science, law and economics at the University of Umeå and graduated with a Master's degree in 1998. He studied Russian language and history at the State University in St Petersburg. He joined the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 2006. Before joining the Ministry, he started his career at the County Administrative Board of Västernorrland as International Affairs Secretary. He joined the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in 1999. Mr. Lundqvist expertise was mainly Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, as Area Manager. Mr Lundqvist was Head of Cooperation at the Swedish Embassy in Bucharest but stationed in the Republic of Moldova as Swedish Representative (2003-2006). Mr. Lundqvist worked with Development Policy as Desk Officer and Advisor on Aid Effectiveness at the Foreign Ministry (2006-2008). He joined the Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan as Counsellor and Deputy Head Mission in 2008. In 2010 he was appointed Political Advisor to the Minister for International Development Cooperation and later joined the Department for Asia and the Pacific as Deputy Director (Afghanistan and Pakistan Task Force). 2011 he was appointed by the Government as Deputy Director General and between 2011 and 2016 as Deputy Head of Department for International Development. 2016 he was appointed Ambassador to Sudan and also accredited to South Sudan. Since September 2020 he is the Ambassador of Sweden to Ethiopia.

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Nancy Okoro Oghenetega

GrEEEn project, youth representative, Ghana

Nancy Okoro is a member of the Opportunity for Youth Employment (OYE) Cohort 3 in the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) trajectory.

When I enlisted for this training in June 2020, I had no idea what the program had to offer me in the GrEEEn sector. Upon admission, I went through a two-week bomber theoretical training program designed to prepare me for any secular job as well as my own business. Following the two weeks of training, I was immediately assigned to my desired location for a two-month internship. During my internship, I was guided through the various stages and processes of waste management, such as generation, segregation or sorting, storage, collection, treatment, and final disposal.

I was taken through the waste industry's nooks and crannies, learning new terminologies and technology in the process. Following this intensive training and internship, the decision to pursue a new career path was made. I also state that there are no words to describe the impact of the training and internship on my life. I'm honored to be a part of it, and I hope to continue my studies in environmental sciences in order to gain more insight into the waste management industry.

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Andre de Jager

Managing Director of Sectors, SNV

Dr. André de Jager is based in Nairobi, Kenya. He has oversight for programmes in the Agriculture and Energy sectors, with annual budget of €100 million, that are spread globally in 26 countries SNV operates in.

Previously, Dr. de Jager served as the Country Director for SNV in Ghana. He has more than 25 years of experience in agricultural economics and project management. Before joining SNV, Dr. de Jager was the Director of the North and West Africa Division of IFDC based in Accra, Ghana; and managed the division of international markets and networks at Wageningen Economic Research. During this period, he managed and coordinated a number of the Netherlands' initiatives on developing public-private partnerships in the agricultural sector in East Africa and Asia and initiated various private sector-driven agricultural training programs in Africa. He served numerous short-term consultancies in Africa and Asia, including conducting market studies, agro-supply chain studies and enterprise development.

He is the author of numerous scientific journal articles, book chapters, reports and books and lectures at symposiums. Dr. de Jager holds a doctorate degree in communication and innovation studies and plant production systems and a master's degree in agricultural economics and horticulture from Wageningen University. In addition, he completed a one-year, master's-level training programme in business administration

OYE International Conference 2021 | speaker information

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Dawit DREAMS

Motivational speaker

Dawit **DREAMS** (**D**awit the **R**elentless **E**thiopian **A**frican **M**otivational **S**peaker) is transforming Ethiopia and Africa, helping people set and achieve their dreams, by teaching the Secrets of Life and Success'. This dream has changed my life and the lives of millions.

When I came to Addis Ababa, I only had 3,000.00 birr, couldn't speak Amharic, didn't know the city well. However, within just a year, I had started four successful businesses and started to make 15,000.00 birr a day and was in the process of making 1,000,000.00 birr a month. However, the Government started a big 'road and railway construction project' around my businesses area, that took more than three years to complete. These were one of the most difficult and challenging of my life as I lost a lot of business. It was then that I decided to become Dawit DREAMS. Today, I am so happy and grateful that I am living my Big Dream.

Over the past few years, I have had the opportunity and privilege to train more than 1,500,000 people in person and millions more over different media platforms. Millions of individuals have also attended some of the hundreds of Seminars that we have launched over the past few years, and they have learned to live an amazing life, driven to make their dream a reality and transforming not only their lives, their family and their businesses, but also their country, continent and the world.

