

SANKOFA

BATO MALAMU SANKOFA WATA-WATA

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EDITORIAL

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Dream of the Africa we want. Ensure the Africa we dream of comes to life... The women and men of the African Union live our pan-African dream, and strive to make it a reality and visible every day. The African Union is made up of around 2,000 people from 55 countries... 55 countries, no less!

At the African Union, diversity is far from being a simple word. It's a way of living and working. It is also an organizational model. With some twenty departments and directorates, a dozen continental institutions and more than twenty technical and specialized agencies, our Union is undoubtedly the pan-African organization with the largest physical presence on our continent. However, beyond this physical presence, it is primarily the strength and inspiration from these women and men that make the difference in this continent.

Our Union has just turned 50, and is the 2nd oldest intergovernmental organization in the world, after the United Nations. She has reached the age of reason. And she becomes more mature with time.

The current reform is a unique opportunity that no one in our organization wants to miss. Young and old, women and men, everyone wants to leave a legacy. This shows how passionate we are all about this ongoing change.

This edition, published at the end of the year, marks the end of an exceptional year in our organization. The year 2017 got off to a great start: the election of a new management team, the adoption of the Roadmap for the reforms needed and essential for further maturity, the adoption of the EU funding model by its Member States ... The list goes on, but none of this would have been possible without the women and men of the Union, officials who have decided to dedicate their intelligence, their courage, their career and their whole life to a single passion: witness the birth and growth of the Africa we want.

We hope you will enjoy reading this edition, and feel free to share with us your successes and challenges ... for the next one!

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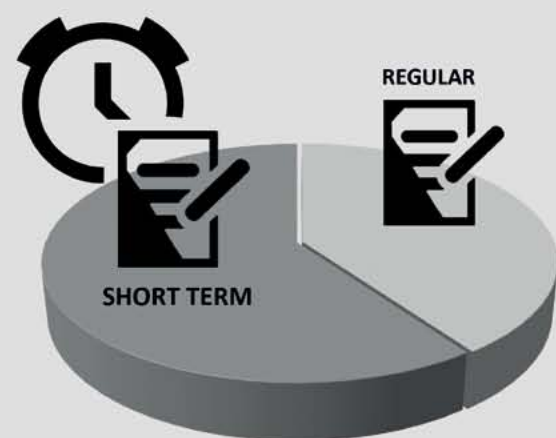
Translation:
Daniel Afewerk

Despite the efforts and progress made,
women still represent only 35%
of the African Union staff



Compared to 2014, the
ratio of women in the
AU staff
increased by 2%
in 2017

Compared to 2014, the
number of women in
professional
category
increased from 149 to 231
in 2017

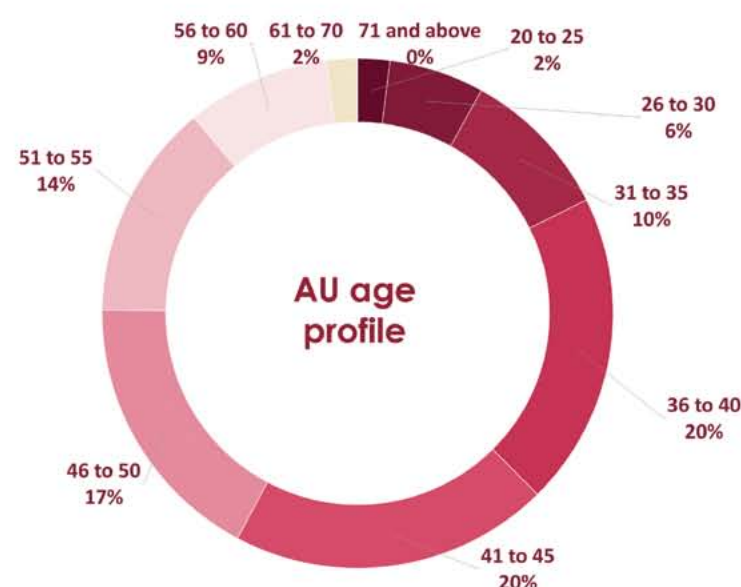


59.8%
of African Union's Staff members
are on short-term contract

The employees' average age
at the African Union is
43.76
years in 2017

AU employees under
the age of 35
account for only
17.66%

Compared to 2014, the
average age of AU staff
increased by 1.02
in 2017



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DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON
H.E. Quartey Thomas Kwesi

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A life dedicated to gender, equality, development, peace and human rights

Ms. Lehau Victoria Maloka

Lehau Victoria Maloka is a human rights lawyer by training, a policy and advocacy specialist and a conflict resolution and peacebuilding practitioner, with extensive regional and international experience in constitutional practice, democracy, gender, governance, human rights, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. She joined the African Union Commission in 2015, following an illustrious career in different sectors including civil society, civil service, national human rights institution and United Nations.

“My mind and my knowledge of myself is formed by the victories that are the jewels in our African crown, the victories we earned from Isandlwana to Khartoum, as Ethiopians and as Ashanti of Ghana, as Berbers of the desert”.

Thabo Mbeki, I am an African speech

Victoria is a descendant of the great South African warrior queen, Lehau, whose name she carries and whose mission for gender equality, development, peace and human rights for all, she holds dear. When the apartheid government of South Africa sought to dispossess her community of its birthright to land, warrior queen Lehau devised a plan and instead, bought the land back from the colonial masters. Lehau understood the centrality of land to economic development and social welfare, which was also one of the foundational pillars of the liberation movement in Africa. Lehau, was indeed a woman

well ahead of her time. Through her fierce determination and unwavering courage, the warrior queen secured an inheritance that many a generation after her, will enjoy. This is in the same spirit of Africa’s Agenda 2063, which is built on the sacrifices of today, but whose real benefits are to be enjoyed by the generations of tomorrow.

Lehau’s story symbolises the hidden treasures of many mighty African women of valor, who fought against the shackles of apartheid and colonialism to birth the Africa we have today. Victoria’s pan-Africanist path, therefore, is chiseled and formed by the deep desire to continue the journey of her foremothers, so she can bequeath to the next generation of pan-Africanists the Africa we all want that is prosperous, integrated, peaceful, developed, democratic and which respects the human rights of her people.

Victoria is a daughter of the soil whose trees are nourished by the blood of fallen heroes such as Solomon Mahlangu and Danny Bokaba. She eats of the fruits of freedom planted by heroines like Lilian Ngoyi and Sophia De Bruyn. She follows the footsteps and walks the same path of human rights defenders and peacebuilders before her to protect the rights of women to equality and empowerment, to advocate for the inclusion and participation of all AU citizens in the affairs of the Union, to promote peace, unity and development in her beloved Africa. Her personal values of love for humanity, inclusivity, tolerance and respect for diversity, equality, justice and human rights, echo the very same values of the AU and motivate her to push forth and voyage, with Africa, forever. ●

Ms. Lehau Victoria Maloka is currently Head of Division within the Women, Gender and Development Directorate



Innovations and inventions as the key drivers of Africa’s inner-generated wealth

Mr. Meshack Kinyua

Meshack Kinyua is a young specialist in space science and technologies. He is supporting the implementation of the African Outer Space Flagship Programme of Agenda 2063, which aims at positioning the continent as a responsible user and beneficiary of space services and resources. He started off in the Commission as a Youth Volunteer with a task to reinforce the space programme in 2014. The concerted efforts of different stakeholders in the space sector has seen the adoption of the African Space Policy and Strategy by the AU Heads of State and Government in their 26th Ordinary session of January 2016 in Addis Ababa. The work of defining an operational Outer Space Programme is the current priority. The ambitious programme targets to derive socio-economic benefits for the African citizenry, being premised on building space capabilities in (i) Earth Observation, (ii) Satellite Communication (iii) Navigation and Positioning, and (iv) Space Science and Exploration. The major goals are:

- To create a well-coordinated and integrated African space programme that is responsive to the social, economic, political and environmental needs of the continent, as well as being globally competitive;
- To develop a regulatory framework that supports an African space programme and ensures that Africa is a responsible and peaceful user of outer space.

