



2010 AWARD Fellow  
**Mercy Anjorin**

<b>Position:</b>	Program/Research officer
<b>Institution:</b>	Food Basket Foundation International
<b>Country:</b>	Nigeria
<b>MPH:</b>	Population and Reproductive Health Nutrition University of Ibadan, 2010
<b>Mentored by:</b>	Professor Isaac Akinyele Department of Human Nutrition University of Ibadan

*Research area: Improving food and dietary diversity through determination of less laborious food-processing methods, focusing on legumes in Nigeria.*

Mercy Anjorin, a recent graduate in public health, is concerned about malnutrition in Nigeria. "In resource-poor environments across the globe, low-quality, monotonous diets are the norm, and the risk for micronutrient deficiencies is high," she says. "Women of reproductive age are among those most likely to suffer deficiencies."

Anjorin has been working at Food Basket Foundation International for the past two years. She is researching how to increase the use of legumes such as soybeans, pigeon peas, and bambara groundnuts. "Lots of vegetables and legumes are very rich in nutrients, but we concentrate on so few of them," Anjorin explains. "Soybean, for example, is cheap, readily available all over Nigeria, and can be made into many products like soy milk and tofu." The rate of consumption of legumes has gradually reduced, especially in southwestern Nigeria, and most of these products are fast disappearing from the market.

Anjorin says her work in the community is rewarding. She does operational research, looking at the livelihoods of people in areas where malnutrition is prevalent. "After we get the information, we give feedback and educate them so that they will ultimately have more money to feed their families. This issue of legume consumption is just a start."

She says she derives great satisfaction when the effects of her work are evident in the lives of the poor. She is keen to develop her skills so she can improve the livelihood of smallholders, particularly by empowering rural women to use the resources that are available within their communities.

As she is just embarking on her career, this young unmarried woman wants to balance her career with her personal life as she realizes this is a pitfall for many women scientists. She plans to further her education, and recently applied for a PhD in Community Nutrition and Nutrition Education at the University of Ibadan. She expects AWARD's Science Writing, Communication, and Presentation Skills Course to be especially valuable. "That is one area I am really interested in. Plus, being mentored by a professor will be a real benefit."

*Anjorin 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)*

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