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Place and date of birth Sint-Gillis Waas, Belgium, January 12, 1968
Nationality Belgian
Occupation Director, Agro-Insight (www.agroinsight.com)
Founder and chairman, Access Agriculture (www.accessagriculture.org)

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Languages Mother tongue: Dutch
Excellent English and French
Intermediate German and Spanish

University studies

PhD (2000): Wageningen University, the Netherlands. "Evaluating farmers' knowledge, perceptions and practices: a case study of pest management by fruit farmers in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam"

MSc (1992): Ghent University, Faculty of Agricultural and Applied Biological Sciences, Belgium. Specialization: Tropical Agriculture

Employment

Agro-Insight: Owner and director (2010-current) of company focusing on agricultural extension

Africa Rice Center (2005-2010): Program Leader, Learning and Innovation Systems

CAB International (2000-2005): Participatory Research and Extension Specialist

Belgian universities (1993-1999): Lecturing & managing projects on agriculture in developing countries

International Awards and other Achievements

2014: Golden award for Communication Effectiveness by The International Visual Communication Association (IVCA) in London for the "Fighting Striga" videos

2013: The second and third price of the 2nd Africa Agricultural Film Festival was awarded to our videos "Feeding snails" and "Let's talk money" developed with staff of various organisations in Africa as part of workshops on farmer-to-farmer video production.

2010: The International Visual Communication Association (IVCA) highly commended our video "Cashing in with Parboiled Rice" in the category for Effective Communication

2009: CGIAR Science Award for Outstanding Communications. Based on series of 11 farmer-to-farmer rice videos translated into 33 African languages and used by over 600 organizations

2004: Industry Award for Effective Communication by IVCA for 'Bangladesh Women-to-Women Seed Health Video Project'

Membership of professional bodies:

Technical Advisory Group of the African Soil Health Consortium (ASHC); Association for International Agriculture and Rural Development (AIARD); Neuchâtel Initiative; External Advisory Board of ENDURE (European network of excellence for sustainable agriculture)

Summary of Experience

I am an agricultural scientist with a keen interest in farmers' knowledge and innovations in order to enhance rural learning and communication. For over 20 years I have supported research and development projects in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Mediterranean on projects with Belgian universities, FAO, CABI, IPGRI, IRRI, AfricaRice (ex-WARDA) and civil society organizations.

Assignments involved: project management and evaluation; documenting seed enterprises and extension methods; bridging local and scientific knowledge; coordinating Africa-wide dissemination of farmer-to-farmer videos; facilitating institutional learning and strengthening R&D partnerships.

Experience (Overview)

COUNTRY	DONOR/DESCRIPTION	DURATION
Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, Togo	SDC: Videos for Farmers USAID: Conservation agriculture IFAD: Integrated soil fertility management BMGF: Africa Soil Health Consortium SDC: Scoping study on farmer-to-farmer video-mediated learning for sustainable agriculture BMGF: Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA) and Stress-tolerant Rice for Africa and South Asia (STRASA) BMGF: Harnessing Opportunities for Productivity Enhancement (HOPE) of Sorghum and Millets in Africa and South Asia AGRA: Evaluating innovative extension approaches in Ghana	> 4 years
Benin, Mali, Guinea, Ghana, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Nigeria, Uganda, Senegal, Tanzania and Madagascar	IFAD: Participatory adaptation and diffusion of technologies for rice-based systems in West Africa - II Government of Japan: Rice quality and rice value chain USAID: Emergency Initiative to enhance farmers' access to seed and knowledge CFH Foundation: Ant-based pest control in Africa FAO: African Seed Enterprises for Food Security Crops	5 years
Bangladesh	SDC: Good Seed Initiative DFID: (1) Capacity building and coordination of rice seed health improvement project; (2) Women-to-women extension through learner-centred video production; (3) Facilitating institutional learning and documentation of 20 projects on agricultural extension and innovation systems	4 years
Vietnam	ACIAR: Manager of project to improve national research and extension capacities for fruit and vegetable disease management	3 years
Vietnam	DGDC: Manager of IPM in fruit project and studying traditional knowledge in sustainable orchard management	2 years
Bolivia	CABI-PF: Developing training curricula for tomato and peach pest management	< 1 year
Colombia	Darwin Initiative: Enhancing biodiversity in coffee	< 1 year
Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Israel, Italy	EU: Scientist in <i>Pistacia</i> germplasm conservation project	3 years
Malaysia	DGDC: Managing research project on small ruminant husbandry to improve livelihoods of smallholders	1 year
Nigeria	IITA Research fellow on control of <i>Striga hermonthica</i>	6 months

Experience (Detailed)

08/2010-now: Agro-Insight

Owner and director. Agro-Insight focuses on evaluation and documentation of international R&D projects, and enhancement of learning towards sustainable agriculture through farmer-to-farmer training videos. Local language versions, mass multiplied and distributed through a targeted strategy help organizations to reach a very broad range of agricultural service providers in developing countries. Video activities undertaken in Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, DR Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania and Togo for ICRISAT, CIMMYT, IRRI, CABI and IFDC.