Meshack has played a pivotal role in shaping the Global Monitoring of Environment and Security & Africa (GMES & Africa), which is a collaborative initiative between Africa and Europe in Earth Observation domain of space. GMES & Africa is in the implementation phase and Meshack serves as the Training Officer with a duty to ensure that implementing institutions have acquired substantive human, technical and infrastructural capacities in acquisition and processing of EO data to derive useful products in order to better inform decisions in environmental management.

Mr. Meshack Kinyua is currently Space Applications Training Officer within the Human Resources, Science and Technology Department

Meshack has been practicing in Earth Observations and their applications into Disaster management, Environmental Management, etc. for the last five years. He is an alumnus of the coveted Lindau Nobel Laureate Programme, having participated in the 66th meeting dedicated to Physics.

“My passion is to see a rekindled Africa that is spawning on innovations and inventions as the key drivers of inner-generated wealth.”

Meshack says “My passion is to see a rekindled Africa that is spawning on innovations and inventions as the key drivers of inner-generated wealth. Being typical end users of ready-made technologies does not benefit the continent in any way. We must strengthen our education systems to align our skills to the future needs, forward thinking is the way to go; anticipating future market needs and meeting them now. I echo President Kwame Nkrumah: It is within the possibility of science and technology to make even the Sahara bloom into a vast field with verdant vegetation for agricultural and industrial development. I look forward to see Africa becoming the next frontier in the Global Space Industry and I believe the African Outer Space Flagship programme is well timed for this purpose.”

“Besides work I value family. It provides the best anchorage and support in times of need and abundance. I aspire to be the best father to my kids”, he concludes. ●



A fighter with a happy mood

Mrs. Agathe Nanga

Agathe Nanga strives to serve her community, her country and her continent. In her opinion, working within the African Union is not the only way to achieve this. A few years back, she has initiated community activities in her country, Burkina Faso. She focuses her actions on women and children to reduce poverty and unemployment. You could better understand this vocation if you knew a bit about her personality and her story.

Agathe is a fighter with a happy mood. She probably developed this character among her 11 siblings. She was the 7th child and 1st daughter of her parents. She had to learn early on to be assertive with her brothers, and was quite a tomboy for some time. Due to that, she became a tomboy for some time.

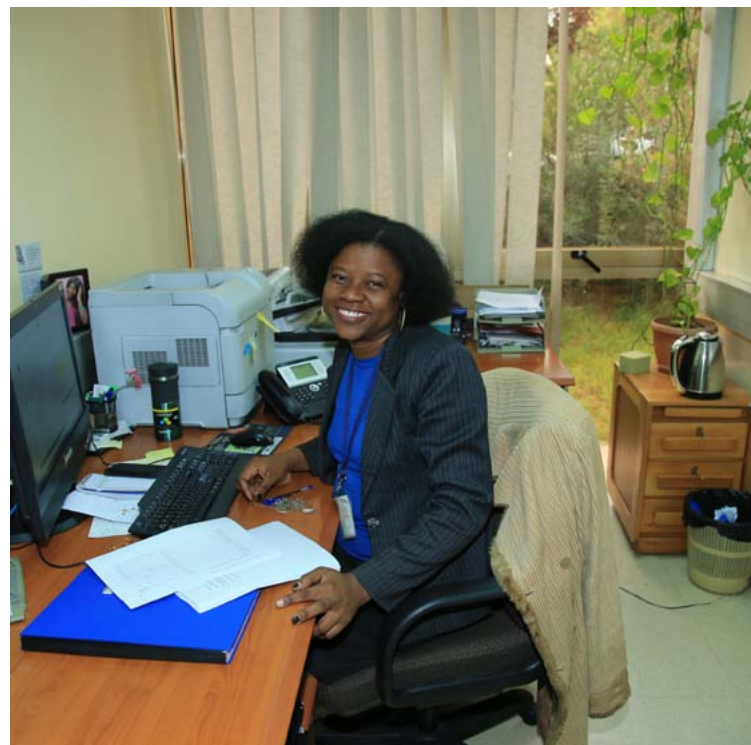
Agathe values respect and love for others, regardless of their age, origin or social status. Her father, a former paramilitary, raised her to be energetic and on the go yet generous, whereas her sweet mother taught her to be generous.

She knew being part of this institution would help her make a contribution in improving the lives of her fellow citizens.

Those circumstances probably led Agathe to dream about working at the Organization of the African Union she had heard about at school. She knew being part of this institution would help her make a contribution in improving the lives of her fellow citizens.

She then studied in the field of organizations in an international context, and obtained her Master's degree at the University Amiens Picardie Jules Verne. She subsequently held the position of executive assistant, customer advisor, cash point manager and finally head of customer service within a multicultural banking group.

On July 7th 2013, the African Union hired Agathe. "Working for the African Union is an excellent opportunity for me to know more about the multicultural environment and the international civil service, and to help build our dear Africa," she concludes. ●



Mrs. Agathe Nanga is currently Bilingual Secretary within the Programming, Budgeting, Finance and Accounting Directorate



Technology to promote good governance, democratic principles and the rule of law and respect for human rights

Mr. Thivhu Netshivhale

Thivhu Netshivhale moved to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from Pretoria, South Africa. He studied ICT and proceeded to work for various media companies; producing professional marketing material both digital and printing. Thivhu recently worked at Dreamworld Promotions in Cape Town, as an IT and Media specialist. In 2015 he worked on a program with Fredskorpset (FK Norway) at KeaMed College in Addis Ababa.

The move to Addis Ababa to serve at the African Governance Architecture (AGA) secretariat, as a Digital Communication Expert, was a huge step and has had profound impact to Thivhu on a personal and professional level. Having moved from the private sector to an international organization with its own culture, standards and norms indeed demands one's best performance and creativity in the field. Over the past few months he has been working with the AGA secretariat team and has managed to boost the online media presence including social media branding of the Architecture and its platforms.

One of the big initiatives so far has been the Regional Youth Consultation that has sought to promote young people's meaningful participation in electoral processes in Africa. As a result he has seen the huge interest of young people in almost all government spheres and one could only conclude that young people have the capacity to lead, they only need to be given a platform and if not given to them, they will take it.

The challenges of moving away from one's home country can be countless with regards to the lifestyle and familiarity of surroundings. Despite this, Thivhu has tried not to compare what he was used to in SA in contrast to what his new country has to offer. Often, success lies in some unfamiliar places but

we often tend to disregard this because we invest so much on the negative aspect of things.

Thivhu was born into a large family in Venda, South Africa and his father was a headman chief and Thivhu has more than 20 siblings.

"Often, success lies in some unfamiliar places but we often tend to disregard this because we invest so much on the negative aspect of things."

Thivhu is very passionate about music. In his free time he play drums. His father was a traditional musician and he somehow impacted the love of music to most of the siblings, as a results one of his brothers is a full time music lecturer and afro-jazz recording artist.

Grateful for an amazing group of friends, Thivhu likes spending time with his colleagues and friends in his new country Ethiopia. They often take trips to the country side to explore the beautiful land that is Ethiopia. ●

Mr. Thivhu Netshivhale is currently Digital Assistant within the Political Affairs Department



Ensuring Africa's prosperity through infrastructure and energy resources

Mr. Cheikh Bedda

Native of Mauritania, Mr. Cheikh Bedda is the Director of Infrastructure and Energy Department since October 2016 bringing to the position over 23 years' experience in the infrastructure and energy sectors. As engineer, Mr. Cheikh Bedda has headed major portfolios, worked on a wide range of high value, innovative and complex infrastructure and energy projects and has been involved in some of the most high profile infrastructure deals in West Africa, especially in Mali, Mauritania and Senegal.

