



2010 AWARD Fellow
Marta Celeste Francisco

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| Position: | Research and communication manager |
| Institution: | Mozambique Agriculture Research Institute (IIAM) |
| Country: | Mozambique |
| BSc: | Veterinary Medicine, Eduardo Mondlane University, 1998 |
| Mentored by | Dr. Aida Libombo, Adviser Food Security Secretariat |

Research area: Technology transfer techniques for agrarian research results from the Agricultural Research Institute of Mozambique.

Marta Celeste Francisco is committed to working with rural women and hopes to help improve their livelihoods by developing agricultural knowledge and information systems that will increase food security in Mozambique.

Born in Maputo into a family of eight children, Francisco was the first in her family to go to university. Before attaining a BSc in Veterinary Medicine, she spent 22 years as a secondary school science teacher. She hopes to continue in a master's program focused on development, agricultural information, and communication.

In her position in the Agricultural Research Institute's training, documentation, and technology transfer directorate, Francisco is involved in documentation, communication, and community agricultural training. "This is an excellent opportunity for me to use my skills as a teacher," she says. "I compile data for agricultural extension workers, and then work with them to use this information to improve farmers' production."

Francisco says the data involve multiple aspects of rural and agricultural development, including animal breeding and nutrition, improved seed-production methods, plant diseases and pests, animal health, irrigation systems, rural marketing systems, and produce storage and processing. "I am interested in informing farmers about new technologies, and demonstrating the results," she says. Her long-term goals are to create a database that will systemize agricultural information in Mozambique, making it easy for people to use, to increase production in agriculture, and to improve livelihoods in terms of housing and food production as a result of using agricultural knowledge, technologies, and information.

Francisco looks forward to the networking opportunities provided by the AWARD Fellowship, and the chance to connect with people from other countries who are involved in similar work. She also has a keen interest in encouraging young women to consider a career in science. "I feel like a role model—almost a mother—for girls in my country," she says. "Many women don't realize they can do things on their own, and I want to tell young girls that they have to challenge themselves, that they can do whatever they want."

Celeste Francisco 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
