Expert Group Meeting: Innovative Finance for Sustainable Development

October 18-19, 2007
Conference Room 7, UN Headquarters, New York

Speaker Bios

October 18 — Session 1: Financing agricultural R&D — 10:30-12:30

- **Nienke Beintema, IFPRI**

Nienke Beintema is head of the Agricultural Science & Technology Indicators (ASTI) initiative, which involves collaborative alliances with a large number of national and regional R&D agencies, as well as international institutions. The ASTI initiative compiles, processes, and makes available internationally comparable data on institutional developments and investments in agricultural R&D worldwide, and analyzes and reports on these trends in the form of occasional policy digests for research policy formulation and priority setting purposes.
Before joining IFPRI in 1995 as a research analyst, Nienke worked at ISNAR in The Hague. She is a citizen of the Netherlands and received a master's degree in economics from the University of Groningen.

- **Annik Dollacker, Bayer CropScience AG**

Annik Dollacker is responsible for International Affairs and Sustainability within Bayer CropScience. She has represented her company and the Crop Science Industry (CropLife International) at various intergovernmental negotiations such as the CSD, including WSSD in 2002. Since 2003 Annik has initiated and master-minded Bayer CropScience's Sustainability Strategy and coordinates the internal, multidisciplinary Sustainability team. Previously Annik conceptualized Bayer CropScience's Agrovida Project – a small-scale farmer capacity building activity running in Latin America. She has been involved in issues management and has worked in the food industry. Annik holds a master's degree in horticultural science from the Technical University of Munich, Germany. She has lived and worked in Belgium, Germany, the US, Australia, Brazil and Japan.
Bayer CropScience is one of the world's leading companies in the areas of crop protection, non-agricultural pest control, seeds and plant biotechnology. The company offers a range of technologies and services for agriculture and non-agricultural use. It is represented in over 120 countries with a workforce of ~ 17, 900.

- **William Masters, Purdue University**

William Masters is a Professor of Agricultural Economics and Associate Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University. He teaches and conducts research on economic policy for food and agriculture, focusing on Africa. He is the co-editor of *Agricultural Economics*, the journal of the International Association of Agricultural Economists, and author or co-author of many professional journal articles as well as a new undergraduate textbook, *Economics of Agricultural Development: Food Systems and Resource Use*. His research on agricultural innovation in Africa has led him to develop a novel system of prize rewards, by which innovators could be paid in proportion to the measured social gains from adoption new technologies; this initiative is documented at www.agecon.purdue.edu/prizes. Masters attended Deep Springs College (1979-81) and holds a bachelor's degree from Yale University (1984) and a PhD from Stanford University (1991).

October 18 **Session 2: Index-based insurance for agriculture** 14:00-17:15

- **Olivier Mahul, World Bank**

Olivier Mahul is a Program Manager, Insurance for the Poor, at the World Bank Financial and Private Sector Develpoment Vice Presidency. Since he joined the World Bank Group in 2003, he has been involved in developing catastrophe risk management solutions for the World Bank client countries, with a particular focus on agricultural insurance and index-based insurance. His latest assignments include the design and management of World Bank programs of technical assistance and lending in support of agric ultural insurance programs in Mongolia, India, China, Kazakhstan, Tanzania, Bangladesh, etc. as well as catastrophe insurance programs in South America, the Caribbean Islands, and the Pacific Islands He was recently involved in the implementation of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility, which provides parametric insurance to Caribbean Governments. Previously, Olivier served as senior research economist in charge of risk management in the French Ministry of Agriculture. He was also visiting research fellow at University of California at Berkeley and Wharton School. Olivier holds a PhD in economics of risk and insurance from University of Toulouse. Olivier won several awards, including the Robert C. Witt Research Award of the *Journal of Risk and Insurance*, and the Best Article Award of the *European Review of Agricultural Economics*.

