

**Inter-agency Expert Group Meeting**  
**on Implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027)**  
**10-12 May 2023, Addis Ababa**

**Bio of Speakers**

**Mr. Khalid Abu-Ismaïl** is Senior Economist at United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). He leads ESCWA's projects on poverty, inequality and human development and is the author of more than 50 technical papers and UN flagship publications on macroeconomic policies, employment and poverty, including the 2022 World Development Challenges Report. From 2002 to 2012, he was the Poverty and Macroeconomic Policy Advisor at the United Nations Development Program Regional Offices for Arab States in Cairo and Beirut. From 1992 to 1997, he held various research positions with the Egyptian Government's Information and Decision Support Center and served briefly as Assistant to the Minister of Public Enterprises. Khalid is a Policy Affiliate at the Middle East Economic Research Forum and a former Guest Lecturer at the Faculty of Economics of the Lebanese American University. He has a D. Phil. in Development Economics from the New School for Social Research in New York.

**Mr. Simeon Oludiran Akinleye** is a Professor in the Department of Economics, University of Lagos. He is a development economist with more than twenty years of experience in academic, research and allied fields. His work on development issues on the African continent has been in conjunction with organisations such as the Global Fund, USAID, EU, IITA, CODESRIA, AERC and IFPRI.

**Ms. Martha Bekele** works for Development Initiatives (DI) as the Africa Delivery, Quality and Impact Lead. DI applies the power of data and evidence to build sustainable solutions that create an equitable and resilient world. Martha is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and manages financing for development and other development related projects and programmes in Africa.

**Mr. Francesco Burchi** is a Senior Researcher at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), where he is currently co-leading the research project on "Social Cohesion in Africa". He is also Adjunct Professor at the Department of Economics of Roma Tre University. He holds a PhD in Development Economics. His research interests include: multidimensional poverty, inequality, social protection, gender equality, food security, and social cohesion.

**Mr. Simone Cecchini** is Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Centre for Demography (CELADE) – Population Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), based in Santiago, Chile. At CELADE, he leads a team of professionals whose goal is to strengthen countries' capacity to analyze population dynamics and their links with economic and social development, to include demographic factors into public policies. Previously he was Senior Social Affairs Officer and Officer in Charge of the Social Development Division of the ECLAC, where he led research and advised governments on poverty, inequality, and on the design, implementation and assessment of social protection policies. His work is characterized by a multi-disciplinary approach and a focus on equality and human rights. Between 1998 and 2002, Mr. Cecchini worked at the World Bank's Poverty Group. Mr. Cecchini holds a Degree in Political Science from the University of Florence, Italy, a Master's in International Trade and Investment Policy from George Washington University, Washington D.C., and an MBA from the Universidad Católica of Chile.

**Ms. Vidya Diwakar** is the Deputy Director of the Chronic Poverty Advisory Network hosted at the Institute of Development Studies. She is a mixed-methods researcher and policy analyst focused on investigating gender-disaggregated drivers of poverty escapes, and the role of armed conflict and fragility in creating poverty traps. Vidya has authored and reviewed a range of reports, book chapters and journal articles, including most recently as Guest Editor for a special issue of World Development. She has successfully fundraised for and led a range of large multi-partner, multi-year policy-oriented research projects on poverty dynamics in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia for international organizations and bi-lateral aid agencies.

**Ms. Rosemarie Edillon** is presently the Undersecretary for National Development Policy and Planning at the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). She holds a PhD in Economics from La Trobe University in Australia, an MA degree in Economics from the University of the Philippines (UP) School of Economics and an MS degree in Statistics from the UP School of Statistics. She is also a 2019 Presidential Gawad CES Awardee. Among her major responsibilities is shepherding the formulation of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP). The PDP is an elaboration of the country's priorities over the medium-term and is the blueprint of government policies, programs and projects. She also oversees the monitoring of the PDP implementation. In addition, she guides NEDA technical staff in providing technical advice on policy issues to both the legislative and executive branches of government, especially the committees of the NEDA Board. Prior to joining the NEDA, she was the Executive Director of the Asia-Pacific Policy Center, a policy-research firm. She was also involved in various researches on macro-econometric modeling, poverty, vulnerability agriculture, agrarian reform, social capital, project evaluation, trade, community-driven development, among others.

