

Making Every Life Count: A Dialogue on Unpacking the Data Revolution at the Country Level

Speaker Bios

Professor Mehmet Arda is affiliated with the Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM), an independent think tank based in Istanbul. Apart from EDAM, Mehmet Arda is an active member of the Global Relations Forum (GIF) and Economic Research Centre (GIAM) of Galatasaray University. Until his retirement in mid-2013 he was Professor of International Relations and Economics at Galatasaray University.

Before returning to Turkey in 2007, he was the Head of the Commodities Branch of UNCTAD, in Geneva, where he worked for 25 years. He has been an occasional advisor to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) and consultant to the United Nations. He is one of the founders of SenDeGel, a Turkish civil society organization assisting Least Developed Countries. He holds a BA from Dartmouth College, and a Ph.D from University of California, Berkeley. His interest in commodity issues continues but his current research focuses on the governance of globalization; the process of development in a globalized world; multilateral and regional trade agreements; Least Developed Countries; South-South economic relations and the political economy of emerging powers; international value chains; natural resource management.

Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya, a macroeconomist and public policy analyst, is a Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) – a globally reputed think-tank in Bangladesh – where he had been earlier its first Executive Director. He was the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the WTO, UN Office, and other international organizations in Geneva and Vienna. He was the Special Adviser on LDCs to the Secretary General, UNCTAD. Earlier, he had been a Senior Research Fellow at Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS).

He currently chairs two global networks, viz. *Southern Voice on Post-MDG International Development Goals* – a network of 49 think tanks from Africa, Asia and Latin America, which serves as an open platform for discussions on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related issues; and the *LDC IV Monitor* – a partnership of eight development organizations seeking to provide an independent assessment of the delivery of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for the LDCs.

Dr. Bhattacharya is engaged in high-level policy designing and advising for the national government and various bilateral and international development agencies at home and in a number of developing countries. He serves in the boards and working groups of a number of national, regional, and international development organizations and networks (e.g. Monitoring Advisory Group of the Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation, UNDP/OECD), and in the editorial board of reputed journals (e.g. *Oxford Development Studies*). He has published extensively on pro-poor macroeconomics; post-2015 international development agenda; trade, investment and finance related issues of the LDCs. He holds a PhD in Economics from Plekhanov National Planning Institute, Moscow and had been a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford. He held a number of visiting positions including Senior Fulbright Fellow at the Centre for Global Development (CGD), Washington DC.

Professor Samuel Jamiru Braima is a lecturer in the Department of Economics and Commerce at the Fourah Bay College, which is a part of the University of Sierra Leone. He led a team of researchers in writing a country report, “Measuring National Priorities for Post-2015 in Sierra Leone,” which explored the statistical capacity of the country to provide adequate, relevant, timely and accurate data to monitor progress on the SDGs. Professor Braima specializes in poverty issues, econometric modeling and statistical analysis, and youth development. His consulting experience includes a review of Sierra Leone’s Poverty Reduction Strategy paper and a study on balance of payments compilation and analysis for the West African Institute for Financial and Economic Management.

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Zach Christensen is a senior analyst for Development Initiative's P20 Initiative, an effort to track data on people in the poorest 20% globally. He has worked on issues related to transparency, statistical capacity, aid data, poverty data, gender data, and related topics. His research has included work in the United Kingdom, the US, Haiti, Uganda, and Kosovo. He received an M.A. in Politics from Princeton University.

H.E. Janine Coye-Felson is a senior diplomat in the foreign service of the Government of Belize with over fifteen years of experience in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. She currently serves as Deputy Permanent Representative at the Belize Mission. She has previously served as legal advisor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Belize, legal expert in the office of the Permanent Mission of Belize to the United Nations, and political strategist to the Belize Climate Change Negotiating Team. She has also held elected posts including as a Member of the Bureau of the Assembly of State Parties to the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court, Member of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women and Member of the Compliance Committee (Facilitative Branch) of the Kyoto Protocol. Prior to joining the Office of the President of the General Assembly, she served as Ambassador Deputy Permanent Representative to the Permanent Mission of Belize. Ambassador Felson holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Saint Louis University, a Juris Doctor from the University of Wisconsin – Madison School of Law, and a Certificate of Legal Education from the Norman Manley School of Law. Her Excellency Mrs. Janine Coye Felson is a national of Belize.

