



## **ATONU Project – Studentship Announcement**

ATONU identified the African Chicken Genetic Gains (ACGG) Project, that is currently being implemented by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Ethiopia and Tanzania, as pilot projects to integrate and assess the impact of selected nutrition-sensitive interventions (NSIs) to provide evidence for agriculture's potential to deliver positive nutrition outcomes. In designing and implementing the NSIs, FANRPAN initially partnered with the six consortium members, and subsequently the three remaining consortium members, namely ILRI and two country implementing partners (CIPs): the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) and the Tanzania Livestock Research Institute (TALIRI). The Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) and its local Ethiopian partner, Addis Continental University, are responsible for the design and conduct of the impact evaluation for the NSIs in Ethiopia, while Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) is responsible for impact evaluation in Tanzania.

The ACGG Project's aim is to improve the production and productivity of chickens kept by smallholder households by introducing improved and tropically adapted genotypes in four regions of Ethiopia and five zones of Tanzania. ATONU interventions being implemented in four regions of Ethiopia, namely Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR); and three zones of Tanzania, comprising Eastern, Central and Southern Highlands. The ATONU project activities are being embedded within the ACGG Project.

In the pilot projects, ATONU is testing three pathways to deliver improved nutrition to smallholder farming households: (i) agricultural production for own consumption, (ii) use of agriculture income to purchase other nutritious foods, and (iii) women empowerment to improve agency and nutrition. The results from the household level studies will be used to model national level responses and feed into engagements with decision-makers (government, private sector, and development investors).

The project uses a cluster-randomized design to estimate the effect of the ATONU and ACGG interventions on the primary outcome of dietary diversity among women of reproductive age in rural, chicken-producing areas of Ethiopia and Tanzania. Secondly, the study will also examine the effect of the interventions on women's and young children's nutritional and anaemia status in Ethiopia. ACGG implementation villages have been randomly selected in the program's target areas. A total of 20 villages from four regions and three zones in Ethiopia and Tanzania, respectively, will be randomly allocated to each of the two intervention arms. These villages will receive either ACGG's intervention (chickens) alone, or both chickens and ATONU's nutrition-sensitive intervention (NSI) package. The ATONU NSI package comprises three components that will be delivered to participating households:

- (i) Behavior change communication (BCC) on nutrition education and hygiene to increase consumption of eggs and chicken meat;
- (ii) BCC for women empowerment and to influence income expenditure on other nutrient dense foods; and
- (iii) Promotion of home gardens for improved dietary diversity.

A comparable group of villages has been randomly selected from the same sampling frame to serve as a control group, resulting in a three-arm research study. Households in control villages have been selected using the same criteria as used by ACGG to select participating households in its implementation villages. Households in all three arms will be visited at three time points during the 18-month study to evaluate the effects of the interventions on diets, nutritional status, and related outcomes.

## **MSc Studentships**

ATONU has four studentships at MSc level for each of Ethiopia and Tanzania valued at \$8,000 per student to cover stipend and research expenses. Students or institutions may put in additional funding where necessary.

### **ATONU Proposed Studies for MSc Students**

1. Monitoring and evaluation of fidelity of implementation processes of nutrition-sensitive interventions,
2. The effectiveness of theatre for behaviour change communication as a tool for messaging nutrition information among smallholder farming households.
3. Hygiene and environmental sanitation (looking at the impact of poor hygiene and sanitation on nutrition outcomes, with a focus on the breeding of chickens in the home);
4. Studies on vegetable production and consumption and nutrient retention in processed vegetables (looking at the various methods of processing vegetables and how each method supports nutrient retention or loss) ;
5. Feed safety (aflatoxin studies, looking at the chicken feed and its safety);
6. Effect of women's workload in agriculture on family nutrition and child care (feeding practices, play and stimulation, routine and systematic treatments);
7. Changes in perceptions of acceptability of certain foods (looking at the promotion of certain foods and how households accept them)

The above list is not exhaustive, and students can design a wide range of research questions to suit their needs. The studentships are for the period January 2017 – April 2018 or shorter, when the field activities on the pilot projects are running.

### **Preliminary conditions**

The studentships will be offered as ILRI fellowships and candidates need to meet the following conditions to be considered.

1. The study must be undertaken in any one of the ATONU Project pilot countries (Ethiopia and Tanzania)
2. Must be registered with a reputable University
3. Must have completed coursework or intending to undertake a masters by research
4. Must have a research supervisor
5. The fieldwork should be completed by April 2018
6. If the budget is over USD 8,000, there should be proof of funding to make up the balance
7. Prepare a one page description of research proposal
8. Provide a budget estimate for the research

### **Information on how to apply**

Please complete the attached form if you meet the above criteria and submit to the following e-mail address no later than March 15, 2017:

[fanrpan-atonu@fanrpan.org](mailto:fanrpan-atonu@fanrpan.org)

Details on the ATONU Project may be obtained at: [www.fanrpan.org/atonu](http://www.fanrpan.org/atonu)