03/2005-07/2010: Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice)

Program leader, Learning & Innovation Systems. Main focus on shaping and documenting rural learning processes and seed innovation systems; public-private partnerships in extension and strategies to enhance learning and linkages among multiple actors in the value chain. Activities undertaken in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda.

07/2000-02/2005: CAB International

Vietnam Country Manager and Participatory Research and Extension specialist, CAB International, U.K.

CONTENT:

- Formulate and manage projects dealing with sustainable agriculture
- Technically and methodologically backstop projects on rice, vegetable, fruit and agroforestry
- Strengthen collaboration between research, extension and farmer communities
- Develop Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) on alternatives to pesticides for coffee for the food industry (COOP, UK)
- Train and raise awareness on farmer participatory methods for staff of extension services, research institutes, universities and civil society organisations
- Organize study tours
- Develop training curricula and materials (learning exercises, manuals, videos)
- Facilitate institutional learning with regard to knowledge generation and dissemination

COUNTRIES:

- Bangladesh: SDC-funded 'Good Seed Initiative'; DFID-funded 'Seed Health Improvement Project'; 'Learner-centred Video Production for Women-to-Women Extension of Post-harvest Technologies'; and 1-year consultancy for IRRI to document 'Rice Research Uptake and Extension Methods'
- Bolivia: PF-funded project 'Plant Health Diagnostics and Discovery Learning'
- Colombia: Darwin award project 'Biodiversity and Colombian Coffee Farmers: Capacity Building for Added Value'
- Nepal, Kenya and Bolivia: FAO-funded case study coordination on 'Knowledge Generation in Tree and Forest Management'
- Trinidad and Tobago: SDC-funded 'Caribbean Regional Training Workshop on Farmer Participatory Methods for Ecological Crop Management'
- Vietnam: ACIAR-funded project 'Developing Disease Management Capacity in Vietnam'; DGDC/SDC-funded project 'Evaluating fruit farmer knowledge as input for farmer-led extension'; and PF-funded project to develop a manual 'Ants as Friends' for natural pest control in citrus and other tree crops

08/1997- 07/1999: Catholic University Leuven, Belgium

Project manager of the 'Integrated Pest Management in Fruit Production' project of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VL.I.R.), at the Cantho University, Vietnam.

CONTENT:

- Manage project with 10 staff members
- Coordinate and document research and training activities for several fruit crops including citrus, mango, sapodilla, longan and durian
- Organise workshops and symposia

COUNTRIES:

- Vietnam: 2-year assignment as project coordinator
- Cambodia, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, China: short missions

11/1993-07/1997: University of Ghent, Belgium

CONTENT:

- Research assistant. Teaching and assisting in: Tropical Crop Husbandry, Applied Tropical Plant Taxonomy, Tropical Eco- and Production systems
- Coordinate and provide technical backstopping for various research projects
- Network

COUNTRIES:

- Malaysia: 1-year assignment as project manager of the 'Goat/Sheep and Husbandry-Phase 2' project. Ecological and nutritional studies of native rangelands. On-station research of impact of tree forage crops on animal production.
- Turkey: Consultancy for the IUAP 28 'Interdisciplinary Archaeology' project. Establishing method to study forage availability of native pastures and dietary intake of goats and sheep.
- Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Israel, Italy: short missions for the EU project 'Establishment of a germplasm collection of Mediterranean *Pistacia*'.
- Sri Lanka: Visiting scientist in the 'Weeds in Tropical Annual Food Crops' V.L.I.R. project. Conducting an ecological-phytotechnical survey on weed communities. Plant collection for reference herbarium. Designing and setting up of experiments for local graduate students.
- the Netherlands: Guest lecturer at the Institute for Social Geography, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands: 'An introduction on farming systems in Sub-Sahara Africa and the impact of farming systems on the vegetation'.

07-12/1991: IITA

Research fellow at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, Nigeria. Cooperate with an international team to develop a new *in vitro* technique useful in the struggle against the parasitic weed *Striga*. Visiting farmers' fields and projects in different agro-ecological zones of Nigeria.

