Guoqi Wu is Associate Vice-President, Corporate Services Department, at IFAD. He is responsible for providing IFAD with the human resources, administrative services, safety and security and information technology resources required to allow IFAD to deliver its mandate.

Wu has over 20 years’ experience working with international financial institutions to promote global development cooperation. He previously held the position of Alternate Director of China at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank, actively engaging on general and sector strategies, operational policies, business plans and budget, investment projects, as well as on membership expansion and partnership agreements. He also served as Alternate Executive Director of China at the Asian Development Bank. Prior to that, he worked for the Chinese Ministry of Finance in different positions, including Chief of the G20/BRICS Division responsible for macroeconomic policy coordination under the respective Finance Ministers’ Meeting mechanisms.

Wu holds a PhD in Economics from the Research Institute for Fiscal Science, Ministry of Finance, China; and a Master of Science in Development Finance from the University of Manchester, United Kingdom.
Beth Bechdol is Deputy Director-General at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In this role, she continues her service to food and agriculture – now on a global scale. Ms Bechdol is responsible for FAO's Partnership and Outreach work, including Partnerships and UN Collaboration, Resource Mobilization and Private Sector Partnerships, South-South and Triangular Cooperation. She also leads programmes in the area of Plant Production and Protection and oversees FAO’s main technical advisory committee on agriculture, the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) as well as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat.

Before joining FAO, Ms Bechdol was President and CEO of AgriNovus Indiana, the Midwestern state’s economic development initiative focused on advancing the agbioscience sector and developing 21st century talent. Prior to her leadership of AgriNovus, Ms Bechdol was Director of agribusiness strategies at Indianapolis-based law firm Ice Miller LLP where she helped build the firm’s dedicated legal practice to food and agribusiness clients. She also was the former Deputy Director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture. Ms Bechdol’s dedication to public service in agriculture and her extensive trade and farm policy experience started in Washington, D.C. where she served in key roles as Chief of Staff at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and as Economist on the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Ms Bechdol was raised on a multi-generation family grain farm in rural Indiana. She received her bachelor’s degree from Georgetown University in international law and international affairs, and completed her master’s degree at Purdue University in agricultural economics.
Valerie N. Guarnieri became Assistant Executive Director in January 2018. In this role, she brings together and oversees essential elements of WFP global operations, including emergency preparedness and response, programme and policy, nutrition and supply chain to ensure essential support to vulnerable, food insecure people around the world.

Prior to this appointment, Ms Guarnieri served as WFP Regional Director for East and Central Africa providing supervision, strategic guidance and support for country operations throughout the region.

Ms Guarnieri began her career with WFP in 2000 as Senior Policy Advisor and has since served as Deputy Country Director in Zimbabwe, Country Director and Representative in the Philippines and Director, Programme Division. In the latter role, she provided global leadership and support for the design and deployment of innovative, high quality programmes to address urgent hunger and nutrition needs. Prior to joining WFP, Ms Guarnieri served within the U.S. Government where she supported humanitarian and development actions which saved lives and helped create conditions for sustainable peace, with particular focus in Africa.

An American national, Ms Guarnieri was born in Heidelberg, Germany. She holds a Master of Arts from the School of International Service of American University in Washington, D.C. Ms Guarnieri is married and has three children.
Jorge Chediek
Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation

Since October 2015, Mr. Jorge Chediek has been the Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation leading United Nations system-wide promotion and coordination of South-South cooperation for development. In March 2016, Mr. Chediek was appointed by the UN Secretary-General as his Envoy on South-South Cooperation.

Prior to this, Mr. Chediek served as the UN Resident Coordinator/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Brazil (2010-2015). In that capacity, he was also the Director of the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth, UNDP’s global forum for policy dialogue and South-South learning on social development innovations. He served as Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Peru (2005-2010); United Nations Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Nicaragua (2001-2005); Deputy Resident Representative in Cuba (1999-2001); Deputy Resident Representative in Uruguay (1996-1999); Programme Management Officer, Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States in New York (1994-1996); and Programme Officer and then Assistant Resident Representative in Turkey (1990-1994).