**Mr. Andrés Fernández** is a senior researcher at the University of Costa Rica with a Bachelor of Economics and Msc. in Statistics from the University of Costa Rica. He also holds the Micro Master certificate in Data, Economics and Development Policy from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He has carried out various investigations on issues of poverty, economic inequality, education, among others. His academic reports have been published in the Journal of Economic Sciences (UCR), State of the Nation, State of the Justice and State of Education Reports, of the State of the Nation Program, CEPAL Review, Spanish Journal of Statistics and Dimensions Magazine of OPHI of the University of Oxford, from where he also received the recognition of Research of excellence in the fight against poverty (Poverty Initiative and Human Development of Oxford).

**Ms. Gabriela Flores** is a Senior Health Economist at WHO Headquarters in Geneva who joined the Health Systems Governance and Financing department in 2015. She currently leads the financial protection monitoring group which publishes the global financial protection database, co-produces global reports on Universal health coverage and financial protection in health and develops modules to track out-of-pocket health spending in multi-platform household surveys. She received a PhD in Statistics and Econometrics from the University of Geneva with a dissertation focused on financial risk protection

**Mr. Alejandro Grinspun** is Senior Economist in FAO's Economic and Social Development Stream, assigned to the Social Protection team in Rome. Alejandro joined FAO in 2017 from UNICEF, where he had led the work on social policy and child poverty in South Africa and Tanzania. Before working for UNICEF, he held various technical positions with UNDP in New York, Brazil and Mexico from 1993 to

2008. Alejandro leads the Right to Food team in FAO and is conducting work on the use of digital innovations for delivering social protection to rural populations and on using farmer and social registries as instruments of public policy targeting small-scale farm households. After graduating from the Universidad de Buenos Aires and from Columbia University, Alejandro has over the years advised governments from across a range of countries and written several publications on poverty, social protection and social policy.

**Dr. Nilupa Gunaratna** is an Associate Professor of Public Health, with a courtesy appointment in Nutrition Science, at Purdue University, USA. Her research, teaching, and professional engagement focus on food systems, food security, and nutrition for at-risk populations, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Her research specifically aims to develop and evaluate interventions that equitably and sustainably improve food security and nutrition, while promoting rigorous and ethical quantitative methods. Her current work investigates the needs of consumers and of actors across the food system in Ethiopia, Kenya, Lao PDR, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and the USA. Dr. Gunaratna holds MS degrees in Agronomy and Statistics and a PhD in Statistics.

**Mr. Dean Jolliffe** is a Lead Economist at the World Bank in the Global Poverty & Inequality team and the Living Standards and Measurement Study team. He was also co-director of the 2021 World Development Report: Data for Better Lives. Prior to joining the World Bank, he was a research economist with the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, an assistant professor at Charles University Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education in Prague, an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Public Policy Institute, and a postdoctoral fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute. Dean currently holds appointments at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, the Institute for the Study of Labor, and the Global Labor Organization. He received his PhD in Economics from Princeton University.

**Ms. Jane Karonga** is an Economic Affairs Officer working with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). She is mainly responsible for providing policy advisory services to African member States and other stakeholders in the area of regional integration, trade, industrialization, macroeconomics, health, and infrastructure development. Prior to working at ECA, Ms. Karonga had several years of experience working for various companies in Zimbabwe, and USA in the area of economic development. Jane is a PhD Fellow with Maastricht University, Netherlands. She holds a Masters Degree in Economic Development from Vanderbilt University and Bachelor of Science from Winston Salem State University, USA.

**Mr. Hiromichi Katayama** works at the Education Sector of UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France. His work focuses on strengthening national education and training systems and he is, among other activities, leading UNESCO's policy reviews in different countries. He has also been coordinating the development of skills assessment and anticipation in the Middle East and North Africa region, and the advancement of management information systems in sub-Saharan Africa. He has also coordinated situation analysis of education and training systems in Asia and Africa. Before joining UNESCO headquarters, he worked at the OECD in Paris on the assessment of PISA financial literacy. He also worked at the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) in Montreal, Canada, on the collection, analysis and dissemination of education data and statistics.

**Ms. Lydie Kouame**, Deputy Director for the World Food Programme-African Union Global OfficeA Cote d'Ivoire national, Ms Lydie Kouame is the Deputy Director for the World Food Programme-African Union

Global Office, based in Addis Ababa. Ms. Kouame has 22 years of experience working with WFP in different capacities, to mention some of her recent assignments being in Niger CO, as Deputy Country Director and in RB Dakar, as Regional Budget & Programming Officer. Ms. Kouame has built up her international profile and reputation in WFP operations in West Africa, as well as in private international financial institution prior to joining the UN. Ms. Kouame holds an MBA from Indiana State University and a Master degree in managerial finance from Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny d'Abidjan. Ms. Kouame Lydie speaks fluent French and English.

