

Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship

Fellow Profile

**Position**

Senior Dairy Inspector

Institution

Dairy Development Authority
(DDA)

Country

Uganda

Education

MSc, Food Science and
Technology, Makerere University
(Uganda), 2018

Mentor

Prof. Charles Kyeyune Muyanja,
Professor, School of Food
Technology, Nutrition, and
Bio-engineering, Makerere
University

Area of Interest

Food systems, governance, and
gender inclusivity

Gloria Arinaitwe

2022 AWARD Policy Fellow

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Growing up in Rubirizi district in southwestern Uganda, Gloria Arinaitwe – like many other children – participated in home farming, especially during the school holidays. At their homestead, her family grew various crops but also reared some livestock, including goats and cattle, which prompted an early interest in agriculture.

Gloria studied agriculture, physics, chemistry, and biology at an advanced level during secondary school and, when applying for university, assumed that agriculture alone would be her first choice. However, when filling out the forms, she saw other courses – among them food science and technology – and decided to select this at the last minute.

Gloria graduated with an undergraduate degree in Food Science and Technology from Makerere University in 2013 and went on to obtain a Master's in the same subject from the university in 2018. Today, Gloria works as a Senior Dairy Inspector for the Dairy

Development Authority (DDA), which is overseen by the Ministry of Agriculture. There, she is responsible for implementing government policies governing milk production, processing, marketing, and consumption of milk and milk products.

In addition, as part of her role at the DDA and in her consultancies, Gloria is involved in policy creation – working hard to help develop policy interventions that empower women's participation in dairy production and value addition. For instance, she designed an intervention to improve women's engagement in dairy production in the southwestern region of Uganda, which involved supporting their adoption of improved production technologies, such as zero grazing, backyard forage production, and improved milk handling and processing.

"Alongside my role at DDA, I have worked as a consultant for six years. Most of the projects I've worked on have involved policy strategies,

implementation plans, regulations, and guidelines in food safety and trade of agricultural products,” she enthuses. “I love the fact that, at policy level, you’re designing actions that are supposed to cause change. Without policies, we cannot do anything.”

Gloria shares that during her work, she is also proud to have provided capacity-building support to food value chain actors to improve their processing technologies and attain Uganda National Bureau of Standards certification. “I developed technical guidelines and designed strategic, and implementation plans to help guide the public and private sector in implementing interventions that ensure improved food security, safety, and environmental sustainability,” she reveals.

After learning of the AWARD GRASP Fellowship through Twitter, Gloria was keen to know more. Upon reading further details, the program’s policy aspect – an area she has a keen interest in – caught her attention, and she decided to apply.

Gloria’s policy focus is on food systems, governance, and gender inclusivity. She believes this is a complex topic that not only needs to be better understood by the public, but also requires direction from policymakers. “In Uganda, while there’s a lot of food, there are also places without it,” she states. “This is a loophole and is an issue linked to production, governance, infrastructure, culture, and many other aspects.”

Alongside the policy aspect of the program, Gloria is excited about working alongside a mentor – and hopes to acquire skills and knowledge in policies and food systems through this collaboration. She is also taking the role of being a mentor herself seriously, and “I look forward to mentoring colleagues at my place of work and elsewhere, especially those new to food systems,” she smiles.

Finally, Gloria intends to publish articles and policy briefs on her focus area. In doing so, she aims to solidify her presence as someone who can drive impactful change in Uganda and believes it will support her goal of pursuing a PhD in food systems.

Gloria Arinaitwe is among a growing number of women selected for the Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship. GRASP Fellowship is a career development program growing a pool of confident, capable, African women to lead the design and implementation of gender-responsive policies in Africa. The Fellowship is an initiative of African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).