



Atsedemariam Tewachew Wolelaw

2019 AWARD-EIAR
Fellow

Position	Assistant Researcher
Institution	Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR)
Country	Ethiopia
BSc	
Mentor	Mulugeta Atnaf Tiruneh, Senior Researcher, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research
Research Area	Rice research: crop management, identification and generation of hybrid varieties, mechanization, postharvest technologies, resistance to biotic challenges like blast, and abiotic cases like cold



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Atsedemariam Tewachew Wolelaw is an Assistant Researcher at Pawe Agricultural Research Centre, of the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR). Stating that she has always wanted to be an agricultural scientist, Wolelaw is involved in crop research programs and is currently specializing in rice research.

“I am working with rural communities on a rice research project which aims to improve yields, quality and disease resistance. Rice is a staple food crop for more than half of the world’s population. Although it was introduced in Ethiopia in the 1970s, it continues to be cultivated in small pockets throughout the country.”

Wolelaw hopes to contribute to improving rice yields and quality through molecular genetics. Highlighting that research is a key component in agricultural development, she notes that growth in this area would give hundreds of millions of the rural poor all over the world an opportunity to move out of poverty

“To achieve this, highly trained and qualified personnel will play a key role in alleviating poverty in our communities,” she added. Through the AWARD Fellowship, she hopes to develop new skills which give her the opportunity to realize her full potential.

On some of the challenges that she has had to face as a young female researcher, Wolelaw mentioned discouragement at a young age, where many young girls are told that science is difficult, balancing family and work life, and lack of access to relevant and timely scientific information.



On possible solutions, she highlighted the importance of tenacity. “We also need to be good stewards of our time and promote effective networks. Young female researchers should build their skills in the areas of communication and leadership to attract more opportunities. We must also strive to support and empower each other.”

Wolelaw is one of a growing number of women agricultural scientists who have won a customized institutional Fellowship for the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR). The customized institutional Fellowship is an intervention of AWARD’s Gender Responsive Agricultural Research and Development (GRARD) initiative that supports institutional capacity for gender-responsive agricultural research.

African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) works toward inclusive, agriculture-driven prosperity for the African continent by strengthening the production and dissemination of more gender responsive agricultural research and innovation. We invest in African scientists, research institutions, and agribusinesses so that they can deliver agricultural innovations that better respond to the needs and priorities of a diversity of women and men across Africa’s agricultural value chains.

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