A day at the office can mean many things to Mr. Cheikh Bedda, Director for Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission. It could mean spending the whole day in meetings defending a project, finding funding for key projects, setting strategy for the short term and the long haul, meeting staff and management, all the while ensuring budget and project implementation.

"There is not a day at work where you don't learn something new."

"There is not a day at work where you don't learn something new," says Mr. Bedda. "And feel part of the making of Africa's development story, envisioned by Africa Union's Agenda 2063."

Agenda 2063's infrastructure goals for Africa include well-developed ICT and digital economies as well as world-class transport infrastructures such as high-speed railway networks and roads, supported by efficient sea and air transport.

Mr. Bedda feels very privileged to have the opportunity to be managing such important sectors at the African Union Commission – Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism. Although he has only spent a year at the African Union Commission, Mr. Bedda's ties with the sectors are long-standing.

Prior to joining the African Union Commission, Mr. Bedda served as the General Director of the Mauritanian Dairy Company and prior to that as the General Director of the Energy Management Company for the Manantali and Vice-President of the West African Power Pool in Mali during which time he implemented bold policy reforms in the energy sector and pursued innovative programmes.

His earlier career saw him move progressively into key senior positions including being the General Director at the Directorate for Refined Hydrocarbon Products of the Mauritanian Ministry of Petroleum, Energy and Mines where he was personally involved in deregulating fuel prices which included price modulation, whereby government will ensure initial slow price increases by regulating the components of fuel price, such as taxes, freight, margins, transport, storage and bridging. A phased approach to reforms, according to Mr. Bedda, permits both households and enterprises time to adjust and permits the country time to build credibility by showing that subsidy savings are being put to good use.

"I have personally travelled the uneven road in Mauritania, spent endless hours at airports waiting for connecting flights from West Africa to Northern Africa, and drove into numerous potholes in the continent," states Mr. Bedda. These experiences affirm a shared reality: Infrastructure is critical to Africa's growth.

"Infrastructure shapes our lives. Transport links get us where we need to be, energy systems power our homes and businesses, digital networks allow us to communicate,

and tourism delivers growth and improved livelihoods. Infrastructure is vital to improving our quality of life and integral to the establishment of the Africa We Want," Mr. Bedda opines.

"What I find exciting about my work is the potential for making a difference in the lives of ordinary African citizens," he says.

The Department of Infrastructure and Energy is currently pursuing a number of regional and continental infrastructure development projects through our Flagship projects and the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), which we believe will provide significant opportunities to meet our development objectives and a platform for African countries, both individually and collectively, to engage with

investors and development partners through a multi- sector programme covering four sectors (Transport, Energy, Trans-boundary water and Telecommunications/ICT).

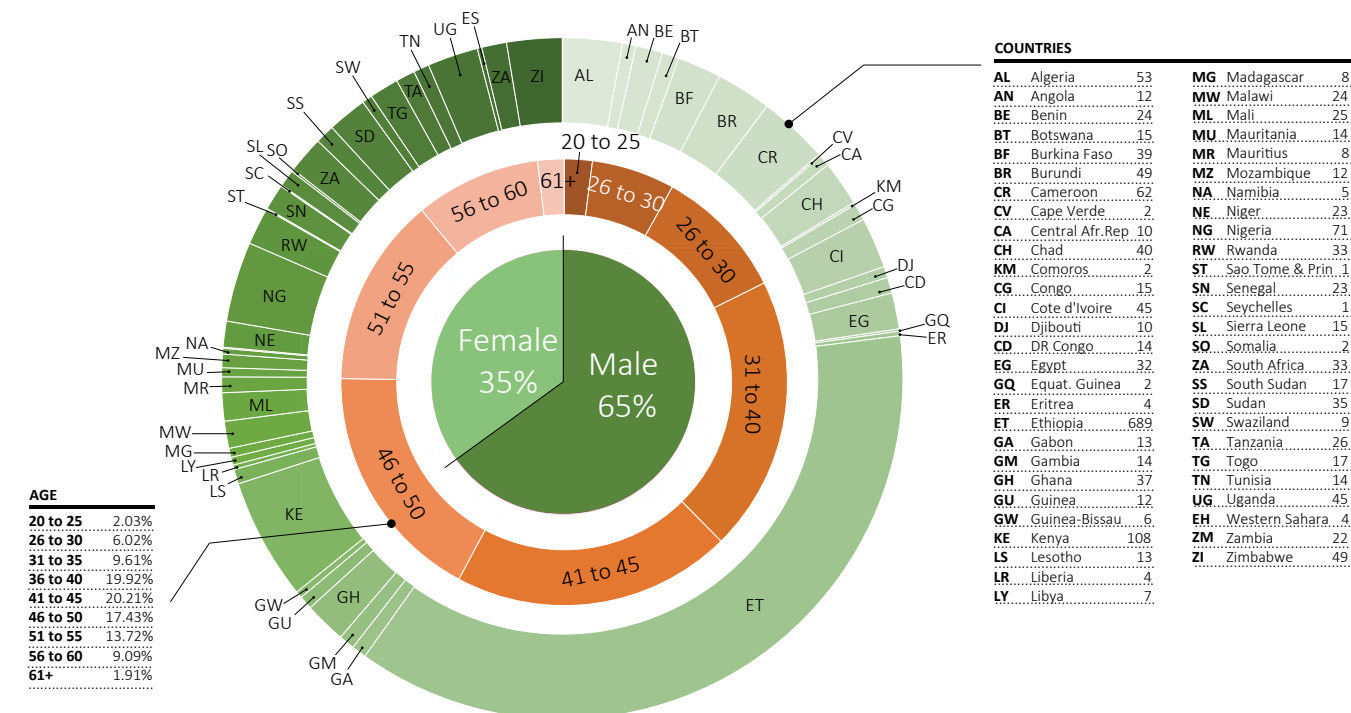
We are prepared for the toughest of challenges. Our boundless missions are out there as long as the people in Africa seek a more comfortable and better life.

Feeling that sort of responsibility makes huge demands in terms of time, energy and passion. Fortunately, Mr. Cheikh Bedda has enough energy and passion – and enough grit – to go around. Mr. Bedda believes that the teamwork, commitment and knowledge of his colleagues, along with the support of all partners, will help realize the vision of the "Africa We Want By 2063". ●

Mr. Cheikh Bedda is currently Director within the Infrastructure and Energy Department



AU staff profile





Serving AU family and her own children with the same endeavour

Mrs. Aster Abebe

Aster Abebe is the proud mother of four children and the happy grandmother of eleven grandchildren. “*My children are my priority, and my dream has always been to see them succeed,*” she says with conviction. This vision underlied without any doubt the warm and close relationships she has built with her children, and it has influenced the children’s way of life as well. For example, his youngest son will receive her medical degree in China by next June.

It has not always been easy for Aster to give priority to the well-being and education of her children. She was often faced with hard choices and was regularly forced into making concessions.

Working hard not to please her supervisors, but to move things forward and deliver good results.

Indeed, Aster is now Administrative Assistant in the Human Resources Management Division of the African Union Commission. She could have gone a long way in her career and earned a very comfortable living, but she decided to remain at the same level and live according to the principles she has set for herself. On several occasions, Aster has had the opportunity to hold higher positions, with higher salaries. “*But the missions and the responsibilities will not have allowed me to be there for my children. With my current position, I had the opportunity to provide for their needs, while having the time to take care of them,*” she says.

