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Place and date of birth Sint-Gillis Waas, Belgium, January 12, 1968
Nationality Belgian
Occupation Learning and Innovation Systems Specialist

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Language proficiency Mother tongue: Dutch
Active knowledge of English and French
Basic knowledge of German, Spanish and Vietnamese

University studies

1986-1992

Ghent University, Faculty of Agricultural and Applied Biological Sciences, Belgium.

Major courses: Tropical Plant Production, Plant Protection, Ecology and Socioeconomy

1999-2000

Wageningen University, the Netherlands.

PhD thesis: "Evaluating farmers' knowledge, perceptions and practices: a case study of pest management by fruit farmers in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam"

International awards and other achievements

2004: the International Visual Communication Association handed over the Industry Award for Effective Communication to our 'Bangladesh Women-to-Women Seed Health Video Project'.

2007: The Economist published an article on our weaver ant research called Ant and Tech (July 14th, p 91)

2009: Series of 11 farmer-to-farmer rice videos translated into 33 African languages and used by over 600 organizations.

Membership of professional bodies:

Neuchâtel Initiative, External Advisory Board of ENDURE (European network of excellence contributing to the development of farming systems less reliant on pesticides)

Summary of experience

I am a learning and communication specialist with good coordination and documentation skills and experience of working in multi-cultural environments. For nearly 20 years I have worked in South and SE Asia, Africa, S America and the Mediterranean on projects with Belgian universities, FAO, CABI, IPGRI, IRRI, AfricaRice (ex-WARDA) and multiple regional and local civil society organizations.

These assignments involved: evaluating and documenting seed enterprises and extension methodologies; integrating local knowledge into formal knowledge systems; developing and coordinating Africa-wide dissemination of farmer-to-farmer videos and rural radio programs; facilitating institutional learning and strengthening collaboration between R&D actors.

Experience (Overview)

COUNTRY	DONOR/DESCRIPTION	DURATION
Benin, Mali, Guinea, Ghana, The Gambia, Nigeria, Uganda, Senegal, Tanzania and Ethiopia	IFAD: Participatory adaptation and diffusion of technologies for rice-based systems in West Africa - II Government of Japan: Rice quality and post-harvest 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	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 for value addition	< 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)

03/2005-now: Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice)

Program leader, Learning & Innovation Systems. Main focus on shaping and evaluating 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, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda.

07/2000-02/2005: CAB International

Vietnam Country Manager and Participatory Research and Extension specialist, CAB International, Egham, 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)
- Enhance communication between stakeholders and donors
- 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: 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

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.
- Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Israel, Italy: short missions for the EC project 'Establishment of a germplasm collection of Mediterranean *Pistacia*'.
- Sri Lanka: Visiting scientist in the 'Weeds in Tropical Annual Food Crops' VL.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.

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

- 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 61,000. (2006-2009)
- Reviving the Rice Seed Sector in Liberia. IFAD, USD 1.6 million (pending)
- 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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Videos

- Women-to-Women Extension for Rice Seed Health (2003)
- Cashing in with Parboiled Rice (2005); Improving Rice Quality (2007)
- Land preparation; Rice seedbed preparation; Rice transplanting; Weed management; Soil fertility management (2009)

Available in French, English and 36 African languages (Amharec, Ateso, Bambara, Bariba, Buli, Creole, Dagari, Dagbani, Dendi, Diola, Ewe, Fon, Gonja, Guerze, Hausa, Igbo, Jola, Kassin, Kusal, Lingala, Luganda, Lugbara, Luo, Mandinka, Mina, More, Peulh, Runyakitara, Serere, Sisali, Susu, Sonrai, Swahili, Twi, Wolof and Yoruba)

