



**AWARD Fellow:**  
**Dora Chao Kilalo**

<b>Position:</b>	Assistant Lecturer
<b>Institution:</b>	University of Nairobi
<b>Country:</b>	Kenya
<b>MSc:</b>	University of Nairobi, Kenya 2005
<b>Mentored by:</b>	Dr. Fridah Mugo Director, Thuiya Development and Environment Consultants, Kenya

*“My goal is to be a seasoned scientist in food safety and quality issues, molecular work and pest management. I want to contribute actively towards the formulation of agricultural policies and food security. I believe that educating a woman is like educating the whole world around her.”*

Dora conducts research on protecting crops from insect and vertebrate pests. A lot of emphasis has gone into research on cereals and legumes for food security in Kenya. However, a shortfall of these crops during a growing season spells doom for farmers.

Dora is developing alternatives that could help ensure food security. She promotes fruits, mushrooms and African leafy vegetables to improve farmer incomes and livelihoods. Passion fruit farming promises good income about nine to 12 months after planting. Dora is conducting some offshoot work to optimize passion fruit tissue culture for mass production of clean planting material and to identify weed hosts of viruses. Upon completing this research, Dora expects to be awarded a PhD in crop protection from the University of Nairobi. She intends to undertake similar studies on citrus, papaya and tamarillo.

With more visibility and an improved network through the AWARD fellowship, Dora hopes to access funding to research quality mushroom spawn production. Courses offered by the AWARD fellowship are helping her to develop her scientific writing skills, enabling her to publish in refereed journals and advance in her career.