Mrs. Aster Abebe is currently Administrative Assistant within the Administration and Human Resources Management Directorate

Aster is not only a dedicated mother, she is also an accomplished employee. “*I appreciate a job well done,*” she repeatedly said. She works hard not to please her supervisors, but to move things forward and deliver good results. She is most happy when the new recruits of the African Union are satisfied with the manner in which their contracts are issued, or when the employees are satisfied with the management of their leave...

Her professionalism is also reflected in her mindfulness and punctuality. Every morning at exactly eight o’clock, Aster is at her desk, and accomplishes within the deadlines all tasks she has promised to deliver. She explains that she acquired these habits with the first job she landed at the Embassy of Côte d’Ivoire in Ethiopia, when she was eighteen years old.

Moreover, thanks to her twenty years of experience in the African Union, Aster has become a living memory. Over time, she gained a better understanding and mastery of the inner workings of the organization. Sometimes, she points out inadequacies of certain procedures. Her vast experience has also taught her to be open-minded: she remains positive when things don’t go as planned. It is thanks to this conviction that she is today a member of the large family of the African Union. Indeed, she thought back then that choosing the Economic Commission for Africa over the Red Cross was a mistake. But now, twenty years later, she does not regret this “mistake” which opened her the doors of the African Union. ●



A well rounded man

Mr. Abraham Woldemariam

Abraham Woldemariam is a well rounded man. An aficionado of cooking and traveling, he chose to pursue studies in these fields; today, he holds both Foreign Cuisine and Tour Guide Professional certificates. He likes to express his interest for these passions at every opportunity: he will try, for example, to say a few words in the other person’s language in his conversations, or explain the etymology of “Africa”.

However, these hobbies did not prevent Abraham from pursuing studies in entirely different fields: he has a Master’s degree in Social Work and Community Development, and a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration. Abraham is particularly interested in community life. He thinks it is critical to treat all human beings well and to pay particular attention to human relations, even when they are complicated. “*If we protect our fauna and flora so as to preserve them, shouldn’t we care more about human beings which are superior to those?*”, he explains.

Abraham makes do with what he has, as he is convinced that happiness is found inside.

However, Abraham chose an unusual career in the context of his diplomas and passions. For the past eight years, he has been a Security Officer first at the European Union representation in Ethiopia, then in various embassies, and before joining the African Union, he was a Security Supervisor at the Embassy of the United States.

Mr. Abraham Woldemariam is currently a Security Agent within the African Union

Despite his work, studies and hobbies, Abraham always makes time for his family. After two years of marriage, he became the proud father of three boys. He explains this little math problem with a great deal of humor: “I am a strong man even if I am quite slim. As a matter of fact, we had twins after one year of marriage, and another son soon after.” Today, Abraham is part of the Twin Parents Club at the African Union. Although educating twins could be a real challenge, Abraham sees the situation as a blessing. This attitude clearly expresses his life philosophy. Abraham makes do with what he has, as he is convinced that happiness is found inside. ●





Promoting intra-African trade and transformation of production structures

Mrs. Meaza Tezera

I am the typical city girl born to a big family (12 to be precise), who had the privilege of getting education from what you could call a “good school” in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Growing up in a big family, among individuals with a number of common features such as hard work, determination, commitment, strength, success and most importantly compassion to others around them, had put a certain virtue in my head about how to lead my life. After my preparatory and University education, I graduated from AAUCC with a BA degree in Business Administration and Information system.

“Growing up in a big family, among individuals with a number of common features such as hard work, determination, commitment, strength, success and most importantly compassion to others around them, had put a certain virtue in my head about how to lead my life.”

Before completing my university study, I had the privilege of landing a job in our prestigious Ethiopian Airlines. Working there had laid the groundwork for my career ethics which I gained through trainings, responsibilities, working under pressure and interacting with international customers with very different backgrounds. Working while pursuing my studies at the University was challenging and difficult, but it paid off as I was forced to learn how to use my time as creatively and efficiently as possible. My efforts were rewarded by an Award.

Back then, I applied for an internship at the African Union, to expand my career in terms of field of work, knowledge, scope, salary and purpose. The internship was very challenging, yet rewarding. Learning the spirit of togetherness in a multicultural environment, interacting with men and women from different backgrounds and cultures became an exciting new episode.

After two years of hard work as an intern within the AU, I finally was a Communication Assistant (Partners Relationship) at the Trade and Industry department. This job also came with its own hardships, challenges and perks. The opportunity of working under the leadership of H.E Fatima H. Acyl (Former Commissioner of Trade and Industry) expanded my skill and built my confidence. For that I am truly grateful. The gesture and faith of the DTI team encourages me even more to do my best for the betterment of the department.

Working in DTI gave me the feeling that through my efforts, I was a force of growth and development for many African countries that benefit from its project through its work of expediting the process of the implementation of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) in Africa. This made perfect sense in that it was an essential part that needed to be played now more than ever.

Juggling both a new marriage, which brought happiness together with challenges, and the responsibilities at the AU, made me strong and determined - qualities that I’ve seen in my mother and sisters only so far. With the support and advices from my husband, these experiences further contributed to my growth as a person and a professional.

I tried my hardest to stay true to my work throughout the years, and got awarded as “Best Employee of the year” in my department for 2017.

Up to now, I have been learning a lot about the work achieved by the department and the AU at large, performing duties as per the values of the AU. I have been traveling, training, sharing experiences, passing on the AU standards and work ethics to new comers, working in teams, participating in cultural exchanges, and developing important skill sets.

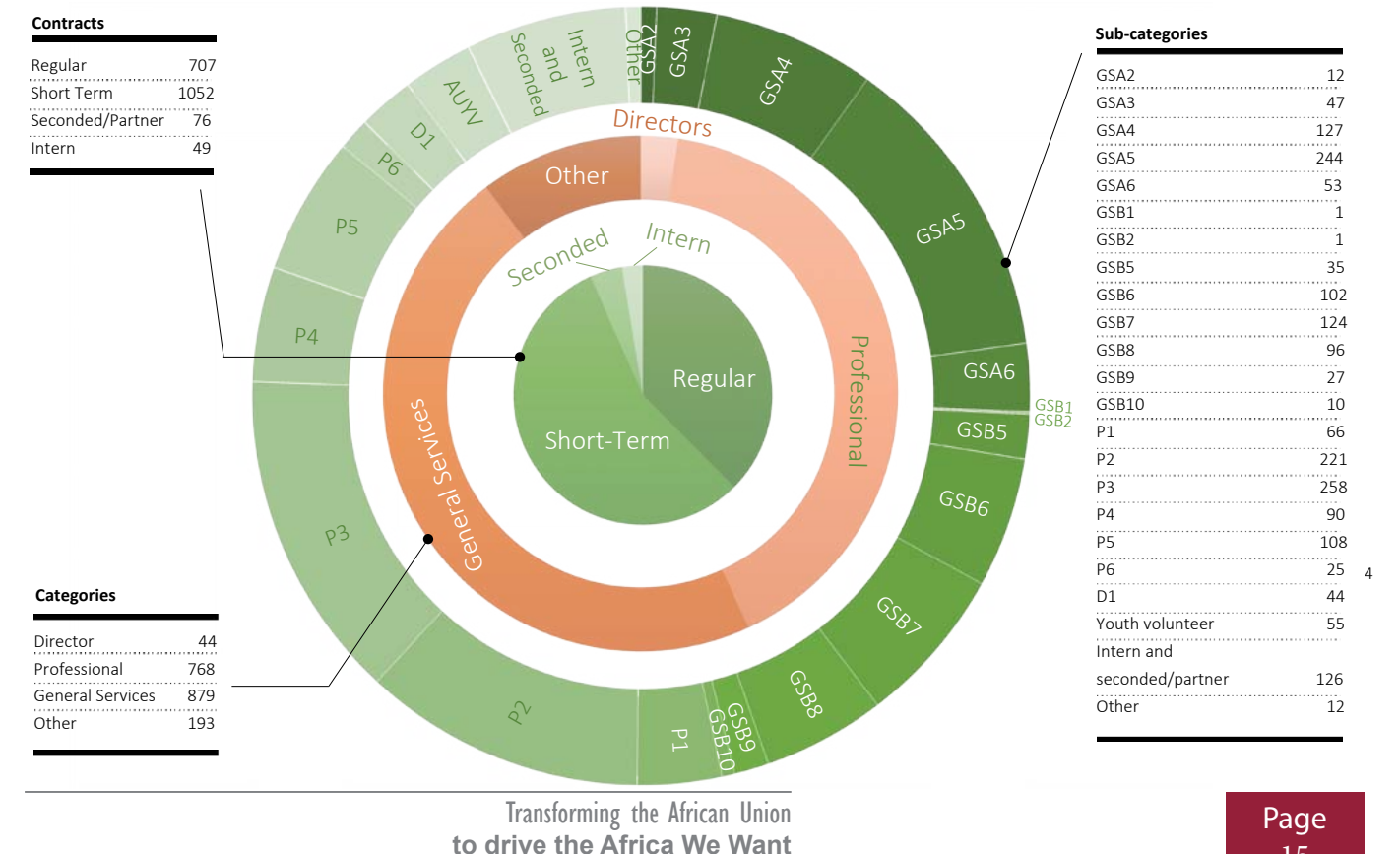
Mrs. Meaza Tezera is currently Communications Assistant within the Trade and Industry Department

