



2009 AWARD Fellow
Onome Davies

Position:	Senior lecturer
Institution:	Rivers State University of Science and Technology
Country:	Nigeria
PhD:	Hydrobiology and Fisheries, University of Ibadan, 2008
Mentor:	Dr. Ebinimi Ansa African Regional Aquaculture Centre of Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research Aluu, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

"Give me a fish and you feed me for a day. Teach me to fish and you feed me for a lifetime." AWARD has taught me how to fish better."

My career, research and skills changed rapidly during my AWARD Fellowship. In June 2010, I was promoted to the position of Senior Lecturer. I was the Deputy Acting Head of the Department, and am currently the Postgraduate and Undergraduate Coordinator (second in command). I wrote 14 international journal papers (seven published and seven under evaluation) and presented three papers at two international conferences (World Aquaculture Society) and one local conference (Zoological Society of Nigeria). I traveled to seven countries. I can now effectively manage my time as a lecturer, researcher, administrator, community worker, mother, and wife.

Immediately after I left the AWARD mentoring orientation workshop, I visited the Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research (NIOMR) shrimp farm, which motivated me to conduct more research on shrimp and other shellfish.

I attended a short course on Competing Claims in Wageningen, Netherlands in 2010, which greatly increased my professional and managerial skills. I also attended AWARD's scientific writing and policy development in agricultural research course in Mozambique in 2010, and with funding from AWARD I participated in the Australasian Aquaculture Conference and International Trade Show of the World Aquaculture Society in Australia. While in Australia, I funded my own registration to a workshop on aquaculture recirculation technology.

In terms of networking, I have developed a network of 250 people, including other AWARD Fellows, in more than 60 countries through the courses, conferences, and workshops that I attended. AWARD sponsored my membership in the World Aquaculture Society, and I joined networking bodies, including SARNISSA, ITOCA and AQUA-TT. I also access e-libraries, such as OARE, HINARI, and AGORA. My visibility and confidence as an agricultural scientist have greatly increased. In fact, I appeared on Rivers State Television on April 3, 2010, speaking about shrimp culture as a non-oil generating venture for youth engagement in Niger Delta. As well, a journalist with a news service recently asked me to be her source for information on agricultural research in Africa.

In my research, my mentor and I submitted a grant-winning proposal to the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN)—a joint proposal between Rivers State University of Science and Technology (RSUST) and the African Regional Aquaculture Centre/Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research. Furthermore, I am involved in collaborative research work with ARAC/NIOMR. I was also invited to train the academic staff of RSUST on communication skills (poster presentation) and policy development.

My institution was positively affected thanks to the improved teaching skills I gained through my involvement in AWARD. I adopted the use of PowerPoint for presentation of students' group assignments, and I encourage knowledge sharing among the students. As one of my students commented, "Madam, this is not the method you used to teach this course last session. You have changed." I apply mentoring principles in supervising my students, especially the women. The rural female fish farmers with whom I work are recording higher productivity using the new techniques I introduced to them.

As an AWARD Fellow, I believe my influence has developed as well. I convinced the technical director of aquaculture of the American-Soybean Association International Marketing (ASA-IM) in Bangkok, Thailand to include Nigeria in their project program. I also helped to persuade a research scientist at the World Fish Centre, Malaysia, to include Nigeria in their program when they have more funds available. In addition, I helped to establish the African chapter of the World Aquaculture Society following assertive discussions with the president of the organization's Asia Pacific chapter.

My personality, assertiveness, and leadership styles changed positively as an AWARD Fellow. I aspire to fight poverty, hunger, and unemployment in Nigeria and Africa by boosting fish production through sustainable aquaculture and capture fisheries.

Davies is one of 180 African woman scientists who have won an AWARD Fellowship. AWARD is a professional development program that strengthens the research and leadership skills of African women in agricultural science, empowering them to contribute more effectively to poverty alleviation and food security in sub-Saharan Africa. For more information, please visit www.awardfellowships.org