**Mr. Daniele Malerba** is a Senior Researcher at the program "Transformation of Economic and Social Systems" of the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS). His research focuses on the links between poverty reduction policies and climate change mitigation, with an emphasis on the role of social protection. Daniele holds a PhD from the University of Manchester and regularly collaborates with various international organizations. He also teaches at various universities.

**Mr. Asegid Mebratu** has a Master's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from "Otto von Guericke" University, Magdeburg, Germany. He worked for many years in private national and multinational companies and managed projects including infrastructure development, energy generation, building technology and electro-mechanical systems. Mr. Mebratu played an active role in the establishment and operationalization of the Private Sector Development (PSD) Hub in Ethiopia in support of private investment and entrepreneurship development through capacity building initiatives and policy recommendations. Since 2007, he has been working in the UNIDO Regional Office Hub Ethiopia and has played an active role in formulation, implementation and monitoring of successive UNIDO programme portfolios for more than a decade including Integrated Programme for Ethiopia (IPE) and the Programme for Country Partnerships (PCP). His current responsibilities include also UNIDO's engagement with and participation in the UNCT to advance the UN reform agenda at a country level through contributions to the preparation of a common UN programme framework, i.e., the previous UNDAFs and the current UNSDCF (2020-25) for Ethiopia.

**Mr. Andualem Goshu Mekonnen** is an Associate Professor of Economics at Addis Ababa University. He holds a doctorate degree in economics and has excellent knowledge in economics, project management, and leadership. He is well-qualified professional in poverty, inequality, and vulnerability studies. He has developed a new index to measure multidimensional poverty and vulnerability. He has experience in teaching, managing operations and projects, conducting research, and doing policy analysis. He wrote more than 30 research works, though most of them are under consideration for publication. He has participated in national and international projects. He has also been equipped with different econometric models such as impact analysis models, cross-sectional models, panel models, time-series models, agricultural models, DSGE models, poverty models, etc.

**Ms. Siviwe Mhlana** is a researcher at the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies at the University of Witwatersrand. She has worked as a consultant for organisations such as Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC). Siviwe also serves on the board of the Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ), is a research associate in the Rhodes University Department of Economics and Economic History and a member of the Neil Aggett Labour Studies Unit (NALSU). Siviwe holds an MA in Social Policy and Labour Studies from Rhodes University and is currently a PhD candidate in the Department of Economics at SOAS University of London. Her research interests include international development, labour economics, social policy, advocacy and gender.

**Ms. Corinne Mitchell** is the Director of Programmes and Operations at the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), a research centre in the Department of International Development at the University of Oxford. She manages the day-to-day affairs of the centre, develops and implements the strategic direction, and leads the technical and policy outreach work on Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs) in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. She has led research projects on topics related to multidimensional poverty with partners including FCDO, WFP, IsDB, and the World Bank. She holds an MPhil in Development Studies from the University of Oxford and a B.A. in Political Science and International Studies from Washington University in St. Louis.

**Dr. Hanan Morsy** is the Deputy Executive Secretary (Programme) and Chief Economist at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Dr. Morsy has a wealth of cross-country experience and vast expertise in leading top-quality policy and development work and building strong partnerships, working in international organizations and the private sector. She has published on a wide range of economic and development issues and led a number of major flagship publications. Prior to joining ECA, Dr. Morsy was the Director of Macroeconomic Policy and Research at the African Development Bank between 2018 and 2021, where she provided thought leadership on economic issues and oversaw the production of rigorous analytical work that strengthened the Bank's policy dialogue and operations across its member countries. Dr. Morsy worked previously as Associate Director and Lead Economist for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Region at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London between 2012 and 2018. In that role, she established and headed the economic analysis and policy advisory services for the new region of operation, led country missions, and developed country strategies. Prior to that, she worked at the International Monetary Fund between 2003 and 2012 in various capacities across different departments, including, Fiscal Affairs, Middle East and Central Asia, European, and Monetary and Capital Markets. She led and contributed to work on exchange rate assessments, fiscal vulnerability, financial and macroprudential policies. She has extensive experience in both IMF program and surveillance work across a wide range of countries from developing, to emerging, and advanced economies. Dr. Morsy holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the George Washington University, USA, and a Master's degree in Economics from the University of California, Davis, USA. She is from Egypt.

