



**2010 AWARD Fellow**  
**Debir Legesse**

<b>Position:</b>	Junior researcher
<b>Institution:</b>	Awassa Agricultural Research Center (AARC)
<b>Country:</b>	Ethiopia
<b>BSc:</b>	Animal and Range Science, Hawassa University, 2008
<b>Mentored by:</b>	Genevieve Tsegaye, Researcher Natural Resources and Social Economics, AARC

**Research Area: Evaluation of biological, physical, social, and economic factors affecting the production of livestock by smallholder farmers in Ethiopia.**

In Ethiopia, about 85 percent of the population depends solely on agricultural production, says Debir Legesse, a junior researcher at AARC.

“To ensure food security for Ethiopians, the government has instituted a strategy called ‘Agriculture Development-Led Industrialization (ADLI)’. Part of my role as a junior researcher is to work with my colleagues to develop appropriate technologies and practices in the area of animal production for the agricultural sector,” says Legesse.

Legesse is involved in several research works with interdisciplinary case teams at AARC. One area of study involves the livelihood improvement of female-headed households through the adoption of day-old Fayoumi chickens. Another line of research is with bees, with the objective of multiplying the colonies and distributing them to local farmers. “Apiculture is a new area for our institution,” she says.

Legesse will soon begin working on sheep breed improvement and estrous synchronization of local dairy cattle to evaluate the efficiency of artificial insemination. “I have great interest in researching the biological, physical, as well as the social and economic importance of livestock production and conservation,” she says. She is also scaling up technologies for poultry production for resource-poor farmers.

Legesse believes AWARD will help to increase her confidence, enable close networking with other researchers, and provide the opportunity to participate in scientific forums. She is looking forward to increasing her skills and knowledge, and wants to share her newfound knowledge with her colleagues.

*Legesse 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, visit [www.awardfellowships.org](http://www.awardfellowships.org)*