

David Abbass

POSITION

Team Lead, UNFCCC/IGES Regional Collaboration Centre – Bangkok

604 SG Tower, 6th floor
161/1 Soi Mahadlek Luang 3
Bangkok, Thailand

office tel. +662 6517894 ext. 29
mobile +66 959167038
email dabbass@unfccc.int

Date of birth

11 April 1960

Nationality

Canadian (born in Halifax, Nova Scotia)

EDUCATION

MA Communication, 1999
University of the Philippines
Diliman, Quezon City
Metro Manila, Philippines

BSc (Agr), Crop Science, 1983
University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario, Canada

Member University Senate

Nova Scotia Agricultural College (Agr Science, 1980-81)
Truro, Nova Scotia, Canada

Dalhousie University (Science, 1979-80)
Halifax, Nova Scotia

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

For the past 12 years, David Abbass has worked for the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, most recently as Team Lead in the secretariat's Regional Collaboration Centre Bangkok. In the previous 12 years, Mr. Abbass worked in communication for research and development in Asia and the Middle East. Drawing on his experience and his formal education in communication and agriculture, he has consulted on communication in support of agricultural marketing efforts in Bangladesh; contributed to the production of innovative extension education materials in the Philippines; led a communication team at an international research and development center in Taiwan; ran a project to improve agricultural radio programming in Afghanistan; and trained extension education officers in Myanmar, to list some of his work to date. For more than seven years Mr. Abbass worked for The Halifax Herald Limited as a reporter covering agriculture, forestry and mining, and later held various editorial positions before pursuing a career and further education abroad.

LONG-TERM POSITIONS

From October 2016, Team Lead, Regional Collaboration Centre (RCC), Bangkok, Thailand. RCC Bangkok is one of five centres established by the UNFCCC secretariat with key regional partners to spur development of climate change mitigation and sustainable development projects under the Clean

Development Mechanism (CDM). Since adoption of the Paris Climate Change Agreement in December 2015, the centres – in Bangkok, Bogota Kampala, Lomé and St. George's – have taken on an expanded role supporting national planning and climate action under the Agreement.

October 2006 to October 2016, Public Information Officer, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat, Bonn, Germany.

As Team Lead, Communication for Development, Mr. Abbass is responsible for raising awareness about and use of market-based approaches to combat climate change, with specific focus on the CDM. His work includes strategic planning, coordinating communication and outreach activities and liaising with the press, among other duties.

July 2004 to October 2006, Editor, UNFCCC secretariat.

As an editor supporting the negotiations of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC, Mr. Abbass checked and revised documents for clarity and accuracy. He served COP10 through COP12 and the related sessions of the subsidiary bodies to the Convention.

August 2001 to December 2003, Science Writer/Editor employed by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), an international agricultural research and development institute based in Aleppo, Syria, with regional program offices throughout Central and West Asia and North Africa.

While at ICARDA, Mr. Abbass co-developed and implemented a project to increase the airtime and quality of agricultural radio programming in Afghanistan, through training of reporters and technicians and improvement of the recording facilities at the country's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. A weekly radio program, *Sow Well Reap Well*, developed as part of the project, earned an appreciative audience among Afghan farm families. During his tenure, he also co-edited the Institute's biannual magazine, *Caravan*, contributed to production of a range of other publications and carried out assignments in Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and Turkmenistan.

August 1996 to July 2001, employed by the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center (AVRDC), an international agricultural research and development institute based in Taiwan, with regional research and training offices in Thailand and Tanzania and project offices in the Philippines and Vietnam.

In his first two years at AVRDC, Mr. Abbass was the principal writer/editor of the Center's five-year plan, revamped the Center's website, set up a database to simplify book sales and helped revise publications policy. He edited research, wrote and produced publications, and lectured on research report writing and use of the Internet for research. In January 1997 he was named Head, Office of Publications and Communications.

July 1994 to July 1996, employed by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), an international NGO based in Silang, Cavite, Philippines, with offices in New York, Kenya and Ecuador. Established in 1960, IIRR conducts projects, consultancies, and training courses in sustainable agriculture, bio-intensive gardening, communication, health and community development in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

As Media Development Specialist, Mr. Abbass edited publications and was called on to coordinate publications production and facilitate training in communication planning and publications production.

January 1984 to May 1991, employed by The Halifax Herald Limited, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. The company publishes two daily broadsheet newspapers, *The Mail-Star* and *The Chronicle-Herald*, with at the time a combined daily circulation of about 105,000 province-wide.

Mr. Abbass held various reporting and editorial positions, beginning with community news and

features reporter, then resources reporter – forestry, agriculture and mining – attached to the papers' business section, before moving to stints as editor, including as night business editor and book editor.

CONSULTANCIES

27–30 April 2004, consultant for WRENmedia, U.K.

Recorded radio interviews at the Interlaken Workshop on Decentralization in Forestry for distribution to radio stations in Africa.

14 January 1999 to 11 February 1999, employed by FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

As Information, Education and Communication Consultant on the UNDP-funded, FAO-implemented project entitled Environmentally Sustainable Food Security and Micro-Income Opportunities in Critical Watersheds (Southern Shan State), Myanmar, Mr. Abbass designed and conducted a communication skills workshop for project staff and their counterparts, wrote a communication strategy and advised on purchase of equipment.