**Mr. Patrick Osakwe** obtained his doctorate degree in economics from Queen's University, Canada. He is currently Chief of the Trade, Poverty and Inequalities Branch at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development based in Geneva, Switzerland. He has also served as Chief of Finance, Industry and Investment at the UN Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Before joining the United Nations, he worked as a Senior Analyst at the Bank of Canada, Ottawa. Dr. Osakwe has done extensive research in international and development economics and has refereed publications in major economic journals and books.

**Dr. Ifeyinwa Ofong** started her career as a lecturer at the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Jos, Nigeria. She then progressed to the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Nigeria, where she held various positions, including Senior Lecturer, Head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Senior Research Fellow, and Course Coordinator at the Institute for Development Studies. She is the National Coordinator of Women in Development and Environment: WorldWIDE Network Nigeria. She is also a member of the NGO Committee on Social Development and NGO Working Group to End Homelessness, where she sits on the Executive

Committee. She was a Board Member of Habitat International Coalition, and currently the Convener of HIC- Women and Habitat Africa Working Group. Dr. Ify Ofong is also a Development Consultant, and has facilitated capacity building trainings, studies and analysis on many social issues, including Gender issues, the Elimination of traditional practices that are harmful to women and girls, the Situation Analysis of women and children in urban slums in Nigeria; the Stakeholder Analysis on Social Protection programmes in Nigeria; Poverty Alleviation studies, Housing census, Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Project for Small Towns; Monitoring and Evaluation of Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria; Women's leadership and participation in Decision- making; Strategic Plan development for Civil Society Organizations and Government Agencies. She has authored many publications, attended, and presented papers in many International and local conferences. She has also received numerous awards for her work and contributions to community development, the advancement and empowerment of women and youths.

**Ms. Neeti Pokhriyal** is an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Policy Fellow at the U.S. National Science Foundation, which is a federal agency that supports research in science and engineering. She is also a visiting scholar at the Department of Computer Science, Dartmouth College. She is a computer scientist with policy experience in developing responsible artificial intelligence technologies for societal good. She was the 2022 Mirzayan Policy Fellow at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, where she worked on issues of data equity, data sharing, and privacy-preserving methodologies. She completed her postdoctoral training at Dartmouth College and her Ph.D. in Computer Science at the State University of New York at Buffalo, where she received the Chih Foundation Research Award. She has been awarded grants from the Irving Institute at Dartmouth to forecast energy accessibility, and from Gates Foundation, in collaboration with the National Statistics Office of Senegal and Sonatel, to develop novel methods and newer data to understand poverty. She has consulted for Datapop Alliance, and for the Inter-American Development Bank on improved mapping of poverty and inequality in Haiti.

**Ms. Natalia Winder Rossi** became the Director of Social Policy and Social Protection at UNICEF Headquarters in New York in May 2020. She brings over 20 years of social policy and social protection experience in global and regional roles. Ms. Winder Rossi leads UNICEF's social policy programming at the global level and oversees the organization's work on child poverty, social protection, humanitarian cash transfers, public finance management for children, and local governance. As of 1 July 2020, the team anchors UNICEF's Global Lead on Urban. From 2015 to 2020, she led FAO's Global Social Protection team in FAO, Rome, while acting as Senior Advisor for the Rural Poverty and Resilience and Humanitarian Action Strategic Programmes. Before joining FAO, Ms. Winder Rossi was the Senior Social Protection Specialist and also Social Policy Advisor (a.i) at UNICEF's Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa, leading the positioning of social protection as a priority for the region, providing technical guidance to 24 countries, leveraging critical partnerships, while enhancing the work on HIV-sensitive social protection and resilience. She was also a Social Protection Officer at UNICEF Headquarters in New York, where she co-led the development of UNICEF's first-ever Social Protection Framework. She is the author and co-author of multiple publications, including "From Evidence to Action: The Story of Cash Transfers Impact Evaluation in Sub-Saharan Africa in Africa" from Oxford University Press.

