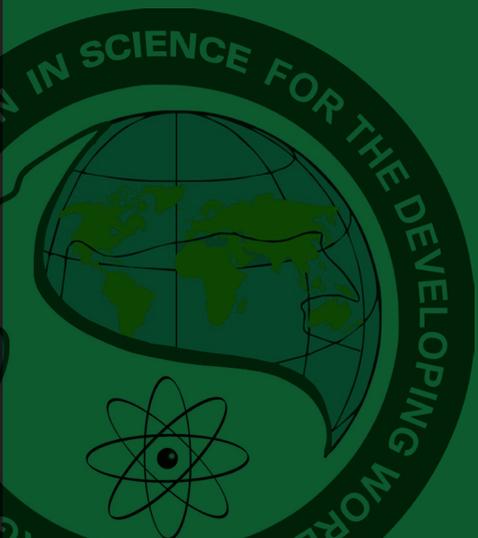
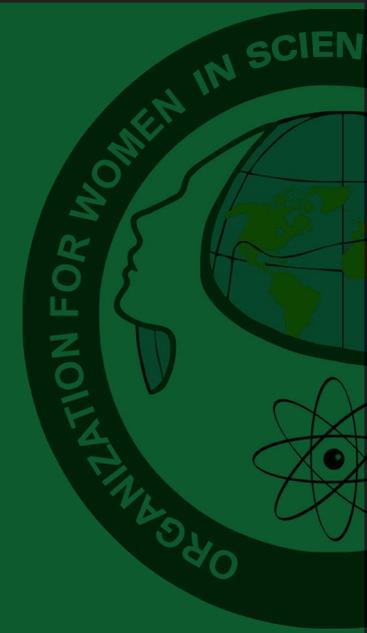


# NEW FACES OF GLOBAL SCIENCE: OWSD SUCCESS STORIES



# Afsana Ansari *Bangladesh*



OWSD Fellowship Awarded 2011



PhD in Crop Genetics and Breeding, 2016



OWSD Fellowship at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Dr. Afsana Ansari received her OWSD fellowship in 2011 and began her PhD at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences. She describes many setbacks while pursuing the PhD, including being separated from her family due to bureaucratic hurdles, arriving two hours early to work to prove her dedication to her supervisor, and having to prepare all her meals for the week during the weekend in order to work a greater number of hours. Nevertheless, she persisted in her work in genetic engineering of rice and not only completed her PhD on time, but succeeded in developing an innovative new breeding tool for rice that allows for manipulation of multiple genes in recurrent selection.

Dr. Ansari now works as a researcher at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), where she is working to disseminate her rice breeding tool in order to ensure food security in Bangladesh. She cites OWSD support as enabling her not only to complete her PhD in a well-equipped laboratory abroad, but also to participate in international conferences including the 4th International Conference on Agriculture and Horticulture in Beijing, where she was awarded Best Poster.



“

OWSD is a very special type of organization. I am lucky and I feel proud as an OWSD scholar.

”

# Juliet Sackey *Ghana*



OWSD Fellowship Awarded 2012



PhD in Physics, 2017



OWSD Fellowship at i-Themba LABS,  
National Research Foundation of South Africa



Juliet Sackey's research focuses on how to biomimic complex systems in nature (specifically, butterfly wings) in order to engineer smart materials.

Dr. Sackey says that OWSD provided her with "bigger platforms, opportunities, recognition and confidence in my career." Through the fellowship, she gained greater international exposure and visibility for her research and scientific publications. She has since been recognized with several awards, including the 1st prize award at the International Conference of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, the FameLab SA Unisa prize, and the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science award for sub-Saharan Africa in 2016.

Currently, she investigates the optics and absorption properties of selected natural dyes. In the future, she hopes to have her own research group. Having derived inspiration from women role models herself, she hopes that by using science to explain natural phenomena will inspire people, especially women, to take an interest in and get actively involved in science, and in this way make a contribution to society.

“

The fellowship from OWSD was the springboard to fulfilling my potential and vision in life.

”



# Angele Sorel

## Achounna *Cameroon*



OWSD Fellowship Awarded 2011



PhD Candidate in Neuroscience



OWSD Fellowship at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico

“ Being an awardee of OWSD has strongly and positively impacted my career as a woman scientist. I feel privileged to be respected for my gender and I would like to thank the whole organization for being so supportive and respectful to women. ”

Angele Sorel Achounna received her Masters degree in Animal Physiology from the University of Dschang in Cameroon. After receiving the OWSD fellowship, she began work on her PhD at the Institute of Cellular Physiology at the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, studying the molecular interactions during serotonin release in specific neuronal cells of leeches. Thanks to Ms. Achounna's research, structural changes involved in membrane fusion during this process have been observed at higher resolutions and are much better understood than previously. She has also been able to gain valuable specialized training in siRNA handling and other molecular biology techniques.