Books

- Van Mele, P., Bentley, J.W and Guéi, R.G. 2010. African Seed Enterprises: Improving Smallholder Farmers' Access to Quality Seed. CABI Publishing, forthcoming.
- Van Mele, P. 2010. Zooming-in Zooming-out: Videos to scale up sustainable technologies and build livelihood assets. In J. Pretty (ed.) Africa Foresight Study.
- Bentley, J. and Van Mele, P. 2010. Sharing ideas between cultures. In J. Pretty (ed.) Africa Foresight Study.
- Van Mele, P. 2009. Strengthening Rural Extension. In I. Scoones and J. Thompson (eds) Farmer First Revisited: Innovation for Agricultural Research and Development. London: Practical Action Publications, pp. 207-212.
- 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 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

- Chowdhury, A.H., Van Mele, P. and Hauser, M. 2010. Contribution of farmer-to-farmer video to capital assets building: Evidence from Bangladesh. *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*, submitted.
- Bentley, J.W., Van Mele, P. and Acheampong, G.K. 2010. Experimental by nature: rice farmers in Ghana. *Human Organization*, in press.
- Van Mele, P., Bentley, J.W., Dacko, R.M., Yattara, K. and Acheampong, G.K. 2010. Attitude counts: engaging with rice farmers in West Africa. *Development in Practice*, in press.
- Van Mele, P., Wanvoeke, J. and Zossou, E. 2010. Enhancing rural learning, linkages and institutions: the rice videos in Africa. *Development in Practice*, 20(3), in press.
- Van Mele, P., Wanvoeke, J., Akakpo, C., Dacko, R.M., Ceesay, M., Béavogui, L. and Anyang, R. 2010. Videos bridging Asia and Africa: Overcoming cultural and institutional barriers in technology-mediated rural learning. *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension*, 16(1), 75-87.
- Dalohoun, D.N., Hall, A. and Van Mele, P. 2009. Entrepreneurship as driver of a 'Self-Organizing System of Innovation': the case of NERICA in Benin. *International Journal of Technology Management and Sustainable Development*, in press.

- Salahuddin, A., Van Mele, P. and Magor, N.P. 2009. Institutionalizing Values-based Research: Lessons from the PETTRA Project, Bangladesh. In I. Scoones and J. Thompson (eds) *Farmer First Revisited: Innovation for Agricultural Research and Development*. London: Practical Action Publications, pp. 212-215.
- Wanvoeke, J., Zossou, E. and Van Mele, P. 2009. Moving pictures. *LEISA Magazine*, 35(6), 28-31.
- Zossou, E., Van Mele, P., Vodouhe, S.D. and Wanvoeke, J. 2009. Comparing farmer-to-farmer video with workshops to train rural women in improved rice parboiling in Central Benin. *The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension*, 15(4), 329-339.
- Zossou, E., Van Mele, P., Vodouhe, S.D. and Wanvoeke, J. 2009. The power of video to trigger innovation: rice processing in central Benin. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 7(2), 119-129.
- Van Mele, P. 2009. Making science work. *Rice Today*, January-March, p. 13.
- Van Mele, P. 2008. Multiple approaches to enhance communication between rice farmers, service providers and scientists. *Outlooks on Pest Management*, 19(6), 260-263.
- Wanvoeke, J., Dacko, R.M., Yattara, K. and Van Mele, P. 2008. Women break down barriers in Mali. *LEISA Magazine*, 24(3): 14-15.
- Van Mele, P. 2008. The role of International Agricultural Research Centres in strengthening rural extension. Paper presented at Farmer First Revisited Workshop, Brighton, UK, 12-14 December 2007.
- Salahuddin, A., Van Mele, P. and Magor, N. 2008. Pro-poor values in agricultural research management: PETTRA experiences in practice. *Development in Practice*, 18(4&5): 619-626.
- Van Mele, P. 2008. Zooming-In, Zooming-Out: Developing farmer-education videos to scale up sustainable technologies. *Rural Development News*, Vol 1/2008, 49-55.
- Salahuddin, A., Van Mele, P. and Magor, N.P. 2008. Values in agricultural research and development management: Rhetoric and practice. Paper presented at Farmer First Revisited Workshop, Brighton, UK, 12-14 December 2007.
- Van Mele, P., Zakaria, A.K.M., Hosne-Ara-Begum, Harun-Ar-Rashid and Magor, N.P. 2007. Videos that strengthen rural women's capability to innovate. *Communication for Development and Social Change*, 1(3), 273-293.
- Van Mele, P. 2007. Reaching the poor? About mindsets, partnerships and methodological pluralism. In: *Proceedings of the XVI International Plant Protection Congress*, Volume 2, 15 – 18 October 2007, Glasgow, UK, 664-665.
- Van Mele, P. 2006. Zooming-in, zooming-out: a novel method to scale up local innovations and sustainable technologies. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 4(2), 131-142.
- Van Mele, P., Beavogui, L. and Soumah, M. 2006. Video and radio bridging worlds. Poster presented at the CGIAR AGM meeting, Washington, December 4-6, 2006.
- Okry, F. and Van Mele, P. 2006. Documenting, validating and scaling-up local innovations: Recent experiences from the Africa Rice Center (WARDA). *LEISA Magazine*, 22(3), 14-15.
- Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N.P. 2006. Innovations in project documentation. *Rural Development News*, 1, 39-45.
- Van Mele, P. 2006. Photographs from the field. *Rural Development News*, 1, 46-47.
- Van Mele, P. 2006. Putting farmers at the centre of the rice seed systems in Bangladesh. ID21website. <http://www.id21.org/nr/n1pv1g1.html>
- Van Mele, P. 2006. Learning through writing. *LEISA Magazine*, 22(1), 24-25.
- Badrul, A., Magor, N.P. and Van Mele, P. 2005. Pump it up: developing a pro-poor mobile pump market. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 157-168.
- Bashar, M.K., Salahuddin, A. and Van Mele, P. 2005. Building a rice seed network. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 209-220.

