



**2011 AWARD Fellow**  
**Felicidade Margarida Macome**

<b>Position</b>	Junior researcher
<b>Institution</b>	Agricultural Research Institute of Mozambique (IIAM)
<b>Country</b>	Mozambique
<b>MSc</b>	Animal science in the tropics, <i>Universidade Federal da Bahia, Brazil, 2007</i>
<b>Mentor</b>	Ines Machungo, Professor Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique

*Research area: Finding viable feed alternatives for the dry season by developing a fodder bank in the district of Chibuto.*

The youngest in a family of 12 children, veterinarian Felicidade Margarida Macome says her interest in animals began at an early age. “My parents kept chickens, goats, and cattle,” she recalls. “Most people in Mozambique, particularly women, raise some kind of livestock and my family was no exception even though we lived in Maputo, the capital.”

Macome’s late father was a teacher and academic achievement was important in her family; four of her siblings are also university graduates. Macome graduated with a BSc in veterinary medicine from Eduardo Mondlane University in 1995, and served as the head of the cattle sector at the Angonia Research Station prior to winning a scholarship to do her master’s of animal science at Brazil’s *Universidade Federal da Bahia* in 2007. She returned to Mozambique in 2009 and joined IIAM as an animal nutrition researcher, initially looking at goat feeding and value-chain analysis.

In her current research, Macome is developing alternative sources of animal feed, such as mango leaves. “Feed shortages and diseases are the biggest problems for smallholder farmers,” she says. “Most small ruminants graze on grass, but there isn’t enough of it during our six-month dry season, so we are trying to introduce drought-resistant forage trees to farmers. I also want to teach them how to construct better housing for their animals so they don’t get parasites from being outside in the mud when it rains. Farmers need improved feed and shelter if their production and their income are to increase.” Macome is also involved in a project serving five villages in the district of Chibuto, which trains farmers how to set up and run a fodder bank.

As a team member on a joint project between IIAM and the International Livestock Research Institute, Macome says she really enjoys learning alongside rural people. “It’s so satisfying to go to the field to develop a strategy to solve a problem that a community is facing,” she says enthusiastically. “They have so much knowledge, and I definitely learn from them. By combining indigenous knowledge and scientific research, we can find new solutions together.”

Career-wise, Macome would like to publish her master’s thesis in an international journal and plans to begin her PhD research in animal nutrition in the next three to four years, preferably in an English-speaking country

where she can develop her fluency. "I want to have the technical skills to be able to conduct more research, and would like to look at the effect of climate change on agriculture and livestock."

Macome also looks forward to attending AWARD's Science Skills Course and being mentored by a senior scientist. In the second year of their fellowships, AWARD Fellows with advanced degrees are required to mentor a younger woman scientist. Before she won a fellowship herself, Macome was mentored for one year by Sonia Maciel, a 2008 AWARD Fellow, who is also a veterinarian. "It was very helpful," says Macome. "I am much more self-confident now and my people skills have improved, as well. And I'm less introverted and more collaborative in my work."

A natural networker with worldwide contacts from Brazil to Mozambique, Macome is already building new relationships within AWARD. "So many people have helped me in the past, and I want to do the same now for others."

*Macome is one of a growing number of African women agricultural 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. AWARD is generously supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development. For more information, visit [www.awardfellowships.org](http://www.awardfellowships.org)*

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