Finally, I aim to achieve more with the AU where I can contribute more profoundly to the ever growth and development of our beautiful continent “Africa” as a whole.

I thank God first for where I am today. ●



AU contracts profile





Including people and ecosystems in the drylands in Africa's dynamic of growth

Dr. Paul Elvis Tangem

decentralised levels by different stakeholders implementing the Programme.

He is convinced that the GGWSSI has the potential of transforming the dry lands, especially the Sahel and Horn of Africa threatened by extreme land degradation and desertification that is leading to extreme poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, natural resources access and use conflicts, irregular migration, terrorism and others vices

“...there is an urgent need to sow the seeds of resilience in the dry lands by harnessing the opportunities the OBOR offer and putting in place systems to harness their potential ”.

His dream today is for the GGWSSI to become a programme for transformative projects and window of opportunity to pave the way for the emergence of desert economics in Africa and be recognised as one of the development programmes along the Road and Belt initiative (OBOR) in Africa. In fact, there is an urgent need to sow the seeds of resilience in the dry lands by harnessing the opportunities the OBOR offer and putting in place systems to harness their potential through renewable energies, pharmaceuticals, agricultural value chains, etc. In this regards, they are currently working at developing strategic partnerships with innovative institutions including Elion Resource Group in China, the leading company in desert economics and renewable energy to transform our dry lands, with the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), they just signed a Letter of Intent (LOI), and extending the Great Green Wall initiative to the Southern Africa Region. ●

Dr. Paul Elvis Tangem is the Coordinator of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI), a Pan African Programme aiming at empowering people living in Africa's drylands under the supervision of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission.

He is a Cameroonian with over 17 years professional experience in several developmental sectors including, Agriculture and Forestry Value chains development, Business and product development, Conservation, Climate change, Leadership and Entrepreneurship. His experience spans from Environmental Justice Foundation, London, and Research in the university of Edinburgh, UN FAO, TREE AID International and AUC –DREA. He is also behind the creation of well-known functional Social enterprises including the Organisation for Indigenous Initiative and Sustainability in Cameroon and Ghana, Association Indigo pour le Développement Durable (AIDI) in West Africa and others. He is also a Member of the Junior Chamber International where he is a Senator.

Elvis Paul holds a Bachelor's degree in Geographie-Amenagement from University of Dschang, Cameroon, MSc in Ecology and Management from Edinburgh University and EMBA and Ph.D. in Business Management from PGSM Paris and AIU in USA. He is married and father of 3 sons.

As coordinator of the GGWSSI Africa Special Hub hosted by the AUC Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, his role is to support the African Union Commission in facilitating and coordinating the implementation of the GGWSSI in the 21 Member countries and involved in the Initiative by reinforcing their capacities in the areas of resource mobilization, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation as well as Knowledge and experience sharing. In this regards, the Africa Special Hub, in collaboration with technical partners, provides the support needed at regional, national and local

Dr Paul Elvis Tangem is currently Coordinator of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) within the Rural Economy Department

What is the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI)?

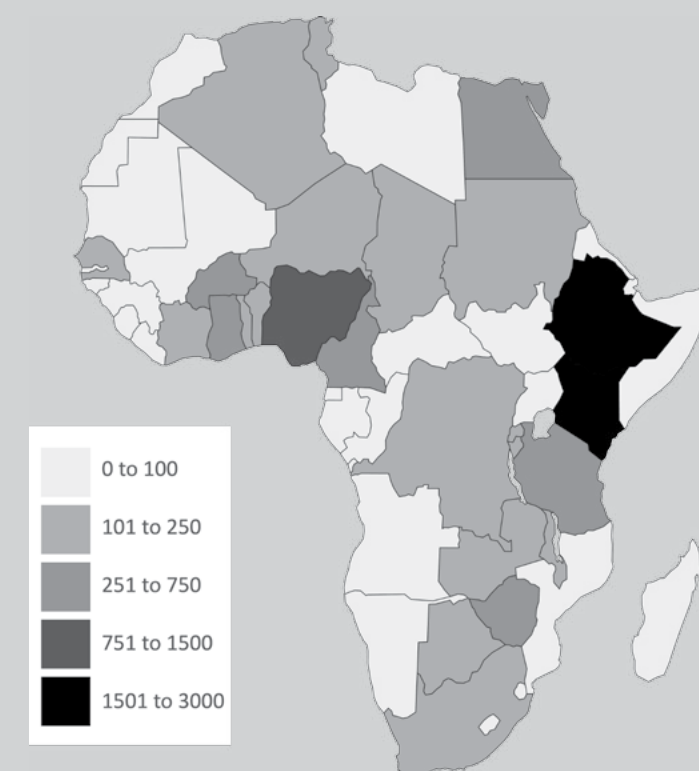
Many people keep thinking that the Initiative is about planting trees in the Circum-Sahara region. Yet the Programme goes beyond putting in place a line of trees from Dakar to Djibouti and positions itself as an integrated development programme with a threefold purpose: strengthening people's livelihoods in the drylands, improving the state and health of ecosystems and advocating the adoption of sustainable land and water management practices. In a nutshell, the GGWSSI helps set the pathway for the achievements of the seven aspirations

of Africa's Agenda 2063 in the drylands of Africa through the promotion of climate smart agriculture, land restoration, endogenous value chains, policy and advocacy support etc. The Great Green Wall Initiative ensures that, people and ecosystems in the drylands facing the challenges of Drought Land Degradation and Desertification and vulnerable to Climate change should not be left behind in the dynamic of inclusive growth based on sustainable development as outlined in Agenda 2063, aspiration 1.



Number of applications to AU mapping

Did you know that the applications from Kenya, Ethiopia and Nigeria are equal to those from the 52 remaining Member States?





