



2014 AWARD Fellow
Oluyemisi Adebisi-Adelani

Position	Principal Research Officer
Institution	National Horticultural Research Institute
Country	Nigeria
PhD	Agriculture (Agricultural Extension and Rural Development) University of Ibadan (UI), 2013
Mentor	Dr. Olutokunbo Birdies Oyesola, Reader Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, UI
Research Area	Improvement and promotion of production, processing, use, and marketing of sweet orange and tomato value chains to enhance food security and reduce poverty.

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Oluyemisi Adebisi-Adelani has worked directly with smallholder farmers in agricultural extension since she completed her first degree. “I like working with people and I am interested in agriculture, so this choice was perfect for me,” she states. Her work has focused on assessing the impact of development projects and climate change on farmers. The results of her PhD research revealed that some of the strategies used by citrus and tomato farmers to cope with the effects of climate change, especially during floods and droughts, are not working. Her current focus is therefore on improving and promoting the production, processing, usage, and marketing of sweet oranges and tomatoes in Nigeria in the face of climate change.

Adebisi-Adelani works with smallholder farmers in villages adopted by the National Horticultural Research Institute, where she works. This concept, introduced by the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria, showcases the technologies being developed and strengthens community relations with the institute. She is involved in organizing community groups (women, men, and youth) to facilitate the dissemination of information and technologies to these target audiences. Working with these groups will also help to identify and address any gender gaps and issues related to various aspects of the sweet orange and tomato value chains, and target interventions to gender groups.

Adebisi-Adelani is linking three aspects of her previous experience and training to her current work: multi-stakeholder processes, which she learned during a course on facilitating multi-stakeholder approaches and social learning at Wageningen University in the Netherlands, climate change issues, and capacity building. She wants women along

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AWARD is a career-development program that equips top women agricultural scientists across sub-Saharan Africa to accelerate agricultural gains by strengthening their research and leadership skills through tailored fellowships. AWARD is a catalyst for innovations with high potential to contribute to the prosperity and well-being of African smallholder farmers, most of whom are women.

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the horticultural value chain to improve their standard of living through access to better, more nutritional food for their households. “There is much wastage when sweet orange, tomato, and perishable foods are in season,” Adebisi-Adelani says. “The literature shows that these losses range from 50 to 80 percent. We need to reduce this wastage so households can have enough food to eat, process, and sell.”

The high points for her at work come from visiting farmers or when they consult her, a free service that she offers. “This is the only thing that keeps me in research,” she notes, recalling one incident in particular. “The farmers had problems getting suckers—or seedlings—to grow plantain and banana, and they were expensive. I facilitated training in rapid multiplication techniques, and now they have enough suckers to use and are able to sell the excess.”

Adebisi-Adelani dreams of becoming a professor of agricultural extension and rural sociology, focusing on women. She also wants to be a consultant in capacity building. “My long-term vision for agricultural research and development is to ensure that agriculture assumes its rightful position in food security in Nigeria as a country and in Africa as a continent,” she says. She is confident that the skills she will acquire through AWARD will prepare her to do her part in achieving this vision.

As an AWARD Fellow, Adebisi-Adelani also expects to gain expertise in writing grant-winning research proposals, and hopes to publish her work. She wants to use what she learns to realize her dream: to see a community that is free of problems related to food and nutrition, and where everything that is produced is consumed, processed, and sold, either locally or internationally.