



Bolarinwa Islamiyat Folashade

2020 One Planet Laureate Candidate

Position

Senior Lecturer

Institution

Ladoke Akintola University of
Technology, Ogbomoso

Country

Nigeria

Education

PhD, Food and Nutrition
Security, University of Leeds, UK

Mentor

Dr. Samuel Folake Olukemi,
Associate Professor, University of
Ibadan (UI), Nigeria

Research Area

Food science, food processing
and postharvest management.

Bolarinwa Islamiyat Folashade was born and raised in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. She spent weekends on her father's farm during childhood, laying the foundation for her career path. Her father grew cassava, vegetables, and fruits. Islamiyat and her siblings did a lot of manual work processing the harvest for the market.

However, whatever was not sold would go to waste, which pained her significantly given the time and effort she and her siblings had expended preparing it. There was no facility in the village for processing cassava into gari, so it had to be transported to another market and sold to intermediaries.

When she joined college, pharmacy science was her first choice of study. Later, she switched to food science specialization after realizing its potential to tackle the challenges she experienced on her father's farm growing up.

Bolarinwa's research focus is food and nutrition security, specifically post-harvest management. The goal is to help farmers extend their food products' shelf life, especially fruits and vegetables.

Her research also deals with value addition to preserve vegetables and fruits. She aims to reduce post-harvest food loss and increase consumption outside the season to enrich the diets of children and pregnant women.

In line with this, she is producing a dry mango paste that can be stored beyond the current shelf life of four months. Evaluation of the products' acceptability and nutritional value is an essential part of the research.

Ultimately, her research will improve smallholder farmers' income, empower rural women in fruit processing and alleviate poverty among smallholder farming communities.

One exciting component of her research, which immensely excites her, is developing an edible food coating material to replace the chemical preservatives used in Nigeria. This research will be groundbreaking and have socioeconomic and environmental benefits since the raw material is readily available for food crops.

The resulting health benefits cannot be overemphasized. She validates her research's applicability through interactions with farmers in the rural areas, mainly women since they dominate the vegetable and fruit sectors.

Bolarinwa aspires to be a renowned researcher and professor in post-harvest technology and climate change and a mentor of young scientists and researchers in her country and globally. She has supervised 60 undergraduate and ten postgraduate students on nutritional value addition through post-harvest processing of food crops.

She has published 35 peer-reviewed papers and is a member of several national and international journals' editorial boards and reviewer panels.

She views the One Planet Fellowship as a platform to boost her leadership skills, improve her visibility, and increase her scientific knowledge by exposing her to international opportunities for advanced scientific training. She is already benefiting from working with her mentor, who is guiding her career development.

As a One Planet Fellowship Laureate Candidate, Bolarinwa will share her new skills with colleagues in her institution and inform them about the benefits of the Fellowship. She will mentor colleagues and be proactive in creating awareness among young women about science career opportunities through career talks and seminars for secondary school students. She will use her scientific writing skills to share knowledge in her institution and organize lectures on gender for the faculty and other university staff.

Bolarinwa's work is hampered by the lack of funding for equipment which affects the quality of her work and deters publishing the emanating results in top-rated journals. Another challenge facing her work is maintaining a healthy life-work balance in the midst of raising a young family. She hopes that in the future, the promotion criteria in the field of research would consider women's unique roles instead of the number of publications done in high-impact journals.

Bolarinwa's research focuses on food and nutrition security, specifically post-harvest management to help farmers extend their food products' shelf life. She aims to reduce post-harvest food loss and increase consumption outside the season to enrich the diets of children and pregnant women in Tanzania.

Bolarinwa Islamiyat Folashade is one of the growing number of candidates selected to participate in the One Planet Fellowship. The One Planet Fellowship is a career development initiative that is building a robust pipeline of highly connected, inter-generational scientists equipped to use a gender lens to help Africa's smallholder farmers cope with climate change. The One Planet Fellowship is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the BNP Paribas Foundation, the European Union and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) and Agropolis Fondation are jointly implementing the Fellowship.

Do you have any further questions? Send an email to: oneplanet.award@cgiar.org

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