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[info@ajfand.net](mailto:info@ajfand.net)

ajfand @  20  
YEARS  
2001-2021

# LOOKING BACK 20 YEARS

African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND) is published in Nairobi, Kenya, by ASSCAT (African Scholarly Science Communications Trust)

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**ajfand**

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**Amaryllis flower**  
determination, beauty and love

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**March 2021**



**Prof. Ruth Khasaya Oniang'o,**  
Editor-in-Chief, and Founder,  
AJFAND

[oniango@iconnect.co.ke](mailto:oniango@iconnect.co.ke)

Dr. Ruth Khasaya Oniang'o is a professor, researcher, African Food Prize Laureate and holder of Kenya's Silver Star and Distinguished Service Medal. Ruth founded Rural Outreach Africa (ROA) in the early 1990s and continues to be a clear and profound voice in research for development as an international consultant and speaker. As the founder and editor of the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND), Ruth seeks to improve policy and decision-making through the dissemination of significant scientific findings and emerging technologies in the field. Rural Outreach Africa works in Western Kenya, harnessing the intellectual resources of universities in Kenya and connecting them to communities, to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor. Through ROA programs, Ruth Oniang'o has transformed the lives of many rural poor families in the districts of western Kenya and the environs. ROA interventions have addressed a variety of issues including nutrition and food security, wealth creation, women economic empowerment, youth employment, environment, health and sanitation including HIV/AIDS, housing, education, and poverty. Currently she advises on issues of food and nutrition, from a rights perspective for vulnerable groups: resource poor women, children and those living in poverty and with disability. She is passionate about research for development, mentoring and giving a voice to African scholars in the field of food systems to share their expertise on how to solve Africa's food problems. Her best moment is when she is with smallholder farmers in their farms and homes sharing and exchanging knowledge. Ruth describes AJFAND as her best professional legacy, through which much relevant information is communicated and shared globally.



**Mary Njeri Karanu,** Assistant Editor

My role is to ensure that AJFAND is meeting current publishing standards, journal quality, and indexing. I provide support to the editorial staff and editor-in-chief in day-to-day running, and periodically, editorial review, copy editing, and metadata management.

[knjeri2003@gmail.com](mailto:knjeri2003@gmail.com)



**Michael Okumu,** Technical Manager

My tasks include database management, website management, bookkeeping and copy editing on a day-to-day basis. I am proud to be part of the AJFAND 20-year journey. Congratulations to the Editor-in-Chief for steering AJFAND this far – congratulations AJFAND for the 20th Anniversary.

[okumuajfand@gmail.com](mailto:okumuajfand@gmail.com)

## Here we are at the SECRETARIAT





**Emily Kaveza,**  
Communications and Editorial Officer



**Sylvester Aura,**  
Copy Editor



**Michael M. Mugendy,**  
Social Media Expert



**Natasha Adisa,**  
Intern Communications

Congratulations AJFAND for attaining 20 years! Keep up the excellent work. I'm so grateful for being part of you for many years.

[emilyajfand@gmail.com](mailto:emilyajfand@gmail.com)

I have been involved with the Journal since 2010, first an intern reviewer, and currently as a senior reviewer mainly tasked with checking the grammar and sentence structure of papers. I would like to send warm wishes to the Editors-in-Chief of AJFAND, the editorial and technical teams, and all the reviewers as they mark the journal's 20th anniversary. I hope that my acknowledgment of the past achievements will provide the strongest stimulus for future endeavours.

[slyaura2002@gmail.com](mailto:slyaura2002@gmail.com)

Is a post-graduate (University of Nairobi) and holds a first degree in Agricultural Economics (Egerton). Since 2018, he has worked as a junior editor and social media strategist for the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Development (AJFAND), establishing and leading presence of the Journal on the social platforms. As a graduate, Mugendy worked as an intern for Rural Outreach Africa and later joined AJFAND Secretariat where he would cross-check manuscripts' conformity and compliance to standards. In 2019, he published two articles with the journal, "Value Addition, the silver bullet in Agribusiness-REPORT"; "Driving Transformational Change in Agri-Food System: A Multi-stakeholder Approach-Webinar REPORT". The most valued aspect of working as a junior reviewer, he believes is the collaborative work environment and its opportunity to meet diverse authors in their publications. Mugendy also believes that his time at the AJFAND Secretariat was crucial in developing his oratory and writing skills he practices in the academic career pursuit. When not writing or editing, Mugendy enjoys reading new publications, sharing publications across social platforms and socializing. For up-to-date information on new publications, follow AJFAND social media platforms across Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook, @AJFANDOnline.

[mm.mugendi@gmail.com](mailto:mm.mugendi@gmail.com)

I am an intern at AJFAND and I work as a peer reviewer. My duty is to provide suggestions to authors on how to improve the quality of their manuscripts and also identify any errors that need correcting before publication. I have been with AJFAND for a period of 1 year and I really like the experience since it betters my skills. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the AJFAND as it celebrates its 20 years.

[natashaadisa2@gmail.com](mailto:natashaadisa2@gmail.com)

## Here we are at the SECRETARIAT



# LOOKING BACK 20 YEARS

**AJFNS\* VOLUME 1 NO. 1  
(August 2001)  
FOREWORD**

Welcome to the African Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences (AJFNS). The journal marks the realization of a long-nursed dream, that one day, I would be able to disseminate research findings and other forms of information considered critically relevant to Africa's development. What we write may not be up to "standard" elsewhere, or indeed one may ask whom does it serve when it is published in media which are unavailable to the majority of the African stakeholders?

