

3rd European Forum on Sustainable Rural Development- Palencia- Spain

CTA side-event

ICTs mobilizing farmers

29th March 2011

BIODATA OF SPEAKERS

Laura M. Drewett, Partner Director, Esoko

As Partner Director at Esoko, Laura manages Esoko's international operations, partner deployments, and franchises throughout Africa. She is passionate about finding new ways to use technology to improve the lives of those in rural areas. Prior to working for Esoko, Laura founded a social enterprise known as Adapted, specializing in designing new technologies and adapting business solutions for the developing world. An expert in sustainability for ICT projects in emerging markets, she has designed and managed projects for a diversity of clients in Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Some of the major projects she has worked on include the Gates Foundation Global Libraries Initiative, the US Agency for International Development-sponsored Communications for Development project, as well as several USAID Last Mile Initiative projects. An author of the book *Wireless Networking for the Developing World* and a contributor to numerous concept papers on the deployment of ICTs in developing markets, Laura is a trainer and frequent presenter of innovative new business models for ICTs at workshops and conferences. Before entering the international development field, she developed e-learning courses and wrote business plans for new tech products for Fortune 500 companies in the United States. Laura holds a Bachelors of Arts in Foreign Affairs and French Literature from the University of Virginia and a Master's in Project Management from the George Washington University School of Business. She speaks both English and French fluently.

Dion Jerling – Special Projects Director, Connect Africa

A passion for Africa and technology led Dion from the world of online media in Europe to Zambia where he runs Connect Africa, an organisation that uses ICT to deliver services to rural communities. Beginning with a community phone network, Dion is building an organisation that provides rural communities with access to information, business and social services using cutting edge technologies. He delights in deploying the latest technology used in the developed world – but on Africa's terms. Africans know what technology works for them and Dion is using this knowledge and working with local partners to establish an agricultural grain storage facility that uses ICT to provide small holder farmers with access to the modern agricultural market place.

- **Connect Africa** is a social enterprise that leverages innovative technologies for socioeconomic development in rural Africa. The Connect Africa service model is based on the delivery of multiple public and private sector services directly to rural communities. These services include communications (voice, SMS, Internet), public sector (agriculture, education, health) and private sector (banking, insurance, advertising, market research) services (www.connectafrica.net).

Edmund Katiti, Acting Head NEPAD, E-Africa Programme

Dr. Edmund Katiti is the Acting Head of the NEPAD e-Africa Programme (formerly the NEPAD e-Africa Commission). He holds a Ph.D. in Telecommunication Systems Engineering. While he was Policy and Regulatory Advisor in NEPAD e-Africa Commission, Dr. Katiti was responsible for the development of the enabling policy and regulatory framework for the development the AU-NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Network and currently is overseeing its implementation across the Africa continent. Before joining the Commission, Dr. Katiti served as Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs of Kampala International University. Dr. Katiti served as President of the Uganda Computer Society 1988-90, and Chairman of the Uganda National Standards Council 1995-2000.

Rémy Lang, Expert ICT Analysis, UNCTAD

Rémi Lang graduated in the International Economics Master's degree from the College of Europe (Bruges, Belgium). He has worked on international trade negotiations and policies at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa and at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, Geneva). He has provided policy analysis and guidance to trade negotiators of developing countries, especially in Africa. He also participated in the management and implementation of capacity building projects on trade policy issues. In 2007, Mr. Lang joined the ICT analysis section of UNCTAD where he contributes to the *Information Economy Report*, UNCTAD's annual publication on *Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Development*. In addition, he contributes to various technical assistance activities, in particular with regards to the statistical measurement of ICTs in developing countries.

Bernard Njonga, ADCIC, Cameroun

A trained agricultural engineer, Bernard Njonga became involved at an early stage in his career in the provision of technical support to farmer organisations, before becoming Secretary-General of the NGO SAILD and, in 1988, director of the monthly magazine "La voix du paysan". Since 2004, Mr Njonga has been President of the *Association des Citoyens pour la Défense des Intérêts Collectifs (ACDIC)*. In addition, he is currently executive editor of "Éclat d'Afrique" magazine and spokesman for the *Coalition Souveraineté Alimentaire Cameroun (COSAC)*.

Julius Okello, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Nairobi

Julius Okello is a Lecturer and the Coordinator of Agribusiness Management Program in the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Nairobi, Kenya, and a World Bank consultant. His current research focuses on the role of ICT in linking smallholder farmers to high value domestic and international markets, food safety and risk, sustainable management of natural resources. His latest publications include "From circle of poison to circle of virtue: Pesticides, export standards and Kenya's green bean farmers", *Journal of Agricultural Economics (2010)*; "Control of invasive Liriomyza leaf miner species and compliance with international food safety standards by small scale snow pea farmers in Kenya", *Crop Protection (2010)*; "Using ICT to integrate smallholder farmers into agricultural value chains: The case of DrumNet project in Kenya" *International Journal of ICT Research and Development in Africa (2010)*. Dr. Okello is currently coordinating an IDRC funded Africa-wide project on effectiveness of ICT on promoting smallholder farmer commercialization and household food security. He also coordinates a project that is using Participatory Geographical Information System (P-GIS) to promote sustainable management of natural forests. He has in the past worked for various other international organizations including Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Oxfam (America), International Livestock Research Institute and International Food Policy Research Institute as a consultant.

Kevin Painting, ICT Senior Coordinator, CTA

Bachelor of Science (Honours) Genetics and Microbiology, University of London. Kevin has over 15 years experience in genetic resources conservation work, specialising in information systems and training, at IPGRI (now Bioversity International) and the Institute of Food Research (UK). Since joining CTA, he has been involved in ICT-related projects and portals development, including the CTA Observatory and ICT Update.

Pierre Traoré, Regional Manager, RESIMAO-OMA, Mali

Born on 4 October 1963 in Bamako, Mali, Mr Pierre Traoré is a management system engineer, who graduated in 1989 from the Kharkov Institute of Engineering and Economics. He began his career in February 1990 in the Finance, Accounts and IT Department of the Office of Agricultural Products (OPAM) in Mali. From 1990 to 1998, he was Head of the Research Department at the Cereals Market Information System. Since 1998 he has worked for the Agricultural Market Observatory, where he is currently Head of the Database, Analysis and Communications Department. In addition, Mr Traoré is Chairman of the Information and Communication Technology Group of the West-African Market Information Network (RESIMAO), as well as a director of the Ecobiz regional network on behalf of RESIMAO.