



Judith ODHIAMBO

Home Country
Kenya

Degree
PhD in Agronomy

Expertise
Agro ecosystems,

**Sustainable Agricultural
Production**

Research Focus
Attaining Food Security in Kenya

Host University
University of Wyoming,
United States

Fellowship Awarded
2012

Judith Odhiambo grew up and attended elementary school in Kogilo, a village near the equator in the west of Kenya. During her childhood she saw first-hand the effects of immense poverty coupled with cyclic food insecurity, which motivated her interest in working to raise the living standards of communities where most people are subsistence farmers.

At the age of 15, Judith moved to high school in the Nakuru District for her secondary education. She attended Egerton University, Kenya for a diploma course in Agricultural Education and Extension. She then taught Agriculture and Biology at a girls' secondary school where she was also head of the science department and patron of its young farmers club. After 10 years, she returned to Egerton University for a BSc in Agricultural Education and Extension and then gained an MSc in Agronomy at the same university.

Judith's PhD studies focus on improving the production of food security crops and staple foods, which are mostly cereals, with the ultimate goal of sustainable food production and environmental sustainability in Africa. Conservation agriculture—which minimizes soil disturbance, provides soil cover, and enhances soil fertility—has the potential to increase productivity. The research will be performed in the northern High Plains of Nebraska, United States, in fields where long-term application of sustainable agricultural practices under dry-land farming conditions have rendered the soils similar to those in Kenya. The work involves comparison of the conservation components of organic farming, reduced-tillage, and conventional approaches under dry-land cropping conditions on wheat, sunflower and millet production. It will also compare greenhouse gas emissions from the different agricultural approaches.

After completing her PhD studies, Judith plans to return to Kenya to share her knowledge and promote practices that will help attain better food stability and living standards for its citizens.