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20 October | roundtable discussion: youth aspirations & perspectives on market opportunities



Hosiana Mmari

Haki Leather Products, OYE Tanzania project

Hosiana (25) is a young entrepreneur and mother; producing and selling leather products like shoes, belts and keyholders together with her companions in Haki Leather Products.

Hosiana started engaging in leather producing activities after completing her Secondary education. She enjoys doing hand-carting work including hair dressing. She gained skills and experience through training. With these activities, Hosiana earns income to support her family, pay school fees for her son and cover her daily needs. Her ambition is to own a bigger factory, where she can produce a variety of leather products and supply them to customers throughout Tanzania.

Haki Leather Product started in 2016, with 8 members after completing 21 days training on leather products production in the OYE project. Hosiana is the group treasurer. The group started with 400,000 TZs capital. Today, this has grown to approximately 5 million TZs.

Haki Leather produces shoes (school shoes, open shoes, belts and keyholders), which are sold in 6 regions in Tanzania. The cooperative has participated in various exhibition events, including in industrial exhibitions to promote and sell its products.

The cooperative has trained 5 youth and 2 are actively engaging with same business.

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19 October | roundtable discussion: youth aspirations & perspectives on market opportunities



Ifeoluwa Tryphena Olatayo

Soupah Farm-en-Market Limited, 2SCALE programme, Nigeria

Ifeoluwa Olatayo is a young agripreneur from Nigeria. Using her business as a tool for social and environmental good, she has consequently impacted thousands of smallholder farmers, children and women.

Ifeoluwa holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and in Entrepreneurial Management from the Pan Atlantic University.

She is a Key Stakeholder with SBN and WHFF and her interest on the value chain leverages agribusiness as a tool for a greener planet and a better society.

Soupah Farm-en-Market Limited's mission is to positively impact the livelihood of the smallholder farmers and the affordable food needs of African growing population by leveraging technology

OYE International Conference 2021 | speaker information

19 October | round table: Youth aspirations and perspectives on market opportunities



Moussa Doumbia

Jus Buguni, EJOM project, Mali

Mr. Doumbia is a holder of a degree in Agro-business from the Institut Polytechnique Rural de Formation et de Recherche Appliquée (IPR/IFRA) in Mali

He is coach-trainer on agricultural entrepreneurship on behalf of Projet Entrepreneurial Agricole Jeunes (PEAJ) in Mali, and promoter of the BUGUNI juice company.

Originally from the town of Bougouni, an agricultural region in Mali, in a village 70km from the capital, where there is real agricultural potential, but unfortunately few opportunities are taken advantage of and many people live in poverty.

"I want to positively impact this situation, with the vision of community development, by improving value chains where each actor at each step in the chain, is able to take full advantage from the opportunities they are presented, have meaningful employment and a good income.

OYE International Conference 2021 | speaker information

19 October | breakout cafe : digital innovation and youth employment



Magnus Johnson

Microsoft Philanthropies Lead - Middle East and Africa

Mr. Johnson takes pride in driving best practice programmes that help youth realise their full potential by leveraging Public-Private-Non profit-Partnerships.

As the Philanthropies Lead for Sub-Saharan Africa at Microsoft, his goals include supporting international organisations, government organisations, agencies and non-profits, putting in place a clear strategy to roll out a skills and employment agenda for young people.

In addition to his primary job functions, Magnus has been recognised by several youth organisations for his extraordinary commitment and support to young people and youth focused initiatives

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19 October | breakout cafe 2: youth green jobs, climate change and the future of work



Tafadzwa Chirinda

**National Project Coordinator, ILO Green
enterPRIZE Innovation and Development in
Zimbabwe Programme**

A developmental professional with experience in technical cooperation projects specializing in raising awareness of the green economy and climate change; creation of better and more green jobs for the informal sector; skills development for green jobs and enterprise development; agribusiness for smallholder farmers, access to finance, women and youth empowerment; as well as specialized experience in developing a green business development programme.

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20 October | opening session



Alison Rusinow

Head of agriculture sector, SNV

Ms. Rusinow has nearly twenty-five years' experience leading, managing and coaching teams to address poverty and inequality in developing countries, including sixteen years as Country Director with international development organisations. She has worked in humanitarian response and long-term development in the agriculture, health and education sectors with a consistent focus on supporting efforts that reduce poverty and mitigate against and adapt to climate change. With a strong commitment to supporting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, Alison believes in working with market forces and the private sector, while also engaging in policy dialogue with governments and other key decision makers, in order to bring about the best possible outcomes for poor people and the environment. She worked in Mongolia, Ethiopia, Lao PDR and Vietnam before joining SNV as Head of Agriculture in June 2020.

