

«It is an incredibly rich professional experience»

Sébastien Delahaye joined the Young Professionals Programme (YPP) of the African Development Bank (AfDB) in 2008. Within the framework of the programme, Sébastien performed tasks in the Research Department, the Agriculture and Agro-Industry Department and the Energy, Environment and Climate Change Department. cinfo asked him about his experience.

cinfo: What was your motivation to apply for the YPP of the AfDB?

Sébastien Delahaye: After spending six years working for non-governmental organisations mainly in the field in developing countries, where I was involved in the implementation of projects funded by bilateral or multilateral organisations, I wanted to work for a multilateral organisation on the funding side in order to gain a broader in-depth experience in the development cooperation sector. I trusted that joining the African Development Bank as a Young Professional would give me the unique opportunity to discover a financial institution working in this sector while being fully involved in its operations and activities. I can now say that it is an incredibly rich professional experience.

What do you particularly enjoy when working for the AfDB? What did you find surprising or difficult?

Among others, there are two things that I particularly enjoyed during the YPP: the opportunity to work in different departments of the AfDB and the interaction with a range of stakeholders involved in the development of the continent. Having to complete three assignments of one year each in different departments is both a chance and a challenge. It enables participants to acquire new skills and exposes them to a series of stimulating activities at the institutional and the project management level in many countries and in collaboration with several stakeholders. It however also requires a lot of flexibility and interest in different areas of work, which I believe is a great advantage for any career development.

What are your plans after the YPP?

I intend to stay with the AfDB and build on the institutional knowledge I have developed during the programme allowing me to pursue some of the assignments I have started during the YPP.

Which recommendations would you give to this year's applicants?

Applicants should first familiarize themselves with the work of the bank by visiting the institution's website, attending AfDB events whenever possible and reading informative documents published by the institution in order to see how they position themselves and a career with the AfDB. Finally, as a general advice, I would encourage Swiss applicants to gain experience in the field before applying.

Interview: Jacqueline Breidlid, cinfo, updated June 2015



Prior to participating in the YPP of the AfDB, **Sébastien Delahaye** worked for six years for local NGOs in Haïti and Democratic Republic of Congo among others, where he was in charge of supporting small and medium enterprise (SME) development in rural areas.

Sébastien holds a Master in Corporate Management from ESDES, School of Business and Management in Lyon, France, and a Master of Development Studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland.

African Development Bank (AfDB)

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