Ms. Achounna is grateful to OWSD for providing her the opportunity to study in the laboratory of her supervisor Professor Francisco Fernandez de Miguel, where she has been able to learn up-to-date research techniques and acquire skills needed to design and conduct experiments in molecular biology, as well as to make connections with distinguished scientists in the field and open doors for her future career. She also cites OWSD's support during her maternal leave after the birth of her first child as being of particular importance.

# Janet Awino Awando *Kenya*



OWSD Fellowship Awarded 2013



PhD Candidate in Microbiology



OWSD Fellowship at Rhodes University, South Africa

Janet Awino Awando received her BSc in Biomedical Science and Technology from Maseno University and her MSc in in Virology from Jomo Kenyatta University in Kenya. Following her Masters, she worked as a coordinator of the International Emerging Infectious Program at the Kenya Medical Research Institute.

Now pursuing her PhD at Rhodes University in South Africa under the OWSD fellowship, Ms. Awando uses traditional molecular biology approaches to understand the replication biology of the Providence virus, which infects insects, mammals and plant systems. Last year, she was able to attend and participate in the 17th International Congress of Virology in Singapore on an OWSD travel grant, which she cites as one of the highlights of her career.

In the future, Ms. Awando hopes to join and work with a dynamic team of experts in the field of virology or epidemiology, and also hopes to mentor young women in the developing world who are interested in scientific careers.



“

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to OWSD for awarding me the PhD fellowship, which has indeed opened doors in my pursuit to become an intellectual in the field of science, with an international outlook!

”



# Wonroo Bernice Bancole *Benin*



OWSD Fellowship Awarded 2013



PhD Candidate in Agricultural Sciences



OWSD Fellowship at University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

“ I wish for every woman who wishes to become a scientist to have the opportunity to be part of OWSD fellows. ”

Bernice Bancole received her undergraduate and Masters degrees in Benin. Now pursuing her PhD in entomology at University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, she focuses on the biological control of stalk borers of sorghum and rice, pests that can cause severe crop losses; Ms. Bancole identifies and cultivates particular strains of a fungus, *Beauveria bassiana*, which can control the borers, thereby contributing to the improvement of food security in Africa. For this work, she was awarded the prize for best student presentation at the 50th Anniversary congress of the Southern African Society for Plant Pathology, was invited to present at the 22nd Meeting and Scientific Conference of the African Association of Insect Scientists, and has had an article published about her work in the University of KwaZulu-Natal online newsletter.

After she finishes her PhD, Ms. Bancole hopes to find a post-doc position in South Africa to continue her work in her current field, or to work as a researcher at a seed company or research institute. She has also taken first steps towards establishing an educational foundation in Benin to help young women in high school pursue their PhDs in science, and is working on starting an OWSD National Chapter in the country.

Ms. Bancole thanks OWSD for allowing her to fulfill her dream of achieving her PhD without financial difficulties, for enabling her to travel to important conferences and training, and for connecting her with other women scientists that have positively impacted her career. And, she says, "I became bilingual by being in South Africa through the OWSD fellowship!"



# Lovanomenjanahary Marline *Madagascar*



OWSD Fellowship Awarded 2011



PhD Candidate in Botany



OWSD Fellowship at University of Cape Town, South Africa

“ Being an OWSD awardee has opened opportunities and doors for me. ”

al bryologists to publish more papers and to take part in projects to use the plants as bioindicators of climate change. In 2014 she was awarded the Green Talent award from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and was invited to complete a three-month research stay at the Nees Institute of the University of Bonn, Germany, where she received specialized training in molecular biology and initiated a new research project on the moss genus *Breutelia* in sub-Saharan Africa.

Currently, Ms. Marline is a member of the steering committee of a new project promoting the study and conservation of Malagasy bryophytes. She is designing a new project with her research supervisor on bryophyte dispersal mechanisms, and has also applied for funding to explore the plants in the dry forests of Madagascar and conduct related workshops at the University of Antananarivo there. She has recently submitted her PhD for examination and expects to receive feedback from the reviewers soon.

Ms. Lovanomenjanahary (Lova) Marline began her PhD in 2012 at the University of Cape Town researching bryology, a lesser-known field of botany that deals with early land plants such as mosses, liverworts and hornworts. These bryophytes are understudied in the context of tropical ecosystems such as Africa and neighboring islands, like Ms. Marline's native Madagascar.

Ms. Marline published her first paper in 2012, which surveyed the bryophytes of Madagascar. She has since collaborated with other international