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20 October | plenary session



Jose Pierre Felix Coulibaly

Deputy Director General APEJ, Mali

Mr. Coulibaly is a Civil Engineer specialised in public investment programmes for employment and specifically in the realisation of infrastructure works following the High Intensity Labour Force (HIMO) approach.

Professionally, Mr. Coulibaly was a labour-based expert with PEJIMO/ILO and the Employment and Investment Department of APEJ, in charge, among other things, of the identification, selection and design of infrastructure projects proposed by local authorities (rock paving, development of rural roads). He was also a leading member of the EJOM (Youth Employment in Mali) Project coordination team and later Programme Officer within APEJ.

In the course of his young professional career, he has acquired a lot of experience in the field of youth employment through his participation in forums, study tours and training seminars in many countries such as India, France, Italy, China, Canada, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Germany, Ghana, Benin and Cape Verde.

APEJ is the Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment of Mali, a public employment structure attached to the Ministry of National Entrepreneurship, Employment and Vocational Training

OYE International Conference 2021 | speaker information

20 October | roundtable discussion: digitalisation and the digital eco-system



Vince Mountage Diop

Founder of BelCash , Ethiopia

Mr. Diop started his career as an entrepreneur by founding AlphaCad in 1995. It was the first Senegalese IT company. In 2000 he moved to Canada, and strengthened his experience in distributed payments and VOIP services. Eight years later, mr. Diop migrated to the Netherlands, a country recognized for its innovative regulatory frame, and co-founded "World Open Services", a venture specialized in developing IT Solutions on a PaaS (Platform As A Service) model.

From 2010 onwards, WOS focused itself on the African market and founded BCTS (BelCash Technology Solution PLC) in partnership with his Ethiopian partner Abrham Gulilat. The company started implementing PaaS platforms under the brand "Hello". In 2020, more than 2.1 million Ethiopians had subscribed to "HelloCash" mobile money; six financial institutions are providing the service; and "HelloCash" is now expanding its services to West Africa. To date, HelloCash has transacted more than 100 million transactions valued over 100 billion birrs.

BCTS diversified its portfolio of services by implementing the first eCommerce platform based on an Amazon model, in Ethiopia. Today, more than 1,400 SMEs are selling their goods via the platform. The service "HelloOmarket.com" delivers products all over Ethiopia and will soon go global; its expansion will make use of the worldwide Ethiopian Diaspora.

In 2017, mr. Diop founded a new Ethiopian venture independent of the BelCash Group, under the name HelloSolar. It is the first Solar Home Based factory using a pay as you go, model.

Vince is full time based between Addis and Dubai, and defines himself as a global citizen with a Pan-African dream.

For more information, see [mr. Diop's profile](#) on LinkedIn

OYE International Conference 2021 | speaker information

20 October | roundtable discussion: digitalisation and the digital eco-system



Rose Funja

**Communication and information systems
Engineer, Tanzania**

Rose Funja has over 13 years' experience working directly with national, international communities – focused on digital technologies in solving community challenges. She is an engineer and a social entrepreneur.

Rose Funja is the founder and Managing Director of [Agrinfo Company limited](#), a Tanzanian local business focusing on harnessing the power of Information and communications technologies to provide farmers with decision support systems to sustainably optimize their operations. Rose also co-founded two ventures [She codes for change](#), a Tanzanian tech mentorship social enterprise, and [Impact Hub Dar es salaam](#) a franchise community centre that fosters entrepreneurship, idea incubation, business development and offers co-working spaces. Rose is an independent board director of Victoria Finance.

Rose is a fellow of prestigious leadership programs, Mandela Washington fellow for Young African Leaders 2014 and International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP- 2019).

Rose holds a Masters in engineering in Information and Communication systems from Huazhong University of Science and Technology in China PRC, and a bachelor in computer engineering and information technology from University of Dar es Salaam

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19 October | roundtable discussion: digitalisation and the digital eco-system



Nadia Yerima Bako

Innovation and Entrepreneurship program associate at the African Union, Niger

Nadia Yerima Bako currently works with the African Union's Commission as an Innovation and Entrepreneurship program associate at the Commission's Women, Gender and Youth Directorate. Nadia is also a multi-linguist, a social scientist, a devout Pan-African and an advocate for the young people of Africa.

