

Newsletter A+FS and e+i / June 2017

The A+FS Network publishes its Newsletter together with the Employment and Income Network. Please select your area of interest: [Agriculture and Food Security](#) | [Vocational Skills Development](#) / [Private Sector Development](#) / [Financial Sector Development](#)

[Learning from the Past: Urban-Rural Development Dynamics](#) | [Your comments](#) 

The severe hunger crises in Ethiopia and Sudan, the first Macintosh computer, the power plant disaster at Chernobyl – what do you remember from the 1980s? For Benoit Girardin, in charge of the domain urban development at SDC in the 1980s, memories include the project Nylon in Douala, Cameroon. We have talked to Benoit Girardin about SDC's social sector portfolio in the 1980s, about strategic decisions and lessons learned in urban-rural development. In addition Benoit Girardin provides us with a short review (in French) of SDC's first approaches in urban development.



Interview with Benoit Girardin

"The reluctance was not so much on realizing the trends and their consequences, but a lot of people were of the opinion that urban development is very costly and, hence, should be left to multilateral organizations and big donors. I tried to advocate in favor of a soft approach ..."



L'approche DDC en développement urbain: un cheminement lent et hésitant

Cet article vise à retracer les étapes initiales que la DDC a franchies dans les années 80 pour définir son approche du développement urbain dans les pays du Sud.

Contact: Sophie Hirsig, trainee in the A&FS Network (sophie-lena.hirsig@eda.admin.ch)

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Rural Youth in Dryland

[by Alessandra Giuliani, Research Associate, BFH-HAFL]

In the framework of the CGIAR Research Program (CRP) on Dryland Systems and the Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), a study was conducted to investigate rural youth's realities, viewpoints, and their dreams, in three Agricultural Livelihoods Systems of the dry, mountain area of Midelt in Morocco.



Gender and Land Governance: New Guidance Sheet

[by Agnieszka Kroskowska, Gender Equality and Social Equity Coordinator, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation]

Who owns and can use the lands? Who decides? Who and where do women and men participate in decision-making about the different priorities for land use? These are some of the questions addressed in the new guidance sheet on Gender and Land Governance. This article provides you with an overview.

Find out what the A&FS Network is and what opportunities it holds for you!

We put together a video that explains the Agriculture and Food Security Network (A&FS) and how you can use it in your work:



Améliorez vos compétences et élargissez votre réseau !
¡Mejore sus habilidades y expanda su red!

The Global Programme Food Security is a thematic division that helps find solutions to global challenges linked to food security. The division develops innovative projects in cooperation to ensure long-term food security and the elimination of malnutrition with a specific focus on smallholder farms. The Agriculture and Food Security (A&FS) Network is an important part of that work. Become a part of our community. [Join the A&FS Network](#).

Le Programme global Sécurité alimentaire est une division thématique dont les activités contribuent à relever les défis globaux liés à la sécurité alimentaire. La division élabore des projets novateurs visant à assurer la sécurité alimentaire et à éliminer la malnutrition sur le long terme, en mettant un accent spécifique sur les petites exploitations agricoles. Le réseau agriculture et sécurité alimentaire est une partie importante du travail de la division. Rejoignez notre communauté. Adhérez au réseau A&FS.

El Programa global Seguridad alimentaria es una división temática cuyas actividades contribuyen a afrontar los desafíos globales planteados por la seguridad alimentaria. La división elabora proyectos innovadores destinados a garantizar la seguridad alimentaria y eliminar la desnutrición a largo plazo, haciendo un enfoque en los pequeños agricultores. La Red Agricultura y Seguridad Alimentaria es una parte importante del trabajo de la división. Forme parte de nuestra comunidad. Únase a la Red Agricultura y Seguridad Alimentaria.

Your thoughts on the Learning Journey on Urban – Peri-Urban Development Dynamics

[access for registered members, to get access [register first](#)]

The A&FS members debated how we should address the nexus of urbanization, migration and poverty in our development work and shared experiences from their respective fields and contexts. The discussion evolved around how to better respond to people's needs, how to cope with the categories 'urban' and 'rural', as well as how to more inclusively reach men, women and children in peri-urban areas. We thank everyone for the lively discussion, and would like to extend a special thank you to Xenia Kirchhofer, Aung Kyaw, Daniel Valenghi, Serge Oumow, Bahar Sadreghazi, and Manuel Flury for sharing their experiences and thoughts on the topic.