Jessica Espey is the Associate Director of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and head of its New York office. Jessica manages much of SDSN's engagement with UN Member States and UN technical agencies, as well as a body of research work on implementation, monitoring and accountability for the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Jessica also manages a project on subnational implementation of the SDG agenda, working in partnership with a number of cities around the world, including 3 cities in the USA.

Prior to joining SDSN, Jessica served as a special adviser on the post-2015 agenda within the Office of the President of Liberia, supporting the work of The High Level Panel of Eminent Persons (of which President Sirleaf was co-chair) and the development of the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Agenda. For three years prior she was a senior researcher for Save the Children UK, who initially supported her work in Liberia on secondment. She has also worked as a researcher at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA). She has particular expertise in the study of inequality, age and gender discrimination.

Jessica holds a Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Modern History from the University of Oxford and a Masters of Sciences in the Political Economy of Development from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Over the past 9 years she has lived and worked in the UK, US, Liberia, Kenya and Rwanda.

Kate Higgins is a Senior Researcher at The North-South Institute. Her research interests include inclusive growth, trade, poverty dynamics, women's economic empowerment, and global development frameworks such as the post-2015 development agenda. Previously, Ms. Higgins was a Research Fellow with the Growth, Poverty and Inequality program at the Overseas Development Institute in the United Kingdom and worked at the Australian Agency for International Development. She has worked with the United Nations, the World Bank, and a number of bilateral development agencies including the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, the Canadian International Development Agency, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. She has extensive field experience in East Africa and has also worked on shorter assignments in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, and

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Yemen. She holds a Master of Philosophy in Development Studies from the University of Oxford and a Bachelor of Economics (Hons I) from the University of Sydney. Kate speaks English and French.

Serge Kapto works as Policy Specialist on Data for Development in the 2030 Agenda Team, Strategic Policy Unit, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, where he covers issues related to data and indicators for measuring the new sustainable development goals. Prior to that, Serge had the dual roles of Governance focal point in the UNDP Team on Post2015 and Policy Specialist for Egovernance and Access to Information in the Democratic Governance Group at UNDP's headquarters in New York. In the Post2015 team, Serge contributed to the organization of worldwide consultations on the priorities of the new development agenda, particularly on governance and institutional capacity.

Serge started his career with the Sustainable Development Networking Programme, a UNDP pioneering initiative that played a major role in introducing Internet to many developing countries. Serge then went on to UNDESA where he remained involved in ICT for Development issues at the United Nations ICT Task Force and the Global Alliance for ICT and Development. Prior to returning to UNDP, Serge worked on strengthening egovernance and parliamentary ICT capacity at the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament in Rome.

Blandina Kilama, PhD, has over ten years of practical experience in research and policy analysis particularly in the areas of poverty, public policy, and value chain and service delivery. In her various engagements in research, she has been involved in all stages research processes not only in Tanzania but also Vietnam. Dr. Kilama, has also been involved in analysis of data from national surveys and has undertaken analytical work related to nutrition, poverty mapping work for the Tanzania Poverty and Human Development. As a senior researcher, her current research work includes poverty mapping, economic transformation, Post 2015 agenda and interactions between financial sector and investment. She is a team member of the five years research programme on “Tanzania as a future Petro State” working on the component on Data for Policy Making and Public Engagement.

Shannon Kindornay is a researcher at The North-South Institute. Her research interests include development cooperation, governance of the aid architecture, aid effectiveness, and aid and the private sector. Prior to joining NSI, Ms. Kindornay worked at the Canadian International Development Agency. She holds an MA from Carleton University's Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA) and a BA in Global Studies and Political Science, from Wilfrid Laurier University. Shannon speaks English and French.