Nadia has worked in various development sectors with various public and private institutions across Africa and Asia. She has served with the African Court for Human and People's rights, as an information officer, supporting with the mainstreaming of the Court's works at both national and continental level. She has also served with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Niger as a Judicial Officer for Nigeriens with special statuses outside of the country. In China, she worked with training institutions to provide learning support to young Chinese.

As an innovation and entrepreneurship program associate, she is responsible for the implementation of projects that provide support and opportunities to young innovators and entrepreneurs across the continent. This is done by engaging with partners and member state institutions to map, identify and scale financing and capacity building opportunities, and ensuring that young people have access to these opportunities.

Nadia's most recent accomplishment is the development of the Young African's Program on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (YAPIE) which seeks to create an ecosystem of young problem solvers linked to opportunity providers and other stakeholders in the continent's Innovation and Entrepreneurship landscape.

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20 October | roundtable discussion: digitalisation and the digital eco-system



Urbain Stanislas Amegbedji

National agency for employment, Benin

Mr. Amegbedji is an expert in project and resource management. He graduated from the Universities of Louvain in Belgium and Abomey Calavi in Benin with two Masters degrees in social sciences. He has coordinated and managed several projects in the social fields (health and welfare) for several partners including USAID, Global Fund, and the World Bank. He is currently the Director General of the National Employment Agency of the Government of the Republic of Benin. He is also the National Director of the Special Employment Integration Programme (PSIE) and Coordinator of the Youth Inclusion Project (ProDIJ).

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20 October | breakout cafe 1: innovative approaches by young women entrepreneurs



Thomas Tichar

Youth and Gender Advisor in Food Systems at Wageningen University & Research, Netherlands

Thomas has over 15 years' experience in the field of international development, working with NGOs, multilateral organisations and research institutes, as well as consulting. Following an academic training in international political economy and development he has worked pre-dominantly in the area of promoting private sector development for positive social and environmental impact.

For most of his career he has worked on rural livelihoods, market- and food-systems, with a focus on reducing poverty and making systems, along with the farmers within them, able to start and grow businesses while managing risks - be they young, old, man or woman.

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20 October | breakout cafe 2: innovative financial inclusion models in agri-food systems



Peter Kiriimi

Financial Inclusion manager 2SCALE programme, Kenya

Peter is an expert in Agribusiness management and Agri-finance. He has over 21 years of experience in public and private sectors in coordinating agribusiness projects for local and international organisations. In his illustrious career, he has been a key-influencer in agri-business transformation strategy of several local and international organisations where he served in key leadership positions in agri-banking, agri-extension services and formerly as the IFDC-2SCALE Agribusiness Coordinator in Eastern and Southern Africa division.

Currently, he leads a team of IFDC's - 2SCALE programme Financial Inclusion subject matter specialists who are spread out in the wider sub-Saharan African region

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20 October | closing and vote of thanks



Simon O'Connell

CEO of SNV, Netherlands

With over 25 years' experience working, Simon O'Connell is an experienced and entrepreneurial leader. Passionate about promoting equitable access to opportunity and catalysing positive, inclusive and lasting change, Simon's main areas of expertise are in setting strategy, leading teams and fostering partnerships.

Since late 2020, Simon has been the CEO of SNV, Netherlands Development Organisation, leading a team of almost 1,300 people and ongoing programmes in approximately 25 countries. Simon oversees a global portfolio focused on the agriculture, energy and water sectors and systems interventions that contribute to sustainable, transformational change.

Prior to SNV, Simon worked for over 12 years with the global organisation Mercy Corps, in Country, Regional and Executive Director capacities, with a particular emphasis on fostering partnerships across development organisations, governments and the private sector, and a substantial focus on fragile and volatile environments, where Simon has spent considerable periods of his life.

Earlier in his career Simon worked on complex, large scale humanitarian interventions in rural Africa, as well as a range of participatory community development initiatives.

Simon attended the London School of Economics and Political Science (Sociology, BSc), Imperial College London (Rural and Social Development, PGCerts. and Development Management, PGDip.) and Lancaster University (Diplomacy and International Relations, MA). He lives in The Netherlands with his wife and two children.

Room for notes

Room for notes

The SNV Opportunity for Youth Employment (OYE) approach uses the unique push-match-pull-enable methodology to create meaningful employment in agriculture, energy and WASH.

SNV is partnering with the Swedish International Development Agency for the second edition of the OYE International Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

