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Newly Elected President welcomes new Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and Minister of Livestock

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Report Highlights:

On April 4, 2012, the new Government of Senegal (GOS) appointed Mr. Benoit Sambou as Minister of Agriculture and Rural Equipment and Mrs. Aminata Mbengue Ndiaye as Minister of Livestock under the new presidency of Macky Sall, fourth president of Senegal.

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Equipment



Benoit Sambou
Minister of Agriculture and Rural
Equipment

Source: Internet

On April 4, 2012, **Mr. Benoit Sambou** became the new Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment.

Mr Sambou comes from the city of Ziguinchor and studied law at the University of Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar (UCAD). For two years (2008 – 2009), he served as editorialist of a newspaper, *Action et Développement*, in the agriculture sector, reaching the position of editor-in-chief. This is the known extent of his experience in the field of agriculture.

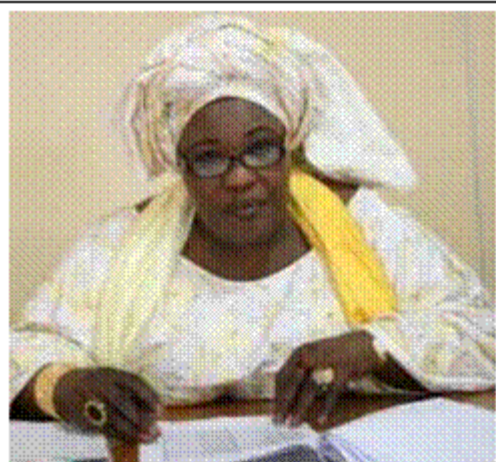
Benoit Sambou resigned from the Jef-Jel political party in 2008 to join the *Alliance for the Republic* (APR) party as a founding member. In this party, led by President Macky Sall, Mr. Sambou served as Director of Elections.

He is the mayor of Dakar's technical advisor and political leader in the city of Ziguinchor (Southern Senegal). According to an interview in the Senegalese newspaper, *Le Quotidien*, dated April 6, 2012, Mr. Sambou is well known by farmer's organizations with whom he has been working closely. The head of the largest farmers' organization in Senegal, Mr Samba Gueye is quoted as saying, "Mr. Benoit Sambou has always been with us before being appointed Minister. He always found an open door with us." Mr Gueye also believes that Mr. Sambou should listen very carefully to rural areas problems of which he is already aware. It is not clear what Mr. Sambou occupied when he worked with farmers' organizations.

During an interview at the official opening ceremony of the 13th edition of the *International Agricultural and Animal Resources Trade* (FIARA), as reported by the *Agence de Presse Senegalaise* (APS) on April 12, 2012, Mr Sambou said, "I want to orient my mission towards the assistance and supply of equipment to rural farmers. I will find the necessary time to discuss with all stakeholders involved in the agricultural sector to find solutions together to the agricultural issues for its development."

Post is not certain about Mr Sambou's capacity to succeed as minister of agriculture since we do not have any record of his professional expertise. Based on the importance of the sector for the Senegalese economy, Post believes technical advisors wish long experience working at the Ministry will need to assist him achieve his goal.

Minister of Livestock



Aminata Mbengue Ndiaye
Minister of Livestock
Source: Internet

Mrs. Aminata Mbengue Ndiaye has a long career in the Government of Senegal (GOS) and in politics.

Mrs. Ndiaye served as a minister twice before. She was the Minister of Women, Child, and Family under the previous administration and Minister of Social Development and National Solidarity (Welfare) for Senegal's second president, Abdou Diouf.

Mrs. Ndiaye is very well engaged in the Socialist Party (PS) where she is the President of the socialist party women's movement. She has also served as mayor of Louga (North-West Senegal) since 2009.

During an interview with the *Agence de Presse Senegalaise* (APS) on April 12, 2012, Mrs. Ndiaye said, "I intend to have an integrated management style involving all actors in the livestock sector to find solutions to problems. I believe it is possible to modernize the sector and make it profitable."

Post paid a courtesy visit to Mrs. Ndiaye on June 12, 2012 and learned that she has a long relationship with the USG, as well. She is very familiar with U.S. agriculture because she was a participant of the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Program (IVP) in 1978 and visited 17 agricultural states in 21 days. Mrs. Ndiaye was the director of a USAID funded program involving women and her husband was the Deputy Director for Peace Corps Senegal for 10 years.

During the meeting, Minister Ndiaye said there is a National Plan for the livestock sector that provides guidance for the next 20 years. It was written by her predecessor, but Minister Ndiaye wants to revise it with input from all actors involved in the sector before submitting it for approval to the GOS. Once approved, the minister will organize a round table with all financial partners to discuss the plan. Minister Ndiaye also noted that the poultry sector is not yet well developed to face the competition. One area where she foresees partnership with USDA is animal health, principally vaccinations, as Senegal is an endemic country for Newcastle's Disease. According to the Director of Veterinary Services, Dr. Mbargou Lo, this disease causes a mortality rate of 80 percent in the poultry sector. In general, only 2 percent of the over 22 million birds that make up the national flock are vaccinated. Minister Ndiaye also requested capacity building to help better organize producers to become more professional and learn cutting techniques.

According to the Minister, Senegal imports \$160 million of powdered milk per year. Mrs. Ndiaye wants to develop the dairy sector to boost local production and make the supply of fresh milk more

consistent. Minister Ndiaye wants to focus on genetic improvement of Senegal's dairy cattle, building storage facilities, and improving road access. During the rainy season, many liters of milk are thrown away because of poor or no road access to markets and lack of refrigeration.

Based on her experience serving at the ministerial level, Post believes that Mrs. Ndiaye may succeed as head of the livestock ministry despite the fact she has never worked in this sector. The new government already decided on May 2012, to subsidize fifty percent of animal feed. Mrs. Ndiaye said that it was an "extraordinary measure" taken by the government to boost the livestock sector especially in the context of an ongoing food crisis that is impacting the sector.

Mrs. Ndiaye is the sister of Mr. Gaston Mbengue, a renowned Senegalese sports promoter since the 1990s. He promotes wrestling (or "Laamb" in Wolof), a very popular Senegalese sport.