Being a key player in the Socio-economic transformations of the 21st century

Ms. Jankey Kassama

My name is Jankey Kassama. I am from Gambia and currently working as an intern at the department of Economic Affairs of the African Union Commission. I recently graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Studies from Westminster International College of the London School of Commerce and a Graduate Diploma in Business Management from the Management Development Institute (MDI). I have worked in Gambia for more than two (2) years in financial and Customer Service sector at The Gambia Telecommunications Company Ltd (Gamtel).

With a 1st class honors in Business Studies my aspiration is to contribute to the national, regional and the continental effort that are intended to make Africa and African key players in the Socio-economic transformations of the 21st century. Working with the African Union in this short period of time has broaden my knowledge on issues within the continent. The African Union (AU) is the primary platform for all the political actors and members of the civil society organizations to be engaged in dialogue and issues that are critical to the continents development. As a staff of the Economic Directorate I have the unique opportunity to meet and network with influential policy makers in the economic development of the continent.

People I met during these meetings organized by my department are of different race, political orientation and nationalities. This diverse group of people have expanded my understanding of the diversity. It prepared me to perfectly shoulder any challenges that comes from interacting with people with diverse orientation.

The highlights of my work as an intern came during the meeting of the African Union (AU) 3rd Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration. The theme of the meeting was on Growth, Employment and Inequalities. It presented everything that I wanted to be part of. As an aspiring entrepreneur I wanted to address issue of unemployment within my country through various entrepreneurial ventures that were relevant

to my country. Furthermore, I have recently applied for a MSC program at the university of Manchester on poverty, inequality and development studies. With a Master's Degree in this field I will be able to work closely with my Government in addressing and overcoming issues regarding poverty, inequality and development. I was honored to be part of such an important meeting that really broaden my knowledge in addressing these developmental challenges.

During this important ministerial meeting I was assigned to manage the affairs of some of the delegations. I closely worked with them for a period of one week and I was given the opportunity to understand the various ways African Professionals and politicians are differentiated. The discussions were diverse and enriching as every delegation put forward issues that have impacts on national development

I have observed the ways the African development agenda is discussed and implemented. This will have a long-term implication for the future of the African continent. Among the key issues that were discussed is the implementation of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). This initiative will lay the foundation for a financially and commercially integrated continent.

The issues I have learnt and the people I have networked with will greatly help me in my future career.

I have seen how the leaders of the continent are discussing and promoting the economic future of the continent. As an individual who aspires to be involved in progressive policy formulation and implementation, the opportunity has exposed me to some very important and complex issues I will be handling. What was evident during the discussions is that clear and good oriented policies are essential for an African continent that is economically vibrant. This will ensure that African people are given the opportunities to have access to quality education and excellent medical care, nutritious food through agricultural growth and gainful employment. ●

Ms. Jankey Kassama is currently an intern within the Economic Affairs Department



A positive attitude in life

Mr. Tesfaye Bekele Hailu

Tesfaye Bekele Hailu is a huge fan of the Manchester United football club. He explains he likes the team's playing style, and thinks highly of the club's philosophy which keeps on striving to remain among the best over the years.

Tesfaye also works that way: he makes every effort to be among the best, and always strives for improvement. He relies on two elements to achieve such ambitious goals: a positive attitude to cope with the bumps in life and a determination to always do his best. Strengthened with these principles, he is convinced karma will do the rest.

Although the right attitude is very important to Tesfaye, he does not underestimate the factor of knowledge development.

Although the right attitude is very important to Tesfaye, he does not underestimate the factor of knowledge development. He studied to get a Computer Science Diploma and certificate, an Accounting Diploma, a TVET college Diploma, a Leadership and management Skill Development Certificate as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree in management. And he has every intention of learning more. Tesfaye is hungry for knowledge and plans to broaden what he already has.

Thanks to these strengths, Tesfaye was noticed by the African Union in 2008. Diversity is the element he likes the most in this environment: he sees the diverse cultures, various languages and different ways of thinking as a source of wealth. Tesfaye believes that he can learn a lot from these differences and that the AU environment allows him to excel.

Mr. Tesfaye Bekely Hailu is currently a store assistant within the African Union

Throughout the 9 years he spent at the AU, Tesfay has also appreciated the progress he has seen in terms of procedures. He admires particularly the workflow automation. "I know they have achieved a lot so far, but there is room for improvement in my humble opinion," he says shyly.

Although he tries every day to improve the way he works and broaden his knowledge, Tesfaye does not neglect his family. He enjoys spending time looking after his wife and two sons, aged three and nine months. "I hope I can convey to them this positive attitude and that desire to always do one's best," he says thoughtfully. ●





Striving for excellence to boost Africa's economy

Dr. Ligane Massamba Jacques Sène

"You have no household chores. Just devote yourself exclusively to your studies and keep making us proud," said seriously a man looking at a very young child, eyes unflinched. The child was Dr. Ligane Massamba Jacques Sène, who became the Economic and Research Policy Officer in the Department of Economic Affairs of the African Union Commission, and the man was his father. One could take these words as those of a responsible father who, considering the importance of devoting oneself to studies, exonerates one of his sons of domestic chores. But no, these words should rather be taken as those of a responsible father encouraging a child to fully invest in his studies and instilling in him the quest for excellence.

And perhaps the father was proved right later on, thus stripping away any ambiguity with respect to the father's approach. This quest for excellence that is inculcated at a very young age, empowered the child to become a brilliant school student with a fine record of distinctions and awards won from various school competitions throughout his childhood.

After his graduation as valedictorian of his graduating preparatory class in Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science at Gaston Berger University in Saint-Louis, Senegal, he opted for a year of study in Applied Sciences and Computer Science. Although computer science was the next hot thing during the late 2000s, he made this strategic choice only to immerse himself in new technologies and meet the technology requirements in order to pursue more effectively other horizons. Continually driven by a strong desire to broaden his knowledge, looking continually for new challenges and innovations, he succeeded the same year in passing the joint entrance examination – with maths as major – of the three prestigious African schools of Statistics, delivered by the Support Center for African Statistics Schools (CAPESA)

in France. After a successful completion of his studies as an Engineer specialized in statistics and economics, he passed with all honors the competitive examination for admission to the last year of the Magistère at the Center for Research and International Development (CERDI) in Clermont Ferrand (France), with a scholarship of excellence from the French cooperation.

However, the young man's eagerness to give his parents the reward of their sacrifices and make a rapid impact in the development field made him decline this new challenge. He decided to stay in the country and secured immediately a job at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) knowing that he has ample time to start later his doctoral studies. That is exactly what he did two years later at the University of Kiel in Germany. He completed his studies with due diligence and motivation and drafted his doctoral thesis in record time. It was at the IFPRI that he honed his talents as an economist and published his first article of what would be a long series on "The Harmonization of Budgetary Policies in Africa" which was the finalization of his earlier works at UNDP. In his early thirties, the young economist is passionate about Africa's development. He is the author of about thirty publications on this theme, including several articles in international journals. He continues to popularize his works in prestigious scientific conferences all over the world.

Although his doctoral research has focused on the evaluation and modeling of pro-poor growth strategies in Africa, Dr. Sène has several strings to his bow. This broad spectrum of economic and statistical knowledge allows him to contribute in more and varied ways to the reflections that aim to tackle the various challenges facing the continent, particularly within the Department of Economic Affairs of the African Union that he has joined just a year ago.

The young economist believes that a holistic approach is the most effective method to develop the continent and design the adequate growth model for Africa.