Preceding his United Nations career, Mr. Chediek worked at the Department of Legislative Analysis of the Argentinean Congress and as an independent consultant assisting in the design of financial investment systems in Argentina.

Mr. Chediek holds a Master of Science in Foreign Service (honors) from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Catholic University in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Ms Dina Saleh is the Sub-Regional Director of IFAD’s Middle East and North Africa Hub in Cairo and has been recently appointed as ad-interim Director in IFAD’s Near East, North Africa and Europe Division, from 1 July 2020.

Ms Saleh has over 20 years international experience in development projects and programs in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia. She also served as the Regional Portfolio Adviser for the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division and previously, as the Supervision Support Officer. Prior to joining IFAD in 2007, Ms. Saleh worked at the United Nations Office for Project Services in Nairobi, Tunis and Rome and with private sector companies.

She holds an MSc from the University of London in Development Finance and a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from United States International University.
Currently Minister of State for Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mr. Henri Djombo has had a long and distinguished career in the public service of the Republic of Congo. From 1980, he has been appointed Minister of State to various Ministries with responsibility for different aspects of the natural resources of his country. These include Minister for Water Resources and Forestry (1980 – 1985); Minister of Forest Economy (1997 – 1988; and 2007 – 2009); with added responsibility for Fisheries and Fishery Resources (1998 – 2002); for the Environment (2002 – 2007); and for Sustainable Development (2012 – April 2016).

During this period, Mr. Djombo played a key role in supporting the peace efforts in his country in his capacity as Member, National Mediation Committee for the end of Armed Conflict (1997); and as Personal Representative of the President of the Republic in the Congo Peace Negotiations in 1999.

On the diplomatic front, Mr. Djombo was Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary accredited to Bulgaria from 1986 to 1988. He has also been selected for several international assignments, including with the African Union, UNEP, UNESCO and the Africa Timber Organization; and has also been Chairman, Conference of African Ministers of the Environment (CMAE) from 2006 - 2007.

Mr. Djombo is an avid sportsman and keen writer with several books and plays to his name. He holds a degree as an Engineer Economist from the Kirov Technical Forest Academy, Leningrad (former USSR), and is fluent in French, Russian and English.
The Minister José Angel Lopez has extensive experience in agriculture, with more than 36 years (Since 1984) working in this sector. He has served as a leader and manager heading different key sectors for the development of the country. He was President of the Board of Directors of the Presidential Unit for the Resolution of Land Conflicts (CONTIERRA) and was the founder and President of the Foundation Coffee Growing for Development (FUNCAFE).

He served as Vice Minister of Livestock, Hydrobiological Resources and Food in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food from 1998 to 1999. He has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Confederation of Cooperative Federations (CONFECOOP). In addition, he has been the General Manager of the Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives of Coffee Producers of Guatemala (FEDECOCAGUA).

The Minister also has experience in the financial sector as he was Second Vice President of the Latin American Federation of Banks (FELABAN), President of the Banking Association of Guatemala (ABG), President of the Administrative Council of BANURAL and Vice President of the Social Economic Council (CES). His experience allowed him to be part of an important economic sector for Guatemala, that of coffee growing. He presided over the National Coffee Association (ANACAFE) and the Board of Directors of the International Coffee Organization.

The Minister José Angel Lopez has a degree in Political Science from the University of San Carlos de Guatemala.
H.E. Niu Dun is the Ambassador of the People Republic of China to the UN Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome since March 2015.

Before his current appointment, Ambassador Niu Dun worked as Vice Minister of Agriculture of China in charge of international agricultural cooperation, fisheries, agricultural product market, retired cadres of the ministry, and logistics service since 2004. His past experience in the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of China includes assignments as Deputy Director-General of Department of Personnel and Labor; Director-General of Department of Farm Mechanization; Director-General of Department of Science, Technology and Education; Director-General of Department of International Cooperation.

Prior to joining the Ministry of Agriculture, Ambassador Niu Dun worked in the Beijing Agricultural University (now China Agricultural University), where he also obtained his degree, with a major in soil and agrochemistry. In addition to this he also studied at the Universitaet Hohenheim, in Germany.
Mr Said FEGROUCHE is Head of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Waters and Forests in Morocco. His mission is to promote the international development and mobilization of partners and technical and financial institutions around the vision of the Green Morocco Plan and then the Green Generation Plan.