Fund raising capabilities

- Videos for Farmers project with Access Agriculture. SDC, Euro 2.5 million (2013-2015)
- Access Agriculture opening credit. Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC, CFH 120,000 (2012)
- Rice quality and post-harvest. Japanese government, USD 300,000 (2006-2009)
- Improving rice processing strategies for food security in West Africa. The CGIAR-Canada Linkage Fund through CIDA, USD 225,000 (2008-2010)
- Ant-based pest control in tree crops in Africa. Conservation, Food and Health Foundation, USD 81,000. (2006-2010)
- Ant-based pest control in Vietnam and Indonesia. Conservation, Food and Health Foundation, USD 20,000. (2003-2004)
- Farmer-to-farmer extension of IPM in fruit crops. Micro-Intervention Project from the Belgian embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam, BEF 300,000 (2001)
- University of Ghent Phd scholarship for a student from Iran to work on germplasm characterization of *Pistacia khinjuk* and *P. mutica*. (1995-1999)

References

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Training videos (Director of production, often with locally trained teams)

- Cassava-legume intercropping; feeding snails, feeding improved chickens; feeding grasscutters; feeding dairy goats; feeding rabbits; honey processing (2013)
- Integrated soil fertility management; Tomato drip irrigation; Contour bunds; Mucuna relay cropping in maize-cassava systems; Reduced soil tillage; Women in extension (2012)
- Urea deep placement; Striga biology; Integrated approach in striga control; Succeed with seeds; Composting; Animals and trees for better crops; Microdosing; Cowpea seed storage; Grow row by row; Crop rotation; Joining hands against striga; Let's talk money; Fish for food and food for fish; Flood tolerant rice; Direct dry seeded rice (2011)
- Land preparation; Rice seedbed preparation; Rice transplanting; Weed management; Soil fertility management (2009)
- Improving rice quality (2007)
- Cashing in with parboiled rice (2005)
- Seed sorting; seed flotation; seed drying and seed conservation (2003)

All videos can be watched and downloaded for free from
www.accessagriculture.org

The video **Managing cassava mealybugs** that we produced for CIAT is distributed and shown throughout South-East Asia, including on national TV.

Our video on agricultural mechanization made in 2012 with CIMMYT in Bangladesh was viewed by over 150,000 farmers at public video shows, on cable TV and on DVD.

Four videos on sustainable land management made in 2011 and 2012 with IFDC available in English, French, Portuguese and 22 African languages: Benin (Bariba, Fon, Idaatcha); Burkina Faso (Dioula, Gourmanche, Lobiri, Mooré); Ghana (Buli, Dagaari, Dagbani, Ewe, Frafra, Gonja, Kusaal, Sisaala); Madagascar (Malagash); Nigeria (Hausa, Yoruba); Niger (Zarma); Kenya (Swahili); Senegal (Wolof); Togo (Aja, Kabyé, Moba)

10 videos on integrated striga and soil fertility management made with ICRISAT available in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and 20 African languages: Benin (Bariba, Dendi, Nago), Mali (Bambara, Bobo, Peulh); Burkina Faso (Mooré); Ghana (Buli, Dagaari, Dagbani, Frafra, Gonja, Kusaal, Sisaala); Nigeria (Hausa); Niger (Zarma); Kenya (Swahili); Malawi (Chichewa), Senegal (Wolof)

- 50,000 copies of multi-language DVDs distributed across Africa
- used by over 800 organizations

Our 11 rice advice videos made from 2003-2009 with IRRI and AfricaRice available in English, French and 40 African languages: Benin (Bariba, Dendi, Fon, Mina); Burkina Faso (Dioula, Mooré); Central African Republic (Sango); Chad (Arabic); DR Congo (Lingala); Ethiopia (Amharec); Ghana (Buli, Dagaari, Dagbani, Ewe, Gonja, Kusaal, Kasem, Sisaala, Twi); Guinea (Guerze, Susu, Pular); Kenya (Kiswahili); Madagascar (Malagash); Mali (Bambara, Serere, Sonrai); Nigeria (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba); Senegal (Jola, Peulh, Wolof); Sierra Leone (Creole, Mende); The Gambia (Mandinka); Uganda (Ateso, Luganda, Lugbara, Luo, Runyakitara)

- 20,000 copies of multi-language Rice Advice DVDs distributed across East Africa and 2000 as VCD format in Benin
- used by over 1000 organizations

