

## 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.



### **Peter Kirimi**

#### **Financial Inclusion manager at 2SCALE**

Peter is an expert in Agribusiness management and Agri-finance. He has over 21 years of experience in public and private sectors in coordinating agri-business 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



### Tchegoun Koba

#### **SNV Global Technical Advisor Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship**

With over 15 years of experience in designing and implementing of youth employment programme and policies in Africa. He has an expertise in a range of youth development approaches in fragile states, social cohesion, labor migration, decent jobs for youth, active labor market programme, TVET and skills development.

Prior to joining SNV, Tchegoun have worked with Save the Children international as Regional Youth Advisor in Africa and have worked at global and regional level with a broad range of multilateral organisations in UN system respectively for UNDP - UNV, ILO (International Labour Organization), UNU at UN HQ New York. He also served as researcher for Think-Tanks, Academia, CSOs, and as leader in many youth led organizations boards across Africa and globally.



### **Thomas Tichar**

#### **Youth and Gender Advisor in Food Systems at WUR**

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.

## Vince Mountage Diop

### Founder of BelCash

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.