- Saleque, M.A., Harun-Ar-Rashid, Van Mele, P. and Bentley, J. 2005. Village soil fertility maps. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 89-102.
- Nash, P. and Van Mele, P. 2005. Going Public: a quick way to share ideas with communities. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 103-114.
- Van Mele, P., Zakaria, A.K.M., Nasrin, R., Chakroborty, B. and Rodgers, J. 2005. Bringing science to life: video development for women-to women extension. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 49-60.
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- Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Jabbar, M.A. 2005. Grameen Seed: Grameen experiments with a pro-poor seed innovation system. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 233-244.
- Bentley, J. and Van Mele, P. 2005. Creative learning methods. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 63-76.
- Van Mele, P. 2005. Farmseed: putting farmers at the heart of the seed production and distribution system. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 221-232.
- Samsuzzaman, S. and Van Mele, P. 2005. Innovating with federations: community institutions take the lead in seed marketing. In: Van Mele, P., Salahuddin, A. and Magor, N. (eds.) *Innovations in Rural Extension: Case Studies from Bangladesh*. CABI Publishing, Wallingford, pp. 245-254.
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- Van Mele, P. and Braun, A. 2005. Methodological diversity and creativity in agricultural innovation systems. *PLA Notes*, 53, 74-79.
- Van Mele, P. 2003. Promising practices for knowledge generation on tree and forest management. In: Van Mele, P. (ed.) 2003. *Way Out of the Woods: Learning How to Manage Trees and Forests*. CPL Press, Newbury, UK, pp. 135-143.
- Bentley, J., Boa, E., Van Mele, P., Almanza, J., Vasques, D. & Eguino, S. 2003. Going Public: a new extension method. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 1(2), 108-123.