Fegrouche has over 23 years' experience working with public and private institutions to promote Agri-business and contribute to the evolving Agriculture development strategy in Morocco. He previously held the position of Head of Strategies division at the Ministry of Agriculture, actively engaged in implementing nationwide, the Plan Maroc Vert (Country Green Strategy). He also served as Head of the Projects Engineering at the Agriculture Development Agency (Specialized public institution of the Ministry of Agriculture) in charge of the prospecting, design, and placement of PMV projects. He was also in charge of proposals of action plans to encourage solidarity agriculture and the contribution to the implementation of incentive systems, financing and insurance related to upstream agricultural and agro-industrial aggregation. Mr Fegrouche evolving experience has given him the opportunity to lead an Emirate multinational firm operating in the Food-Agri systems in Mauritania and Morocco.

Fegrouche holds an MSc degree in Agro-Economics from Agronomy and Veterinarian Institute Hassan II Morocco.
Ms Aggie Asiimwe Konde
Vice President
Programme Innovation and Delivery
Africa Alliance for a Green Revolution

Aggie Asiimwe Konde is the Vice President, Program Innovation and Delivery at Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). Aggie leads a specialized team of scientists and generalists across 11 AGRA countries in East, West and Southern Africa responsible for the strategic role of portfolio design & development, monitoring and implementation to achieve Agricultural transformation by 2030.

Aggie is a blue ocean enthusiast who is pragmatic, and results oriented with over 15 years’ experience across multiple private and public sector industries (Tobacco, Beverages, Multimedia, Textile & Apparel, Aquaculture and Agriculture) with diverse experience in leveraging innovative solutions that drive sustainable economic growth.

Aggie is a social scientist who also holds an MBA from the University of Liverpool and has trained with the world-renown Springfield Centre in Market Systems Development. She recently completed a select pioneering class of the Global CEO Program (IESA -University of Navarra).
Mr. Oliveira assumed the position of Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Structural Economic Transformation and Trade of the OACPS on July 7th, 2020.

Mr. Oliveira is a national of the Dominican Republic (DR) with 30 years of experience in drafting, managing, supervising, and evaluating multi-donor programs and projects for the creation and strengthening of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and Business Support Organisations in the six OACPS regions at national, regional and all-ACP levels.

Before joining the OACPS, he served as Deputy Executive Director of the Caribbean Export Development Agency and this since 2011. During this period Mr. Oliveira acted as “Programme Manager” of the “Trade and Private Sector Components” of the 10th and 11th EDF Haiti-DR Bi-national Programmes. He also worked for Caribbean Export as “Manager of Special Projects” and “Manager of the 9th EDF Caribbean Trade and Private Sector Development Programme” (2008-2011).

He was Sector Coordinator for “Information & Communications Technologies” and “Tourism” as well as Regional Coordinator for Southern and Eastern Africa at the ACP-EU Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE) (2005-2008).

Mr. Oliveira worked as “Expert, Private Sector” at the OACPS Secretariat, contributing in the development of the first private sector development strategy of the Group and participating in the review of the Cotonou Agreement (2002 to 2005).

From 2000 to 2002 he assumed the role of Deputy Minister and Deputy National Authorizing Officer (NAO) of the DR; Under this responsibility he represented CARIFORUM on the “ACP Ministerial Trade Committee” and “Joint ACP-EC Ministerial Trade Committee” that negotiated the first phase of the ACP-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). From 1997 to 2001, he was National Representative of CDE in DR and Director of the “Private Sector Support and Foreign Trade Department” at DR’s NAO Bureau.

