

Gender Responsive Agriculture Systems Policy (GRASP) Fellowship

Fellow Profile



Position

Specialist in Agricultural Policy Analysis

Institution

The United States Agency for International Development

Country

Senegal

Education

PhD Sociology

Mentor

Dr Mame Ndioba Diène,
Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations (FAO)

Research Area

The development of agricultural reforms and policies in the areas of family and rural poultry farming

Yacine Ngom

2023 AWARD Policy Fellow

"I hope to help address the needs and interests of women and young people in the Senegalese agro-silvo-pastoral and fishing industries to boost their revenues."

Although trained as a sociologist, Yacine Ngom has always focused on agricultural issues. "Sociology is a means to better understand social change and dynamics in Senegal's agro-silvo-pastoral and fishing industries and to further their development," she explains.

In 2003, her first internships were in agriculture-based organizations such as the Senegalese textile company SODEFITEX and the National Agency of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services. She concurrently worked on her master's degree at the Gaston Berger University in Saint-Louis, which she obtained in 2006. She promptly joined the Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research (ISRA), where she worked as a Research Assistant at the Analysis and Macroeconomics Bureau and completed her doctoral thesis in 2013.

Becoming an official researcher was "a milestone in her career." It entailed supervising and managing socio-economic activities for the National Agriculture Investment Plan support program and the USAID Economic Resilience Activity program that promotes the local rice industry in the Senegal River valley and delta. Both projects are co-funded by USAID and the Italian Cooperation.

At the end of 2014, Yacine focused on gender-responsive agriculture. "I have observed that although women are active in the industry, they have less access to productive resources, such as water, land, seeds, fertilizer, farming equipment, innovations, information, and training, than men," she states. Yacine plans to use her awareness of unequal access to help "reduce the gender gap in agro-silvo-pastoral and fishing industries."

She completed approximately 12 gender equality training programs and represented ISRA in meetings on such topics. Another milestone in her career was being named Coordinator of the organization's gender unit in 2018. After 12 years at ISRA, Yacine joined Feed the Future Senegal Policy System Services, a USAID-funded program, as an Agricultural Policy Analyst.

Although Yacine is a specialist in gender issues, she is not exempt from discrimination. "When career opportunities come around, as a woman, people do not necessarily consider you. It is not calculated or intentional, but senior management positions are automatically offered to men instead of women," she deplores. She nonetheless fought her "number one" battle between 2015 and 2018, a very challenging time during which she conducted research, published papers, and raised two young children who required a lot of her time.

Yacine met people involved with AWARD while participating in various training programs. That is how she heard about the GRASP Fellowship. Instantly drawn to the program and its mentorship, she hopes to enhance her knowledge of gender in agriculture, her current area of study. "As a GRASP participant, I want to strengthen the ability of private sector and civil society actors to integrate socially inclusive, and gender and youth responsive data when elaborating, implementing, evaluating and reforming agricultural policy."

Yacine plans to focus on agro-silvo-pastoral and fishing industries, particularly rural family poultry farming. "I plan to use policy analysis tools to help address the needs and interests of women and young people in the Senegalese agro-silvo-pastoral and fishing industries to boost their revenues."

Yacine Ngom 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).