- Van Mele, P. & Baker, P. 2003. Product Advisory Sheet for Coffee. General guidelines to reduce pest, diseases and weeds in coffee using Good Agricultural Practices according to Fairtrade standards and Co-op Code of Practice. CABI, UK, 12 pp.
- Bentley, J., Boa, E., Van Mele, P. & Vos, J. 2003. Discovery through Diagnosis. A Manual of Practical Exercises and Pest Data Sheets to Promote Better Pest Management. Experiences from a Pilot Project in Bolivia. CABI *Bioscience*, pp. 36 (English and Spanish). <http://www.jefferybentley.com/Discovery%20through%20diagnosis%20Bolivia%20ENGLISH%20only.pdf>
- Van Mele, P., McGillivray, L., Brunt, J., Crowson, H. & Vos, J. 2002. Discovery Learning Manual for Cabbage Pest Management. CAB International, Wallingford, pp. 288.
- Moses, K., Little, A., Van Mele, P., Wessler, G., Guharay, F., Pollard, G., Persad, C., Dolly, D., Palengleng, L. & Kimani, M. 2002. Proceedings of Regional Training Workshop on Farmer Participatory Methods for Ecological Crop Management. Trinidad & Tobago, 11-15 September 2000, pp. 88.
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- Van Mele, P. 1999. IPM in Developing Countries: Only a Dream Without Proper Policy? IPMnet NEWS, 63, p. 5, www.ipmnet.org/IPMnet_NEWS/news63.html

Selected Publications on Sustainable Agriculture

- Van Mele, P., Cuc, N.T.T., Seguni, Z., Camara, K. And Offenberg, J. 2010. Multiple sources of local knowledge: A global review of ways to reduce nuisance from the beneficial weaver ant *Oecophylla*. International Journal of Agricultural Resources, Governance and Ecology, in press.
- Seguni, Z.S.K., Way, M.J. and Van Mele, P. 2010. The effect of ground vegetation management on interspecific competition between the ants *Oecophylla longinoda* and *Pheidole megacephala* in a citrus-pineapple intercrop in Tanzania. Agriculture and Forest Entomology, submitted.
- Adandonon, A., Vayssières, J.F., Sinzogan, A. and Van Mele, P. 2009. Density of pheromone sources of the weaver ant *Oecophylla longinoda* affects oviposition behaviour and damage by mango fruit flies (Diptera: Tephritidae). International Journal of Pest Management, 55(4), 285-292.
- Van Mele, P., Vayssières, J.F., Adandonon, A. and Sinzogan, A. 2009. Ant cues affect the oviposition behaviour of fruit flies (Diptera: Tephritidae) in Africa. Physiological Entomology, 34, 256-261.
- Van Mele, P., Camara, K. and Vayssières, J.F. 2009. Thieves, bats and fruit flies: Local ecological knowledge on the weaver ant *Oecophylla longinoda* in relation to three 'invisible' intruders in orchards in Guinea. International Journal of Pest Management, 55(1), 57-61.
- Van Mele, P. 2008. Biological control with the weaver ant *Oecophylla longinoda* in Africa: A review of research and development efforts to link farmers to organic markets. Outlooks on Pest Management, 19(4), 180-183.
- Van Mele, P. 2008. The importance of ecological and socio-technological literacy in R&D priority setting: the case of a fruit innovation system in Guinea, West Africa. International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability, 6(3), 183-194.
- 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. 2008. A historical review of research on the weaver ant *Oecophylla* in biological control. Agricultural and Forest Entomology, 10(1), 13-22.
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- Cuc, N.T.T., Vo Mai, Chien, H.V. & Van Mele, P. 2005. *Discovery Learning: A Manual for Better Pest Management in Tree Crops*, Cantho University, 14 pp.
- Van Mele, P. & Chien, H.V. 2004. Farmers, biodiversity and plant protection: developing a learning environment for sustainable tree cropping systems. *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*, 2(1), 67-76.
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- Van Mele, P. & Cuc, N.T.T. 2003. *Ants as Friends: Improving your Tree Crops with Weaver Ants*. CABI *Bioscience*, pp. 67. ISBN 958-97218-2-6
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