"We must question the quality of the growth observed since the beginning of the 2000s because in actual fact this growth did not lead to a substantial reduction in poverty and inequalities, let alone to job creation". It is in this logic that the Department of Economic Affairs has organized the 5th Congress of African Economists and produced the first edition of its report on the dynamics of African economies around the theme of "Growth, employment and inequalities" in order to come up with appropriate political recommendations. According to Dr. Sène, African economies must be transformed, but unfortunately, the structural transformation we are witnessing is going in the opposite direction of what is expected. People

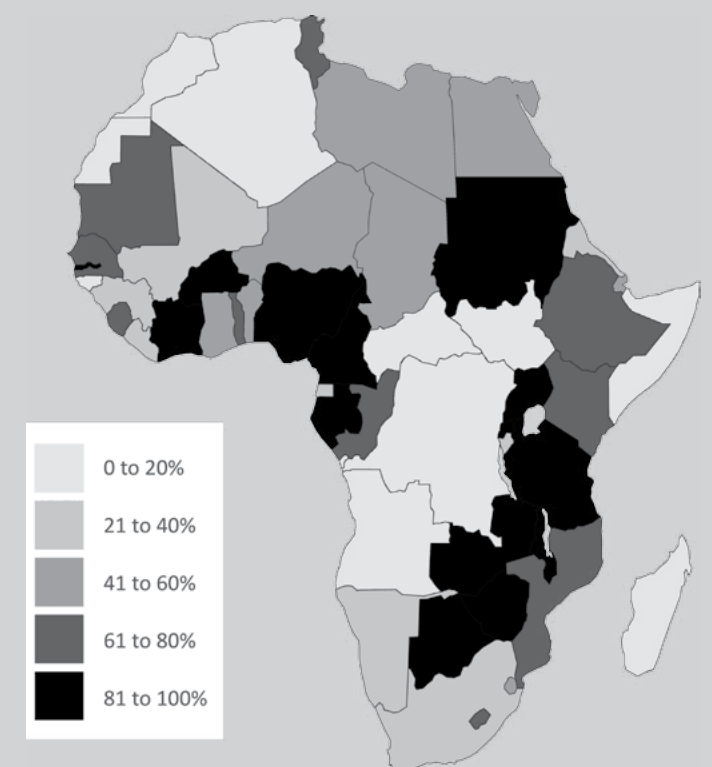
are leaving sectors with moderate productivity but with strong growth potential as agriculture to take low-paying jobs with low productivity, including informal trade in urban areas. Dr. Sène personally contributes in addressing this concerns through his research work within the Union but also through action research. In Mbour, a tourist town in Senegal, his home town, he has an ongoing project which aims to provide vehicles to some carters and carriers who leave their surrounding villages in order for them to increase their competitiveness and attractiveness in the sector within the region and bring about overall productivity gains. The abandonment of these rural activities should not be considered as a loss for the local economy. He is also working hard to set up large-scale projects to motivate some to stay in the agricultural sector to continue to feed the planet. ●

Dr. Ligane Massamba Jacques Sène is currently Economic Policy and Research Officer within the Economic Affairs Department



Utilization of regular employees quota

Did you know that as of September 30th 2017, Guinea Bissau, Morocco, Sao Tome & Principe and Somalia do not have any appointed regular staff within the African Union?





Fighting for a safe and peaceful continent

Ms. Maryann Wanjiru

MaryAnn Wanjiru Brown joined the African Union in June 2015 as a Situation Room Assistant in the Conflict Prevention and Early warning Division, Peace and Security Department. Being part of the AU family for the last two and a half years has been a blessing which she does not take for granted.

Working with the AU has given her immense exposure to continental and regional efforts and programs that deal with issues of conflict prevention and early warning across Africa; as a situation room Assistant she monitors potential and actual conflict situations across Africa on a 24/7, 365 days. The Situation Room is the one office that is never left unmanned at any time and serves as the eye and ears of the Department. Working in the Situation Room requires real commitment, as the job not only entails working night shifts but also sacrificing your weekends and holidays. She believes it is the most amazing and fulfilling job as it keeps her and her fellow Situation Room colleagues' eyes glued on Africa, even when the rest of the continent is asleep. One important lesson she has learned is that team work is the back bone of the division, as the staff of the Situation Room have to work closely with the Early Warning Analysts as well as members of staff of other Divisions and Departments to ensure that there is a smooth flow of information, and all relevant updates are produced in a timely fashion and disseminated to the various stakeholders. The information that they provide to their superiors serves as the basis for any decision-making related to peace and security on the continent, and they take their responsibility seriously.

She always strives to ensure that she gives the organization 110% as she strongly believes in hard work. The one word she always hopes that anyone who she associates with will use when asked to define her character is 'a hard worker'. She believes that it is not only about the various tasks that

one is assigned to perform but also the will to go the extra mile to ensure perfection in the given task. Professionalism and respect to all staff is the corner stone of her daily life at the AU. She lives by the principle that the difference between ordinary and extraordinary is the extra; so she tries doing ordinary things in an EXTRA ordinary way.

Doing ordinary things in an EXTRA ordinary way.

She wants to be an inspiration to all young people working at the AU, especially the African Union Youth Volunteers. Just as she was mentored into the organization, she would also want to mentor other young people that hard work and determination will always pay off in the end and reflect the ideology that no great person got to where they are through taking the easy road or shortcut. As a mother of a 4 years old daughter, she also have to be a role model to her and the Z generation at large. She is still work in progress in terms of her career and the moon is not the limit for her.

Some people may describe her as a workaholic but she is just a young lady who is ready to go the extra mile to contribute to a stable and prosperous Africa. It will always be an honour and privilege for her to serve the continent. ●

Ms. Maryann Wanjiru is currently Situation Room Assistant within the Peace and Security Department



Supporting social development through human-centred approach

Dr. Jane Marie Ong'olo

Dr. Jane Marie Ogola Ong'olo is a Development Specialist with cross functional skills in management of technical co-operation and development programmes in a variety of themes including governance and leadership, social protection, industrial relations, and health and development focusing on social and security impact of drugs, and transnational organized crimes.

She has training in Sociology, Gender Studies and Strategic Management. She joined the African Union Commission in 2010 after a long developmental track record spanning work with the British Council, The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) where she worked in senior management in gender, children rights, governance, and drug control.

Jane Marie is driven by principles of equity and social justice, having grown up in a community where girls' access to education was severely constrained. She is passionate about the inclusion agenda from where she draws inspiration to champion the rights of the marginalized and vulnerable groups in society, particularly women, children and the youth. Self-driven, and highly motivated, she says: *"I find joy in the work that I do, knowing that somehow it impacts on the lived reality of someone, if not many... The AUC Agenda 2063 clarion call of leaving no one behind truly embodies the work that I have stood for since childhood into the professional sphere".*

With rich experience in diverse sectors and themes, she seamlessly moves from grassroots to policy arena. She feels as comfortable in a drug using den with injecting drug users, giving hope to the lower of the lowest in society, to negotiating African common positions on the world drug problem in Vienna and New York. She has significantly contributed to raising the profile and image of African Union to a major

global player and partner in this regard. Indeed in her current position as the Programme Manager for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, she has galvanized political good will continentally, international cooperation and technical support towards the development and implementation of a balanced and integrated response towards drug control in Africa.

"Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it"

(Dennis P. Kimbro)

Jane Marie is God fearing, driven by values such as respect for all which is very important in working in diverse and multi-cultural environments. She combines this with "appreciative enquiry" principles of interaction, always assuming good intent in the first instance with colleagues and friends. This has often opened up channels for honest communication, trust and mutual respect. She believes that we must not only preach and advocate for Peace, Love and Unity, but make it a practical living experience. She approaches the fact that while there is no doubt that there are challenges and obstacles in life and life is not always a bed of roses, we must however, weave through the thorns to get to the roses. This brings to mind a life mantra she follows: *"Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it"* (Dennis P. Kimbro) .

Indeed one can choose to narrow on the minor or on the major and she chooses the latter!!!