He was Economic Attaché of the DR Embassy to the European Union (EU) and the Kingdom of Belgium (1990-1997) and Director of the Dominican Tourism Office for the BENELUX countries (1994-1997).
Mr Bukar Tijani, a national of Nigeria, continued the current role as Assistant Director-General (ADG) in March 2020, following a one and one year mandate as Assistant Director-General of the FAO Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department (AGD) starting November 2018. While AG-ADG, Mr. Tijani reconstituted the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Plant Pests (ECTPP), which integrates technical and operational capacities of Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP) and with that of the Food Chain Crisis – Emergency Management Unit (FCC-EMU) of the Emergency and Resilience Division (PSE) and held the first and several meetings to flag-off FAO response for the Desert Locust upsurge in Eastern Africa, Red Sea Coast, South West Asian countries in January 2020.

Before assuming the role of AG-ADG, Mr Tijani was FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa (ADG/RR RAF), for 5 years – from December 2013 to October 2018 where he coordinated the activities of the 47 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa very successfully. He has extensive experience on on-farm research and agricultural extension, as well as on participatory and community-based agricultural and rural development approaches applied across Africa. His professional career started in 1978 as a Rural Agricultural Extension worker in Nigeria. After his National Service with the Kano Agricultural and Rural Development Authority in the mid-1980s, Mr. Tijani collaborated with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) on on-farm adaptive research for smallholder farmers which saw to adoption of several maize, rice and cowpea varieties used up to present day in Nigeria. He also collaborated with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), regional office in Mali and with the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) in Lomé which saw to the first introduction of fertilizer “super granules” on rice in Northern Nigeria. In addition, and among the several appointments he held, Mr Tijani has served as a Cabinet Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as the Minister of State for Agriculture and Rural Development.

Mr. Tijani holds an M.Sc. in Tropical Agricultural Development from the University of Reading, United Kingdom, and a B.Sc. in Agronomy and Soil Science from the Tuskegee University, Alabama, USA.
Mr Kaatrud is WFP's Global Director of Programme and Policy, based in WFP's headquarters in Rome, Italy. Before that, Mr Kaatrud served in Bangkok as WFP's Regional Director for Asia & the Pacific Bureau. In various senior positions in Emergencies, Assessment & Analysis and Logistics over the years, he had a lead role in building WFP’s internal response capacity, developing key strategic partnerships and strengthening inter-agency coordination.

Mr Kaatrud has been involved in leading humanitarian and development work for the past 30 years, having worked with CARE and OCHA in addition to WFP, with longstanding experience in supporting and coordinating operations across the globe. He holds two master’s degrees in International Affairs/Economic Development and Urban Planning from Columbia University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).
Marie Haga is Associate Vice-President of the External Relations and Governance Department at IFAD. She is responsible for communications, global engagement, partnerships, and resource mobilization, as well as overseeing the relations with IFAD’s 177 Member States.

Haga has extensive experience in conservation, food security, foreign affairs and politics. Prior to her role with IFAD, she was the Executive Director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust since March 2013.

Haga served with Norway’s Foreign Service holding various positions in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including the Norwegian Mission to the United Nations in New York and the Embassy in New Delhi. She held the position of State Secretary/Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1997-1999.

Mr Ron Hartman is currently IFAD's Director for Global Engagement, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization. He is responsible for leading IFAD's global engagement and multilateral relations including with the private sector; IFAD's south-south and triangular cooperation agenda; and replenishment, resource mobilization and funds management.

Prior to his current position, Mr Hartman has served as IFAD Country Director and Representative at its South East Asia and the Pacific subregional office in Jakarta. He was also formerly IFAD's Country Programme Manager (Nepal, Pacific Islands, Thailand) and Portfolio/Operations Advisor in the Asia and Pacific region. Mr Hartman has also served UNOPS as a Portfolio Manager based in Bangkok, Thailand.

Prior to joining the United Nations in 2003, Mr Hartman held management positions in both public and private sector organizations in Australia and the United Kingdom, most recently in investment banking and fund management. With over 24 years of professional experience, including over 15 years with the United Nations, Mr Hartman has acquired an extensive managerial and operational experience in over 25 countries.

He has specialized knowledge in promoting sustainable socio-economic development and poverty reduction, public policy, public and private investment, and partnerships. He has strong technical experience in the design and implementation of investment programmes. In 2011, Mr Hartman was awarded the IFAD Presidential Award for outstanding performance.

Mr Hartman was educated in Australia and UK and holds qualifications in economics, finance and management.