

# **“Poto Mitan”:** **Change Agents that Promote Well-Being** **in the Haitian Community**

## **BIOGRAPHIES OF INVITED & KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

### **WINGDIE “DIDI” BERTRAND, MA, DEA, DESS**

Mrs. Didi Bertrand is a medical anthropologist and community health specialist who has worked especially in Haiti, France and Rwanda. Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Mrs. Bertrand studied social science, community health, and health systems management in Haiti and in France. For the last 15 years, she served as community organizer, program developer and implementer, activist for women and girls’ rights, and researcher. She worked as the Director of the Community Health Program and then headed the Biosocial Research and Social Development Programs for Partners In Health Rwanda Inshuti Mu Buzima from 2005 to 2015, supporting the Rwandan Ministry of Health. She has been principal investigator on studies focusing on community health, reproductive health, traditional healing, and health system strengthening evaluation in rural Rwanda. Mrs. Bertrand also chaired the Haiti-Rwanda Commission, initiated after the 2010 earthquake to promote South-South cooperation and exchange between the two countries. She currently serves as Senior Adviser on Community Health for Partners In Health and leads a Women and Girls Initiative founded in 2009, with programs targeting marginalized adolescent girls both in Rwanda and Haiti. She is also the mother of three wonderful children.



### **ABNER SEPTEMBRE, M.A.**



Abner Septembre is a Sociologist and Founding Member of the Association des Paysans de Vallée (APV). He is also the CEO of Hotel Villa Ban-Yen (HVB), in Vallée, Petit-Goave. He received a Master’s Degree in Sociology from the University of Ottawa, and a Graduate Degree in African, Afro-American and Caribbean Studies from the State University of Haiti. For more than 35 years, he has worked for different institutions (e.g., national and international, public and private) as a consultant, manager or coordinator, in various fields, in particular community development (*design, management, implementation, and training*) and community and rural tourism (*promotion, services and events*). He has also served as a member and coordinator of several Boards and Networks.