1 November 1993 to 31 January 1994, employed by Agriteam Canada Consulting Ltd., Calgary, Canada.

As Media Specialist assigned to the Crop Diversification Programme (CDP) and stationed in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Mr. Abbass helped CDP reach its 20 million rural clients through effective use of media.

He advised the Department of Agricultural Marketing on communication, in particular in support of crop promotion. He also supervised the project's promotions unit, which included a promotions coordinator and graphic artist.

CDP was a joint Bangladesh, Canada, Netherlands program designed to balance diets and increase food self-sufficiency in Bangladesh through increased production and consumption of pulses, oilseeds and tubers.

1 January to 30 April 1993, employed by Agriteam Canada Consulting Ltd.

As Media Specialist assigned to CDP, Mr. Abbass oversaw the work of a private advertising firm hired to work with the Bangladesh Department of Agricultural Marketing to promote potato and pulse consumption. The campaign included village dramas, radio and television advertisements, advertisements in cinema halls, posters and printed handouts for students. Apart from overseeing the design and implementation of the campaign, Mr. Abbass advised on message and material preparation.

During this four-month assignment he also directed a motivational video for the Department of Agricultural Extension.

26 August to 15 December 1992, employed by Dutch Executing Agency of CDP

As a Special Consultant to the Dutch Executing Agency (Euroconsult), Mr. Abbass designed and produced two innovative cartoon books on seed marketing and seed storage and handling.

Based on research for the two books, he also wrote a communication strategy for reaching Bangladesh's thousands of independent seed dealers.

13 February to 5 August 1992, employed by Agriteam Canada Consulting Ltd.

As Media Specialist assigned to CDP, Mr. Abbass worked closely with the Bangladesh Department of Agricultural Marketing to promote potato and pulse consumption. He wrote a review of the department's potato promotion campaign and designed a framework on which the department could base a pulse promotion.

In partnership with CDP's Project Implementation Unit and through his amicable and productive working relationships with officials in the Bangladesh Agricultural Information Service, Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television, Mr. Abbass was able to secure countless spots on Bangladesh Radio's regular farm broadcast and several feature items on Bangladesh Television's weekly agricultural show.

16 May to 12 August 1991, employed by Agriteam Canada Consulting Ltd.

Assigned to CDP, Mr. Abbass worked with four agencies and institutes under the Bangladesh Ministry of Agriculture, helping to assess their communication capabilities. He also wrote a media plan designed to guide CDP specialists in their diverse efforts to reach CDP clients—men and women farmers and rural poor.

PUBLICATIONS

A Quiet Revolution: Vetch Helps Transform Agriculture in Syria. In *The World & I* magazine. A publication of The Washington Times Corporation. April 2002. (author, photographer)

Farmers Breed Better Barley. In *Caravan*, International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas. Issue 16, Dec. 2001 (co-author)

AVRDC. 2000. *AVRDC Report 2000.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 152 p. (co-editor)

AVRDC. 2000. *AVRDC Report 1999.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 152 p. (co-editor)

AVRDC. 2000. *Indigenous treasures: Healthy diversity through indigenous vegetables.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 18 p. (writer, designer)

AVRDC. 1999. *All the right ingredients: Feeding hungry cities in the next century.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 18 p. (writer, designer)

AVRDC. 1998. *AVRDC Report 1997.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 191 p. (co-editor)

AVRDC. 1998. *Vegetables for poverty alleviation and healthy diets: A plan for 1998-2002.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 29 p. (principal writer/editor and designer)

AVRDC. 1997. *Marking success, charting a future.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 20 p. (writer, designer)

AVRDC. 1996. *Priority green.* Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center, Shanhua, Taiwan, ROC. 20 p. (writer, designer)

IIRR. 1996. *Paraveterinary medicine: An information kit on low-cost health care practices.* International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Silang, Cavite, Philippines. Four vols. 191 p. (co-editor)

IIRR. 1996. *Recording and using indigenous knowledge: A manual.* International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Silang, Cavite, Philippines. 211 p. (editor-in-chief)

IFWA and IIRR. 1996. *Ecologically sound technologies for women in agriculture*. International Federation for Women in Agriculture, Delhi, India and International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Silang, Cavite, Philippines. 213 p. (co-editor)

FAO and IIRR. 1995. *Resource management for upland areas in Southeast Asia*. FARM Field Document 2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Bangkok, Thailand and International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Silang, Cavite, Philippines. 207 p. (co-editor)

IIRR. 1994. *Ethnoveterinary medicine in Asia: An information kit on traditional animal health care practices*. International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Silang, Cavite, Philippines. Four vols. 400 p. (co-editor)

CDP. 1992. *Beej kahini* (The story of seed). Crop Diversification Programme, Dhaka, Bangladesh. 29 p. (writer, designer)

CDP. 1992. *Shooki o Dhookir golpo* (The story of Happy and Sad). Crop Diversification Programme, Dhaka, Bangladesh. 29 p. (writer, designer)

VIDEOS

Bussin' 1994, VHS-NTSC, 5 min. Director and cinematographer. Submitted by the University of the Philippines Film Department to the *Gawad CCP para sa Alternatibong Pelikula at Video* (Cultural Center of the Philippines Alternative Film and Video Competition 1994).

Krishi Shena (Soldiers for Agriculture) 1993, VHS-PAL, 17 min. Writer and director. This motivational video for agricultural extension workers was produced by the Crop Diversification Programme in partnership with the Bangladesh Department of Agricultural Extension.

— 7 October 2016