



AWARD Fellow
Filomena dos Anjos

Position	Senior lecturer and veterinarian
Institution	Eduardo Mondlane University
Country	Mozambique
MSc	Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University Denmark, 2005
Mentor	Christine Jansen van Rensburg, Lecturer University of Pretoria

Research area: Animal and livestock/veterinary sciences

Filomena dos Anjos is passionate about poultry. For the past 15 years, this senior lecturer and veterinarian at Eduardo Mondlane University has worked with poultry farmers—who are primarily women—to control Newcastle disease through vaccination campaigns. In Mozambique, more than 70 percent of rural families keep chickens, which have great socio-economic importance, contributing to household food security and income. However, the production level is low due to disease, deficient nutrition, and general mismanagement. Feed is the most important factor in commercial poultry farming, since it represents some 70 to 80 percent of total costs both in egg and poultry yields. Dos Anjos's challenge is to help them overcome the scarcity and high cost of feed.

Through AWARD, dos Anjos competed for a nine-month, advanced science training sponsored by Novus International, a leading developer of animal health and nutrition programs for the poultry, pork, beef, dairy, aquaculture, and companion animal industries. Her research goal was to increase the efficiency and profitability of poultry-production systems in Mozambique through the use of more cost-effective feed ingredients, such as pigeon peas and cowpeas.

Novus, based in St. Charles, Missouri, proved to be the perfect placement for dos Anjos. "I was interested in locally grown ingredients for poultry feed, and Novus shared this interest," she said. She worked with scientists on an experiment that slowly increased the percentage of cowpeas and pigeon peas into a chicken's soybean diet, which includes vitamins, antioxidants, amino acids, and minerals produced by Novus.

Dos Anjos sees the research that she conducted at Novus as a possible life-changer for farmers in Africa. "If these peas work well, then I can imagine a whole market change," she said. "Right now, farmers grow peas only for personal consumption. We're not producing a quantity that can provide for the feed industry. I want to improve the quality of life for families in Mozambique, and this is one of the ways to do it."

Although it is too soon for dos Anjos to know the full impact of the research attachment on her career, she strongly believes that the benefits and rewards from this experience will be felt at many levels. "It is crucial that I transfer the technology and skills learned at Novus to Eduardo Mondlane University," she said. "It will

help to create an environment for conducting quality research and teaching. This will, in turn, have a direct impact on the poultry industry and the general well-being of the Mozambican people.”

Equipped with enhanced research skills, dos Anjos sees her future career path very clearly. “As a lecturer in animal nutrition, my goal is to be a professor within the next five years. I hope to get a PhD in Animal Nutrition and to do more research in this field,” she said. “I also want to help attract more scholars to animal nutrition research.”

Dos Anjos believes that age need not be a barrier for ambitious women researchers. “My involvement with AWARD provided me with career opportunities far beyond my dreams. I could not imagine that, at age 50, I would win the fellowship,” she said. “AWARD taught me the importance of receiving feedback from my colleagues, and of drawing on work by other researchers. I have learned how to manage my time better and to use the right channels to support my research activities. I also learned that determination can overcome the challenge of not having full mastery of the English language.”

(With reports from an article by Doug Moore , St. Louis Post-Dispatch, April 17, 2010.)

Dos Anjos 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
