



**Position**

Associate Researcher

**Institution**

Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR)

**Country**

Ethiopia

**Education**

PhD, Plant Genetics, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

**Mentor**

Dr. Demissew Abakemal Ababulgu, Senior Researcher, Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR), Ethiopia

**Research Area**

Crop improvement, specifically maize, to increase adaptation to climate change and resistance to diseases.

**Gebre Worknesh Terefe**

2020 One Planet Laureate Candidate

Born and raised in Addis Ababa to a teacher father and a civil servant mother, Gebre Worknesh Terefe loved school and was always among the top students. She credits the persistent guidance from her father for her academic success and the person she has become.

Gebre's specialty is in maize and general crop improvement using applied genetics as a plant breeder by profession. She is an Associate Researcher with the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research's highland maize breeding program at the Holeta Agricultural Research Center.

Her main objective is to improve maize yields, identify genotypes for adaptation to changing climatic conditions, and develop early maturing, drought-tolerant, and disease-resistant varieties.

Gebre is passionate about being a researcher, mainly because she can see the results of her work benefiting smallholder farmers. For example, the seven maize varieties released from her research center have been of help to smallscale farmers and seed companies.

Through her work interaction, she is well aware of the hardships faced by farmers. She has noted that women in her community still use fuelwood for energy and walk long distances to

collect it. "I sense their pain.

When I visit a field, I see how desperate the situation is, and that is where I have learned that I need to help people and change their lives through the work I do".

Since childhood, pursuing a career in science was always a longing for Gebre, although she did not know which direction she would take until she was in college.

One of the main reasons her research area appeals to her is that it involves exploiting local resources, making them relevant to her community, and promoting the adoption of its outputs. Her career aspiration is to be a leader at the highest level in her sector and change her community through coaching and farmers' training.

Gebre expects the One Planet Fellowship to guide her towards achieving her goals. The proposal and technical writing skills will boost her research by improving her fundraising ability and sharing results. The interpersonal skills and communication training will aid her community outreach activities by building her confidence.

The networking opportunities will link her to experts in her field to learn from them and facilitate collaboration in research. Mentoring will be her most significant acquisition.

It will add value to her life by allowing her to help younger scientists grow.

In her line of research, Gebre faces numerous hurdles, especially as a woman scientist. She often leaves her young daughter behind for several days when she goes for fieldwork or attends forums away from home. She also lacks advanced labs in her country and frequently sends her samples to Europe or America.

Gebre's research focuses on maize and general crop improvement using applied genetics. She is working to improve maize yields, identify genotypes for adaptation to changing climatic conditions, and develop early maturing, drought-tolerant, and disease-resistant varieties.

**Gebre Worknesh Terefe** 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](mailto:oneplanet.award@cgiar.org)

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