



2008 AWARD Fellow
Isilda Nhandumbo

Position:	Senior researcher, Natural Resources Group
Institution:	Institute for Environment and Development
Country:	Mozambique
PhD:	Natural Resources Management University of Edinburgh, 1997
Mentored by:	Professor Rashid Hassan, Director Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy in Africa Extension and Rural Development, University of Pretoria

Research area: *Policy analysis and understanding the consequences of policy on community livelihoods.*

My involvement with AWARD has increased my leadership skills and prepared me to use these skills beyond Mozambique and beyond Africa. My goal is to improve the accounting of natural resources in eastern and southern Africa by formulating environmental policies and then seeing them through to local implementation.

Before obtaining my PhD I lectured in forestry management and engineering at Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo. Upon graduating I worked for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as their country program coordinator in Mozambique, and then became their regional forestry program coordinator. From 2006 to 2010 I worked from both Maputo and Nairobi as a consultant on natural resources and on management and policy analysis for a number of organizations, including the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, IUCN, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

My professional achievements include leading a coalition of Mozambican NGOs and academics that mobilized government agencies to practice environmental accounting, and documenting how natural resources contribute to the Mozambican economy. More recently, I worked with UNDP to examine how land policies and resource rights can contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

In September 2010 I joined the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), where I am engaged in research that will influence policy at both the national and global levels. The IIED influences global-level decisions on environment and development issues—including forestry issues, which are part of my training and interest. The AWARD Science Writing, Communication, and Presentation Skills Course in particular helped me to think not only of short-term projects, but also to look at emerging issues and assess how my knowledge and experience could contribute to shaping the debate on climate change and the role of forests.

Working at a multicultural organization requires me to engage with many other organizations at the international and national levels. AWARD has equipped me with confidence and assertiveness to put my views across. I find it very helpful to review the notes I took at the AWARD training sessions as I integrate into my position at IIED. For example, when writing I am conscious of presenting myself as a reviewer and, when reviewing work of others I am more aware of what to look for. AWARD's Women's Leadership and Management Course offered a valuable opportunity to look inside and see how issues affect my work, my life, and my relationships with others. Now that I am working for an organization, I am confident that I will have a chance to apply most of the skills acquired.

I expect that the skills gained as an AWARD Fellow, as well as the opportunity to see other women engaging in science at the international level, will encourage me to try to make a difference at that level. The fact that I am now at IIED, having competed with more than 100 candidates from across the globe, gives me the confidence that I have something to contribute, and if I focus on that, people will listen to me and respect my input.

Nhantumbo 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