**Mr. Isiyaka Sabo** (Niger), is a Regional Team Leader Inclusive Growth in the Regional Service Center of Africa in Addis-Ababa since May 2021. From 2003 to 2021, He was Senior Economist in UNDP Cos in

Comoros, Madagascar, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Senegal. Before joining UNDP, Isiyaka served as Economist with IMF in Niger (2001-2003), Macroeconomist at the West African Development Bank (1999-2001) in Togo and Director of Economic Reforms and Financial Studies at the Ministry of Economy and Finances in Niger (1998-1999). He has written and coordinated several papers, notably on the analysis of inequalities and poverty, on the promotion of sustainable human development and on the analysis of the impact of policies. Isiyaka is a Statistical Engineer and holds a master's degree in Economic Policy Management from CERDI (Center for Studies and Research in International Development) of the University of Auvergne in Clermont-Ferrand, France. He is certified in Economic Development Policies from the Institute of Economic Research and the Economic Planning Agency of Japan.

**Ms. Sweta Saxena** is the Chief of Staff and the Acting Director of Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. From 2018 – 2022, she served as the Chief in the Macroeconomic Policy and Financing for Development Division at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in Bangkok, Thailand, where she led 4 flagship reports that mainstreamed sustainable development in economic policymaking. Prior to this, Ms. Saxena worked at the IMF (Washington DC), BIS (Switzerland) and University of Pittsburgh (USA). Her research has appeared in top journals (AER, JEL, JIE).

A Malawian national, **Mr. Ken Chamuva Shawa**, is a Senior Economist at the ILO's Regional Office for Africa in Abidjan, Cote d' Ivoire and a member of the ILO's Research Department, Geneva. His research interests include the economics of labour markets, impact assessment economics, saving and investment, industry and trade, debt sustainability, the growth-environment nexus, agricultural policy and the link between health and labour. He holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, a MSc in International Environmental Management from the University of Northampton, UK, and a Master of Arts in Economics from the University of Malawi. He is currently pursuing another PhD in Health Economics and Policy at the University of Lancaster, in the UK.

**Mr. Sandile Simelane** is a Technical Specialist in the Population and Development Branch at UNFPA. Prior to joining the United Nations, he worked for Statistics South Africa for several years. He has also worked for the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) where he was Development Information Analyst and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) where he was Senior Lecturer in the Graduate Program in Population Studies at the School of Development Studies. He holds a Ph.D. in Demography from the University of Pennsylvania (2007).

**Dr. Srinivas Tata** is currently serving as the Director of the Social Development Division of ESCAP over the last four years. The division promotes social protection, fosters gender equality, and strengthens social inclusion of persons with disabilities, older persons, youth and migrants, among others. He has 16 years of experience of working with the United Nations.

Dr Tata is a physician by qualification with experience in social policy, public health, finance and taxation, and programme management.

He has served in wide range of positions in the United Nations, including as the Chief of the Capacity Development in UNESCAP, and as the Chief of Social Policy and Population Section in the Social Development Division from 2012 to 2016, focusing on population ageing, demographic change, migration and health. He was also posted as the Deputy Chief of the Regional Commissions New York Office from 2010 to 2012.

**Mr. Girum Abebe Tefera** is a Senior Economist at the World Bank's Africa Region Gender Innovation Lab (GIL). In the lab, he also leads the private sector and entrepreneurship development thematic area. Girum relies on field experiments to study ways of making social programs more responsive to the needs of socially disadvantaged groups, such as women, young people, and refugees. He studies how active labor market policies, productive safety nets and business training programs can be leveraged to promote the inclusion of disadvantaged youth and women into productive wage- and self-employment. He has published in the American Economic Review, Review of Economic Studies and the Journal of Development Economics. Girum holds a Ph.D. in Development Economics from the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Tokyo.

**Dr. Hassan Yousif** is a development economist and demographer. He worked at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analyses (IIASA) in Vienna where he further harnessed his scientific contributions to the advancement of multidisciplinary knowledge on social development research. He worked with the Government of Botswana on developing a national population policy and programs for its implementation. In 1998 he joined the UNDP/NLTPS African Futures regional project, through which he provided technical support on long-term visions and strategic planning to several countries in Africa (Namibia, Swaziland, Sierra Leone, and Zambia). In 2004 Dr. Yousif joined the UN Economic Commission for Africa. At ECA Dr. Yousif supervised the implementation of strategic activities on population and development, employment, social protection, aging, the family, international migration, and prepared regional reports and contributions to the UN Secretary General reports on these themes. Currently he is advisor to the National Population Council, Sudan.