Juan León Jara Almonte is a PhD candidate in the Department of Educational Theory and Policy and Comparative & International Education at Pennsylvania State University. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences with mention in Economics from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. Currently, he is an Associate Researcher at GRADE. His research interests are inequality in education, intercultural bilingual education, early childhood, testing policies and school effectiveness.

Dr. Andreas Pfeil is a Counsellor for Development and Economic Affairs at the Permanent mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations. Prior to his role at the Mission, Dr. Pfeil served as the Head of the Regional Division for Central and East Asia at the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Bonn. He has served in the Germany embassies in India, Ghana, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as at UNDP and Friedrich Ebert Foundation in New York.

Minh-Thu Pham is Executive Director for Policy at the United Nations Foundation, where she develops and leads strategic initiatives to strengthen the UN's ability to solve global problems and brings together

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governments, civil society and thought leaders to help reach global agreements. Over the last four years, she has led UNF's effort to support the creation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She recently taught international policymaking at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School and has over 15 years of experience in foreign policy, international diplomacy, and fieldwork.

She served in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General for Kofi Annan and Ban Ki-moon as policy adviser in the Strategic Planning Unit, leading initiatives to strengthen the UN and improve relations between the U.S. and the UN. Minh-Thu has high-level experience delivering the MDGs, implementing the peace accord in Bosnia and advancing refugee and humanitarian causes in Ethiopia, Vietnam and Washington, DC. She has a background in documentary work and was once a crew photographer for the BBC series Planet Earth.

Minh-Thu is a fellow of the Truman National Security Project; was selected a Term Member of the Council on Foreign Relations in 2007; and serves on the Board of the Coalition for Asian-American Children and Families. She holds an MPA from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University and a BA in History from Duke University. She was born in Vietnam and lives in New York City.

Professor Mustafizur Rahman is currently the Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a leading centre of excellence in South Asia. Prior to this he served as the Research Director of the CPD for several years (1998-2007). In 1986 Dr Rahman started his teaching career as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Accounting and Information Systems, Faculty of Business Studies, University of Dhaka. Having taught for twenty-five years Professor Rahman took voluntary retirement from the University of Dhaka in 2012. Professor Rahman was awarded the prestigious Ibrahim Memorial Gold Medal by the University of Dhaka for excellence in research (1999) and also served as a member of Dhaka University Senate (2009-2013). Professor Rahman did his Masters in Economics with Distinction from the Kharkov State University, Ukraine (1981), and thereafter did his Ph.D in Developmental Economics from Moscow State University, Russia (1985). He did post-doctoral research at the University of Oxford, UK (1994), Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad (1995), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore (1998), Yale University, USA as a Senior Fulbright Fellow (2003) and Warwick University, UK (2006).

Professor Rahman's current research interests include fiscal-monetary policies and macroeconomic management, trade policies and trade reforms in developing countries, regional trading arrangements and free trade agreements, trade-poverty nexus, multilateral trading system and interests of the Least Developed Countries. He has published widely in professional journals both in Bangladesh and abroad, and has authored several books and monographs in areas of his interest and expertise. Professor Rahman has been involved in research works undertaken by a wide range of international agencies and institutions including UNCTAD, UNESCAP, World Bank, ADB, Commonwealth Secretariat, European Commission and the ILO. At different points in time Professor Rahman has served as a member of various national bodies and committees set up by the Government of Bangladesh. These include, inter alia, WTO Advisory Committee, National Coal Policy Review Committee, Regulatory Reforms Commission, Committee to review 'National Sustainable Development Strategy', National Task Force to monitor the impact of Global Financial Crisis and Core-committee for Transit and Connectivity. He has served as a member of the Panel of Economists for the Sixth Five Year Plan and the Ten Year Perspective Plan of Bangladesh and he is currently a member of the Panel of Economists for the Seventh Five Year Plan of Bangladesh. Professor Rahman has been a member of Bangladesh delegations to various multilateral and bilateral negotiations including several WTO Ministerial Conferences.