Books

- Van Mele, P., Bentley, J.W and Guéi, R.G. (eds.) 2011. African Seed Enterprises: Sowing the Seeds of Food Security. CABI Publishing, UK, 256 pp.
- Van Mele, P. (ed.) 2008. Discovery Learning: A Manual to Promote Better Pest Management in Tree Crops in Africa. French version. Africa Rice Center (WARDA) and Conservation, Food and Health Foundation.
- Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) 2005. Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh. CABI Publishing, UK, 307 pp.
- Van Mele, P. & Cuc, N.T.T. 2003. Ants as Friends. CABI Bioscience, UK, 67 pp. Translated into Khmer (2010), French (2008), Vietnamese (2005) and Bahasa Indonesia (2004).
- Van Mele, P. (ed.) 2003. Way Out of the Woods: Learning How to Manage Trees and Forests. CPLPress, Newbury, UK, 143 pp.
- IPGRI. 1998. Descriptors list for *Pistacia* spp. (excluding *P. vera* L.). International Plant Genetic Resources Institute, Rome, Italy, 48 pp. (Principal authors: Kaska, N., Van Mele, P. & Padulosi, S.).
- IPGRI. 1997. Descriptors list for pistachio (*Pistacia vera* L.). International Plant Genetic Resources Institute, Rome, Italy, 51 pp. (Principal authors: Barone, E., Van Mele, P. & Padulosi, S.). <http://www.ipgri.cgiar.org/publications/pdf/494.pdf>

Publications on Rural Extension and Agricultural Innovation Systems

- Bentley, J., Van Mele, P., Okry, F. and Zossou, E. 2014. Videos that speak for themselves: when non-extensionists show agricultural videos to large audiences. *Development in Practice* 24(7), 921-929.
- Bentley, J., Van Mele, P., Touré, S. and van Mourik, T. 2014. Fighting striga and improving soil fertility with videos in Mali. *Agro-Insight*, Ghent, pp. 21.
- Van Mele, P., Wanvoeke, J., Rodgers, J. and McKay, B. 2013. Innovative and effective ways to enhance rural learning in Africa. In: Wopereis, M., Johnson, D., Ahmadi, N., Tollens, E. and Jalloh, A. (eds.) *Realizing Africa's Rice Promise*. CABI Publishing, 366-377.
- Bentley, J., Van Mele, P. and Harun-ar-Rashid 2013. The Story of a Video on Mechanical Seeders in Bangladesh: "If we are convinced, we will buy it". MEAS Case Study # 6, Michigan State University, pp. 28.
- Bentley, J., Van Mele, P. and Musimami, G. 2013. The Mud on Their Legs – Farmer to Farmer Videos in Uganda. MEAS Case Study #3, Michigan State University, pp. 26.
- Okry, F., Van Mele, P. and Houinsou, F. 2013. Forging new partnerships: Lessons from the dissemination of agricultural training videos in Benin. *Journal of International Agricultural Extension and Education*. DOI: 10.1080/1389224X.2013.783495.
- Zossou, E., Van Mele, P., Wanvoeke, J. and Lebailly, P. 2012. Participatory impact assessment of rice parboiling videos with women in Benin. *Experimental Agriculture* 48(3), 438-447.
- Zossou, E., Vodouhe, D.S., Van Mele, P. and Lebailly, P. 2012. Linking farmers' access to rural radio, gender and livelihoods: case study of rice processors in Benin. Paper presented at the Third IAALD Africa Chapter Conference. Johannesburg, South Africa, 21-23 May 2012.
- Demont, M., Zossou, E., Rutsaert, P., Ndoura, M., Van Mele, P. and Verbeke, W. 2012. Consumer valuation of improved rice parboiling technologies in Benin. *Food Quality and Preference*, 23(1), 63-70.
- Van Mele, P. 2011. Desperately seeking content: Why service providers increasingly search for quality agricultural training videos. Paper presented at the International Conference on Innovations in Extension and Advisory Services. Nairobi, Kenya, 15-18 November 2011: CTA.
- Van Mele, P. 2011. Video-mediated farmer-to-farmer learning for sustainable agriculture. A scoping study for SDC, SAI Platform and GFRAS. *Agro-Insight*, Ghent, Belgium, 47 pp.
- Bentley, J., Van Mele, P., Kibwika, P., Atta Diallo, H., Oduor, G., Romney, D. and Williams, F. 2011. AGRA Extension Support Function Country Reports. CABI, Nairobi, 172 pp.
- Van Mele, P., Bentley, J.W., Dacko, R.M., Yattara, K. and Acheampong, G.K. 2011. Attitude counts: engaging with rice farmers in West Africa. *Development in Practice*, 21(6), 806-821.
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- Guéi, R.G., Bentley, J.W and Van Mele, P. 2011. Introduction: A full granary. In: Van Mele, P., Bentley, J.W and Guéi, R.G. (eds.) *African Seed Enterprises: Sowing the Seeds of Food Security*. CABI Publishing, UK, pp. 1-7.
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