In her small corner, she gives all she can to contribute to the building blocks towards the Africa We Want. ●

Dr. Jane Marie Ong'olo is currently Programme Manager within the Social Affairs Department



Making every effort to showcase african identity

Mr. Moctar Yedaly

The domain name extension DotAfrica's long story spans over 8 years full of pitfalls, and reveals a great deal about who we are and what we value for our continent. But before telling this story, let me first explain what a domain name is.

It is a well-known fact that Internet is a network of individual computers. Each computer has a unique identifier that allows other machines to communicate with it. This is called the "IP" address. It is a coded sequence of 0's and 1's that computers use to communicate with each other (this is their phone number). They are difficult to use or even to remember. This is why domain names (such as "xxx.xxx.COM", "xxx.xxx.INT", "xxx.xxx.ORG", "xxx.xxx.FR" or "xxx.xxx.UK") have been introduced as a human equivalent of IP addresses. Each domain name is associated to a specific IP address.

The domain name may refer to the owners' name or trademark or to a significant or relevant element that is easy to remember. It's a link between your name and your activities - a mirror through which the world sees and perceives you. It can attract or repel business opportunities. The domain name is your unique identity on the Internet, your address in cyberspace. The sense of ownership and belongingness is the most important aspect of domain names. Getting your own domain name is just like getting your identity document or a land title. A commercial entity that does not have a domain name is sidelined from international trade. It misses out the opportunity for integration in its area, the African economic area.

Therefore, it is best to own and control certain domain name extensions (especially the geographical name extensions such as DotAfrica, a common African heritage) instead of

someone else having the ownership and control. This is what guided and inspired all our actions towards DotAfrica, the efforts towards gaining or rather regaining this top level domain.

The battle over the geographical domain name started in 2008 when the Commissioner in charge of Infrastructure and Energy asked my opinion with regards to a request made by an Ethio-American, owner of a company named DCA, to implement DotAfrica.

Taking into account the well known story of "WHITEHOUSE.COM" and knowing that the domain name extension DotAfrica is a common heritage whose fate should be decided collectively, I recommended that DotAfrica should not be controlled by one individual. The adviser of the then Chairperson of the AU Commission in this matter made the same recommendation. The Commissioner forwarded this recommendation to the Chairperson of the AUC. And, in response, Chairperson Jean Ping wrote a letter to the DCA in which he said that the AUC will explore with AU organs the ways and means to implement DotAfrica.

Some time later, while we were working on a more inclusive way of implementing DotAfrica, we learnt through social networks and through a large number of complaints from African experts that DCA got a letter signed by the Deputy Chairperson of the AU on behalf of Chairperson Jean Ping authorizing it to implement DotAfrica. A similar letter has been issued by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission (UNECA). These two letters, especially the first one, will be, for the next 8 years, at the center of the legal battle for DotAfrica.

Following the two positive responses somehow magically obtained by DCA despite the recommendations of experts and officials, my supervisors simply decided to resign from the DotAfrica project.

Surprised by the capacity of external person to the Commission to prepare a letter to the Bureau of the Chairperson and have it signed by the Deputy Chairperson on behalf of an authority that does not exist (AFRICAN UNION AUTHORITY) and disappointed by a blatant lack of leadership and feeling harassed by the complaints of African experts I could not respond to, I decided to go back to my former employer in the US. But I had to make a last attempt at discussing the letters with their authors.

Thanks to a good network of friends, I was able to meet in person the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Vice

time, passive, they only paid lip service considering that we were acting beyond our mandates. That was how we were treated by all the Commission.

Subsequently, my team and I succeeded in making the relevant AU organs adopt the necessary decisions for implementation of the project DotAfrica. We now had to meet all the following requirements of ICANN: i) Proven technical capacity to manage a Domain Name System (DNS), ii) commercial viability, iii) financial solvency (USD 500,000 for insurance cover; USD 180,000 for application fee, etc.).

The AUC did not meet any of these criteria. It had been necessary to find an African partner who fulfilled the requirements to bid for the project DotAfrica and agreed that the AUC is the process owner: DotAfrica was to be implemented by Africans for Africans. The domain name



Chairperson of the AUC. Following our discussions, the two executives decided to revoke the letters. It was up to me now to define the terms and conditions. The DotAfrica project was now revived and my resignation forgotten.

The Deputy Chairperson would address a revocation letter to DCA stating that "... the AUC will no longer endorse individual initiatives in this matter and that the AUC will set up an open competition process for the implementation of the DotAfrica project ...". As for the ECA, the Deputy Executive Secretary sent a revocation letter to DCA announcing that it is withdrawing its endorsement. The supervisors were surprised by this turnaround but it did not re-motivate them. Most of the

market in Africa was and remains almost non-existent. Finding a partner was an impossible mission. But in the end we found ZACR, a non-profit South African organization based in Johannesburg. I will spare the reader the details of the selection process which was pretty far-fetched.

In the agreement signed between the AUC and ZACR, AU Member States would provide the necessary political support to ZACR for its request to implement DotAfrica. ZACR would bear all the costs related to this process and the operationalization of the Domain Name. The surplus of revenues earned over the expenditures related to delegation and operationalization will finance a foundation that will fund

the development of ICT projects in Africa. DotAfrica is thus the first alternative source of financing implemented by the African Union for its ICT programs.

DCA did not take part in the invitation to tender organized by the AUC. It instead submitted a complaint to ICANN on the DotAfrica matter, claiming that the aforementioned letters of support from ECA and AUC leaders represent African governments support and the Internet community. We as well as the ICANN Governmental Advisory Committee strongly objected their interpretation.

Both applications were evaluated by ICANN. DCA's application failed the preliminary assessment. The ZACR application endorsed by the AUC completed successfully all necessary assessments, reviews and procedures, beginning with the initial assessment in mid-2013. In March 2014, ICANN and ZACR signed a Registry Agreement for DotAfrica.

DCA challenged immediately the signed agreement and filed a complaint with the ICANN Independent Review Panel (IRP) which required ICANN to stop processing the application submitted by ZACR until the IRP issued a decision on the case filed by DCA. After several months of delay, the IRP recommended that ICANN continue to refrain from delegating DotAfrica and give time to the DCA to finish the evaluation process. That was done.

DCA then filed a preliminary injunction in California's US court. The case advanced to the litigation phase. ICANN and ZACR hired lawyers, my diplomatic immunity was waived and AUC authorized me to testify in the case. Appeal after appeal, from federal court to district court, the judges finally reversed



the preliminary injunction in February 2017. And on February 15, 2017 the Domain Name extension DotAfrica was finally created and given to Africa.

It was the end of 8 years of legal and technical battles in which leadership was challenged, resources wasted and business opportunities lost. The amount of USD 3.6 million were spent in this case but not a single cent of this money was disbursed by the AUC, the Member States or their traditional partners. The package that was negotiated with ZACR covered everything: we knew DCA was going to lodge a complaint and we also knew that no one would pay for it. Mr. E. Mwench, the former Deputy Chairperson of the AUC says: "The story of DotAfrica is about determination, ingenuity and commitment ... "

Even though the letter he signed was at the origin of the DotAfrica problem, Mr. Mwench was, to date, the only African high official who recognized in writing the work and achievements of my team and myself. The rest of the world has done its duty and this achievement shows that Africans, when united in action, can move mountains.

DotAfrica has entered into its operational phase and, after five months, more than 1,000 domain names have been bought by major international brands in addition to one African country: Benin. This is an indication that DotAfrica is indeed a valuable continental asset, that it has the potential to have a great impact on the African economy and the African people, but it is still misunderstood by Africans. And yet, its success and profitability will largely depend on the utilization of DotAfrica by African companies and individuals. ●



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