- **Jerry R. Skees, University of Kentucky**

Jerry R. Skees is the H. B. Price Professor of agricultural policy and risk at the University of Kentucky. Skees has had a unique career that blends experience in academia, government, and private sector firms. Skees has worked in over ten emerging or developing economies. Recent and ongoing work include a World Bank project for developing a new livestock insurance product in Mongolia; a USAID project to use weather index insurance to hedge portfolio risk for microfinance entities in Peru; and an Inter American Development Bank project to use index-insurance to hedge irrigation risk and facilitate water markets in the Rio Mayo of Mexico. Skees has served as director of research with the Commission for the Improvement of the Federal Crop Insurance program, as a visiting scholar with the Economic Research Service of USDA, and has served time on a special USDA task force that examined disaster assistance. Skees was the primary architect outside the Federal government in designing and rating the unique USDA Group Risk Plan insurance. He is co-author of the award-winning book "Sacred Cow and Hot Potatoes: Agrarian Myths in Agricultural Policy." Skees has also won several outstanding teaching awards and was recently award the T.P. Cooper award for outstanding research in the College of Agriculture.

- **Joanna Syroka, WFP/World Bank**

Joanna Syroka is a consultant to the World Bank's Commodity Risk Management Group in Washington DC helping to develop weather and commodity risk management projects for commercial entities and governments in the developing world. Joanna is also a consultant to the UN World Food Programme in Rome, working with the Business Planning Unit, providing quantitative support to the WFP's internal Working Capital Facility for emergency humanitarian response.

Prior to joining the World Bank in 2004, she worked as an analyst for Centrica Plc, one of the UK's largest utility companies, responsible for developing quantitative weather and gas risk management strategies for Centrica's trading and hedging operations.

Joanna holds a PhD in Atmospheric Physics from Imperial College, London.

- **Christina Ulardic, Swiss Re, Switzerland**

Christina Ulardic works for Swiss Reinsurance Company on the development of weather risk transfer solutions in emerging markets. She leads origination efforts with main focus on multilateral institutions, public sector entities and financial service companies.

Swiss Re is a leading player in the worldwide weather risk markets typically used to cover risks of northern hemisphere energy sector players. Broadening the scope of this technology, Swiss Re pioneers its transfer to emerging markets such as Asia and Africa.

Christina received her Master of Science, Geology from the University of Freiburg, Germany and Basel, Switzerland. Before joining Swiss Re she worked for the Geological Survey in Chile, the climate change program of the United Nations Institute of Training and Research in Geneva and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment in Berlin. In 2004 she obtained a Master of Public Administration at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA.

- **Hemanth Valvekar, BASIX, India**

Hemanth Valvekar is the Associate Vice President of BASIX, a new generation rural livelihood promotion institution in India. Apart from being involved in urban micro finance project initiation, Hemanth oversees the Intermon Oxfam project on promotion of community based MFIs in the Marathwada region of the state of Maharashtra. Prior to joining BASIX in 1998, he worked with the Family Planning Association of India and the Grama Abhyudaya Mandali (a leading NGO in the state of Andhra Pradesh, India).
Hemanth holds a masters degree from Osmania University, Hyderabad.

October 19 **Session 3: Micro health insurance in Africa** 10:00-12:45

- **Agnes Chakonta, Madison Insurance, Zambia**

Mrs Agnes Chakonta was born in Zambia, Africa on 15 June 1970. Agnes obtained Bachelor of Arts degree in 1993. She completed her ACII in 2003 and is currently working as Deputy General Manager of Madison Insurance Company Zambia Limited. She has worked for Madison Insurance Company for 12 years. Agnes Chakonta is a Christian, married and has three children aged, eight, four and two. Her hobbies include reading, listening to music and visiting friends.

- **Gerry Noble, MicroCare, Uganda**

Gerry Noble is an Irish physician with ten years experience in health management and systems development in Uganda. Seven years ago he founded Microcare, as a not for profit providing low-income groups with access to quality affordable healthcare. Microcare grew into a licensed insurance company servicing a wide range of corporate and informal sector clients and has become Uganda's largest health insurer and the countries fastest growing insurance company. Microcare is now preparing to expand regionally.
Microcare integrates on site client identity verification and real-time claims processing with centralized insurance management. This is achieved by networking a central Oracle database with computerised clinic check-in terminals and client Smart Cards. Recently Microcare incorporated biometric (fingerprint) identity verification and GSM phone (GPRS) data transfer into its system. This system prevents fraud, contains treatment costs, expedites payments to service providers and enables monitoring of health care quality.

