

## Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship

### Fellow Profile



#### Position

Teacher-researcher

#### Institution

Higher School of Agricultural  
Sciences, University of  
Antananarivo

#### Country

Madagascar

#### Education

PhD Engineering Sciences,  
University of Antananarivo  
(Madagascar), 2017

#### Mentor

Bodo Rakotomalala, Nutrition  
Specialist, Unicef Madagascar

#### Research Area

The agricultural and food industry

### Felamboahangy Henintsoa 2023 AWARD Policy Fellow

*"I have a dual degree in Agronomic Science and Chemical Science. I began working in a pharmaceutical laboratory and later focused on nutrition. It became my passion."*

Felamboahangy began her career working in a pharmaceutical laboratory. She later became a Research Professor at Antananarivo University, teaching courses related to the agricultural and food industries. At the same time, in 2017, she completed a doctorate in Engineering Sciences with a specialization in Process Engineering and Industrial and Agrifood Systems. Focusing her research on nutrition-led agriculture, she worked on agricultural and gender issues in collaboration with international organizations.

In 2019, Felamboahangy was elected president of MIKASA, a research platform for the fight against malnutrition in Madagascar. She considers participating in implementing several national policies and strategies regarding agriculture, food fortification, and the quality of farming products to be her greatest career accomplishment. Felamboahangy firmly believes that by transforming farming, the Malagasy people can improve their nutrition. This is what motivates her teaching and research.

She nevertheless admits facing challenges. As a woman and the mother of two children, maintaining a balance between "family life and work commitments" is not always easy. For example, she may be away on assignment for two weeks in a remote location that lacks phone service. She also faces social pressures, such as comments regarding her legitimacy as a woman working in the community. Male chauvinism is widespread in the rural world. She encountered it while doing fieldwork and research and regretfully admits that rural development remains male-dominated.

Felamboahangy observes: "Women face many barriers. They must work twice as hard to prove themselves capable in the field." Felamboahangy gradually became interested in women's issues in the farming industry. As a consultant for several international organizations, she continually provides analyses to raise awareness on such topics.

Felamboahangy deploras that nutrition is not included in rural development policy in Madagascar despite the country's high rates of malnutrition: nearly one in two children is chronically malnourished. It is a major public health concern. Felamboahangy knows that to be an effective advocate and disseminate her research results (as a researcher and consultant), she needs to hone her leadership and policy development skills.

She is counting on the GRASP Fellowship for this. With support from her mentor, Bodo Rakotomalala, Nutrition Specialist at UNICEF Madagascar, she hopes to increase her leadership potential and her ability to develop policy to heighten her community impact as a technician and research professor.

*Felamboahangy Henintsoa 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).*