



**2013 AWARD Fellow**  
**Oluwatoyin Bukola Chete**

<b>Position</b>	Program Officer
<b>Institution</b>	WOAFA Centre for Development Policy and Management (WCDPAM), Nigeria
<b>Country</b>	Nigeria
<b>MSc</b>	Agricultural Economics, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, 2000
<b>Mentor</b>	Dr. Subuola Bosede Fasoyiro, Head, Product Development Program, Institute of Agricultural Research and Training

*Research area: Assessment of socio-economic factors, gender and policy issues to improve the agricultural value chain for rice among rural farmers in southwestern Nigeria.*

Oluwatoyin Bukola Chete grew up in Ibadan, Nigeria, in a family of six. Her father encouraged all his children to pursue higher education, and upon his advice, Chete chose to study agriculture, thinking it a practical course that would enable her to set up her own farm some day and contribute to poverty reduction and food security. With this goal in mind, she obtained a BSc in Agricultural Economics and Extension, and an MSc in Agricultural Economics.

As a program officer at WCDPAM, a non-governmental organization serving Nigeria and sub-Saharan African countries, Chete trains extension workers and farmers on crop-management practices, including appropriate spacing in planting, weeding times, correct use of fertilizers, and the appropriate application of seeds. She is currently pursuing her PhD research on the assessment of socio-economic factors such as gender and policy issues on the value chain of rice among rural farmers in southwestern Nigeria. Her project profiles agro-ecological zones for rice production in the area, gender and policy issues, and constraints to up-scaling value-chain processes for greater productivity and national food security.

Chete aims to unravel mechanisms and channels through which the outputs of women reach the consumers. Her research engages factors relevant to constructing value-chain systems, such as production risk and perishability, economic relationships among various parties in the value chain and those that govern transactions, the number and size of competitors at various stages of the value chain, and key consumer trends and technological innovations.

Concurrently, Chete is working with other scientists to promote the use of a quality protein maize variety among women farmers in south western Nigeria. According to Chete, "the maize has outstanding qualities of improved lysine content and protein quality, almost twice that of the local maize variety. This maize variety is helpful in addressing protein malnutrition and food security among children, young women, pregnant women, and lactating mothers in rural Nigerian communities."

Chete says the most exciting part of her research is impacting the life of rural women and empowering

them so that they can access their own inputs, as well as training them in the proper application of fertilizers. "I also enjoy organizing workshops on techniques for both women and men farmers," she says. "I hope to continue working with them so that women can have access to improved seeds, fertilizers, loans, and access to land."

With goals such as setting up knowledge exchanges with women farmers, strengthening women's organizations, and mainstreaming gender into the programs she implements, Chete says she expects the AWARD Fellowship to strengthen and develop her research capacity through improved scientific, research, and writing skills. "I will acquire communication skills that will enable me to write winning grant proposals, as well as develop leadership skills that will allow me to collaborate with other researchers, gain visibility, and become an international expert in my field."

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*Chete is one of a growing number of African women agricultural scientists who have won an AWARD Fellowship. 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.*

*AWARD is generously supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the United States Agency for International Development, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, and Agropolis Fondation. For more information, visit [www.awardfellowships.org](http://www.awardfellowships.org)*