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Dr. Maam Suwadu Sakho-Jimbira is an agricultural economist and researcher at IPAR “Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale”, a think tank based in Dakar where she is working on issues related to Post-2015 Development Agenda, Climate Change Adaptation and Agriculture among others. She is also teaching Development Economics in part-time at the National School of Statistics and Economic Analysis (ENSAE) in Dakar. Suwadu holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Montpellier and a Masters in Economic Sciences from the University Gaston Berger of Saint-Louis, where she specialized in agricultural and development economics. She formerly worked for national and international organizations, namely the Senegalese Agricultural Research Institute (ISRA) in Dakar, and the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in Yaoundé, Ouagadougou and Indonesia.

Stefan Schweinfest has been the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division, Department of Economics and Social Affairs since July 2014. Mr. Schweinfest joined the Statistics Division in 1989 and worked in various areas, such as national and environmental accounting, statistical capacity building programmes, and indicator frameworks. He was responsible for external relationships of the Division, both with member countries as well as with international partner organization. In this context, he has been the substantive Secretary of the United Nations Statistical Commission since 2002. Mr. Schweinfest has also been the Secretary of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM). He was closely involved since the beginning in the establishment of the UN-GGIM programme and acted as the key liaison between the Division and the United Nations Economic and Social Council during the negotiations of the United Nations resolution that formally launched UN-GGIM in 2011.

Jenna Slotin, Director, Sustainable Development Policy, has over ten years of experience at the UN and on UN policy issues related to sustainable development and peacebuilding with a particular focus on analyzing the political dynamics around the 2030 Agenda, financing for development and the UN’s peacebuilding architecture. She has published several independent reports on peacebuilding and fragile states and co-managed a research program on these topics at the International Peace Institute. Jenna also has project management and leadership experience from time spent working at UNDP in Kosovo and as Chief Operating Officer of Building Markets, a social enterprise that promotes private sector development in fragile and post-conflict countries. Jenna holds a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University with a concentration in International Security Policy and a BA in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Toronto.

Peter Taylor is Associate Director for Think Tank Initiatives at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada. Before joining IDRC, Peter was the Leader of the Participation, Power and Social Change Team, at the Institute of Development Studies. Prior to that, he was a Technical Advisor for the Swiss development cooperation NGO Helvetas, and a lecturer at the Agricultural Extension and Rural Development Department at the University of Reading, UK. Peter has PhD and Master’s degrees in agricultural education. He has worked, published and taught on the theory and practice of capacity development in international contexts, the role of education systems and institutions in participatory and social change. He has particular interests in organizational learning and change, and program evaluation. He has worked in many countries of the world, including East and Southern Africa, Central, South and South East Asia and Latin America.

H.E. Jean Francis Régis Zinsou has served as Permanent Representative of Benin to the United Nations since January 2010. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Zinsou was Chargé d’Affaires ad interim at his country’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York from 23 October 2008 to 28 October

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2009, during which time he also served as Minister Counsellor in charge of Political and Legal Affairs, from May 2003. Mr. Zinsou served a first stint as Assistant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation from 2002 to 2003, having previously held the same post from 1988 to 1990. He was Deputy Director of the Ministry's Europe Department between 1997 and 2002. From 1990 to 1997, Mr. Zinsou was First Counsellor at Benin's Embassy in Germany, covering also Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Austria and the United Nations Office at Vienna. He was Head of the Foreign Ministry's Division responsible for Germany and the Nordic countries from 1987 to 1988, and the Division in charge of Universal Political Organizations and International Non-governmental Organizations between 1983 and 1985. Mr. Zinsou holds a master's degree in international relations, as well as diplomas from the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna and the University of Vienna. Born in Quidah, Benin, in 1955, he is married and has four children.