- **Rupalee Ruchismita, Institute of Financial Management and Research, India**

Rupalee Ruchismita is the Head of the Centre for Insurance and Risk Management at IFMR; a technical group which provides micro insurance expertise to the sector. The Centre works in collaboration with Community Based Organisations, Insurers, Reinsurers, and International expert groups at FAO, World Bank and ILO in this endeavour to provide safety nets for the under served.
As a graduate of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, she has worked with the Social Initiatives Group (SIG), a grant and research making group within ICICI Bank.
Her work has been in the space of Financial Inclusion. She has also been involved in developing Catalytic Infrastructure and engaging in Policy Advocacy in the micro finance space to ensure sustainable development of the microfinance sector.

- **Randall Dodd, International Monetary Fund**

Mr. Randall Dodd is technical assistance advisor at the Monetary and Capital Markets Department of the IMF. Prior to that Mr. Dodd was the director of the Financial Policy Forum, a nonprofit research institute that studies financial markets, the regulation of financia l markets and their impact on the economy. Mr. Dodd also worked for U.S. Congress as a senior economist for the Joint Economic Committee and the Democratic Study Group, and as legislative director for a member of the House Banking Committee. He holds a PhD in economics from Columbia University.

- **Isaura A. Guzmán L., Fitch Ratings, Mexico**

Isaura Guzman started working at FitchRatings Mexico in 2002 in the Public Finance Group. Since 2004 she has been an Associate Director. During this time Ms. Guzman has made Committee Presentations to assess issuer ratings for Mexican States, Municipalities and Public Decentralized Bodies, as well as specific financing ratings for bank loans and debt issuances launched by Mexican Subnationals. Ms. Guzman has made cooperated closely with Finance Secretaries and Municipal Treasurers in Mexico in order to assess these credit ratings. Additionally, Ms. Guzman has participated in Rating Committees on credit ratings for other Latin American Subnational entities in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Colombia. She received a BA and a Master Degree in Economics from Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon in Mexico and took a course at University College Dublin, in Ireland. She has been a Professor at the School of Economics at University of Nuevo Leon and Researcher at the Center of Economic Research of the same University.

- **Thiru Vikram Kapur, Tamil Nadu Urban Infrastructure Financial Services Ltd., India**

Vikram Kapur is an officer of the Indian Administrative Service, borne on the Tamil Nadu State cadre. A graduate in Physics, he has been in public service since 1988. He has worked in the State of Tamil Nadu in various capacities, including that of Deputy Commissioner, Chennai Municipal Corporation where he handled subjects ranging from Education to Revenue and Finance. Prior to the present assignment as Managing Director and Chief Executive Office, Tamil Nadu Urban Infrastructure Financial Services Limited (asset management company for Tamil Nadu Urban Development Fund), Mr. Kapur was on deputation with the Government of India, after which he spent a year at the prestigious Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore undergoing a post graduate course on Public Policy and Management. Mr. Kapur’s interests are varied and, besides being an avid reader, he is keen sportsperson, and has been active in dramatics and elocution. He is widely traveled and has visited several countries. He is deeply interested in the field of infrastructure finance and committed to public sector reforms.

- **Jason Ngobeni, City Treasurer, City of Johannesburg, South Africa**

Jason was born, raised and schooled in Bushbuckridge, a village located in the Limpopo Province. Thereafter he joined the University of Venda where he completed a diploma in State Finance and a B.Com degree. He then pursued further studies with the University of Pretoria, obtaining a B.Com Hons and an MBA degree. He was instrumental in the issuance of the first Municipal Bond to be issued by a South African Local Authority. To date the City of Johannesburg has issued a variety of listed debt instruments which includes both institutional and retail municipal bonds.

He worked for various institutions, mainly in the fields of Finance, Consulting, Credit, Financial Risk, and Treasury Management. He currently holds the position of Executive Director: Economic Development