How to farm fish in your bathtub and chicken on your balcony

Access Agriculture showcases farmer-to-farmer videos in agricultural training in local languages. The videos are all designed to support sustainable agriculture in developing countries. Recently, three new DVD compilations were made available: Legumes, Fish and Livestock. Anyone interested in having these compilations in local languages, please contact kevin@accessagriculture.org



Seeds for smallholder farmers! How to make it a reality...

Quality seeds of improved varieties have enabled farmers in advanced agricultural systems to triple their yields. What is the seed industry, strategically placed as it is at the start of the food value chain, doing to help smallholder farmers in food insecure regions to achieve similar results? The Access to Seeds Index aims to shine a light on this question. It assesses and benchmarks leading global field crop and vegetable seed companies on their efforts to make their products available to smallholder farmers in four regions: Latin America, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, and South and Southeast Asia.



Short Course: Crop Genetic Diversity

On 11-15th September 2017 Università di Roma Sapienza, in collaboration with the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research (PAR) and Bioversity International, will be holding a one week credited short course on "Crop Genetic Diversity in the Field and on the Farm - Principles and Applications in Research Practice"

22 June 2017, Ausserholligen, Switzerland

Looking at the Food System: How can Africa feed its Millions?

A Learning Forum by SDC's Global Programme Food Security (GPFS) with partners from science, civil society, the private and public sector

Participate in the first GPFS Learning Forum! Participation is free of charge. Kindly be informed that due to limited space, registration will be on a first come, first serve basis. Register by writing to Sophie Hirsig: sophie-lena.hirsig@eda.admin.ch.



ANDREAS WEBER

Junior Programme Officer, currently working in Mongolia

Andreas, what do you enjoy most about your work?

I like the diversity of activities in an interesting political and economic context. And I enjoy working with inspiring and motivated people. In Mongolia, SDC is active in the domains Agriculture and Food Security, Vocational Education and Training and Governance. I started to work for SDC Mongolia in January this year, and I am responsible for the projects in the field of Agriculture and Food Security as well as some Governance project. At the same time we are working on a new country strategy. As a result, I often work in one and the same day on very diverse issue, be it the strengthening of civic

participation, the promotion of cabbage storage houses that allow farmers to sell their products when prices are high, the nationwide upscale of a community based approach for sustainable rangeland management or the analysis of the economic outlook of Mongolia with the current IMF program and possible implication on our new country strategy.

Which are your favorite instruments and projects?

I like projects that address a development challenge from a holistic perspective and combine different instruments. One good example is in my view SDC's Green Gold/Animal Health Project in Mongolia. At the center of the project is sustainable rangeland management, as land degradation due to overstocking and climate change is threatening directly the livelihood of thousands of herder families. The project combines several approaches and instruments. A scientific method that provides sound evidence about the status and causes of rangeland degradation was developed and introduced, which is the basis of the entire work. As overgrazing is the main cause of rangeland degradation, the project promotes bottom-up community based collective action initiatives. Herders organize themselves in so called Pasture User Groups which define together with the local government how the open-access rangeland should be managed. To give herders a short term incentive to participate in such activities that often have only a medium and long term impact, SDC introduced matching funds, which gives participating herders access to get micro-credits to cover cash shortage. The project also works on the value chain of products produced by herders in order to increase their livelihood. This is done for example by increasing the quality of products (e.g. through better animal health services or combing techniques for wool and cashmere) and market linkages (e.g. through the introduction of cooperatives and direct links to processing companies). Finally, the project uses its grass root experience to advocate at the macro level for policy change with the promotion of laws on animal health or rangeland protection. This broad approach was only possible thanks to SDC's engagement in this field over more than 10 years, with the project constantly developing. Since I arrived in Mongolia in January this year, I witness on a regularly basis how positive this project is received by people here, be it from herder families, other donors, local politicians or Members of Parliament.

Your message for your colleagues is:

While our work is often activity driven, I find it useful to pause from time to time and take a step back; to ask myself why we are doing a certain intervention and why we are doing things this way and not another way round. This reflection helps me to keep a positive but at the same time critical attitude towards our projects.

Your Comments

Leave your comments on specific articles or on this newsletter in general! 
(only for logged-in members)