It is not uncommon to find a fair amount of work on Africa and yet, both the authorship and the reference page in the back have no African name. Starting a brand new publication of the quality of a professional journal is not easy. Sustaining the journal

Inspirations:

- No culture has a monopoly of knowledge
- African scientists must share their research findings globally
- Without science and technology, we cannot innovate

Here we go. Our first issue of the journal came out 20 years ago. Here we share the first foreword. We start our celebratory year this January and will run until January 2022. We shall share invited and voluntary contributions about the journal regularly as they come in. Feel free to contact us about this. God has been GREAT. Please join us to give thanks. As Africa, we have a lot of scientific knowledge to share with the rest of the world. As Africa our future in now. Let us seize the moment. We have enough friends across the GLOBE to join us. Let us do it.

once it has been started is even more difficult. One needs more resources, good articles, efficient reviewers, a publishing house of high standard, a working secretariat and an Editor-in-Chief who is prepared to burn the midnight "candle light" to get the publication out in good time. I have been asked by many friends: "are you sure you know what you are getting yourself into?" My response has always been: "I know what I am getting myself into because this is a dream I have had for years". There is now more than a flicker of light that, indeed, that dream might just become a reality.

We worked hard to have the inaugural issue of the AJFNS ready by the 17<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Nutrition, which this time takes place in the beautiful city of Vienna, Austria.

I must recognize the following organizations: the Food and Agriculture Organization, Helen Keller Foundation, ILSI Research

Foundation and Nestle Foundation, World Food Program, Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) for the expression of trust and confidence in me, by supporting a yet-to-be born journal. With the funds received, one thousand hard copies of the journal have been printed. Reprints will be produced and sent to the authors, and ambitiously we intend to launch a Website, which will post both English and French versions of the journal. This journal is for information only, and relevant to Africa for international readership: contributions are invited from both African and non-African professionals with relevant information to share. For the African colleagues, this is your chance. Tell your story in your own words.

**Ruth K. Oniang'o  
Founder Editor-in-Chief**

*✧It started as AJFNS and then changed to AJFAND in 2003 to be more diverse and inclusive*

**ajfand @ 20 YEARS**  
LOOKING BACK 20 YEARS 2001-2021

# SOME STATISTICS

## Number of articles submitted by country

ALGERIA	16
AUSTRALIA	5
AUSTRIA	1
AZERBAIJAN	1
BAHRAIN	1
BANGLADESH	5
BELGIUM	5
BENIN	22
BOTSWANA	20
BRAZIL	2
BURKINA FASO	10
BURUNDI	1
CAMEROON	20
CANADA	10
CHINA	2
CONGO	1
ECUADOR	2
EGYPT	8
ERITREA	1
ETHIOPIA	145
FRANCE	2
GAMBIA	1

GERMANY	11
GHANA	95
GREECE	1
GUINEA	1
HAITI	1
INDIA	25
INDONESIA	46
IRAN	13
IRAQ	8
ISRAEL	1
ITALY	3
IVORY COAST	12
JAPAN	9
JORDAN	7
KAZAKHSTAN	1
KENYA	215
KOREA	2
LESOTHO	3
MADAGASCAR	2
MALAWI	21
MALAYSIA	5
MAURITIUS	3

MOROCCO	9
MOZAMBIQUE	1
NAMIBIA	13
NEPAL	2
NETHERLANDS	3
NIGER	8
NIGERIA	329
NORWAY	7
PAKISTAN	8
PARAGUAY	1
PERU	1
PHILIPPINES	1
POLAND	1
PORTUGAL	1
RUSSIA	4
RWANDA	17
SAUDI ARABIA	10
SENEGAL	7
SIERRA LEONE	5
SOUTH AFRICA	89
SOUTH KOREA	1
SOUTH SUDAN	1

SUDAN	4
SWAZILAND	7
SWEDEN	1
SWITZERLAND	2
SYRIA	1
TANZANIA	35
THAILAND	6
TOGO	9
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	2
TUNISIA	2
TURKEY	2
UGANDA	86
UKRAINE	2
UNITED KINGDOM	9
UNITED STATES	49
VENEZUELA	1
VIETNAM	8
ZAMBIA	11
ZIMBABWE	23

## Current AJFAND Reviewers by country

KENYA	54
UNITED STATES	20
NIGERIA	19
GHANA	17
UGANDA	8
ETHIOPIA	7
ZIMBABWE	6
CANADA	5
BURKINA FASO	4
SOUTH AFRICA	4
TANZANIA	4
MALAWI	3
ITALY	2
UNITED KINGDOM	2
BRAZIL	2
BOTSWANA	2
MALI	2
RWANDA	2
BENIN	2
ZAMBIA	2
INDIA	2
BURUNDI	2

NAMIBIA	1
MAURITIUS	1
THAILAND	1
INDONESIA	1
SENEGAL	1
SWAZILAND	1
SUDAN	1
KOREA	1
GERMANY	1
AUSTRALIA	1
IVORY COAST	1
NORWAY	1
IRAN	1
SIERRA LEONE	1
LESOTHO	1
PERU	1
CHINA	1
MOROCCO	1
TOGO	1
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	1
TURKEY	1

**43 Countries  
and 192 Reviewers**

### Number of Reviewers by Category

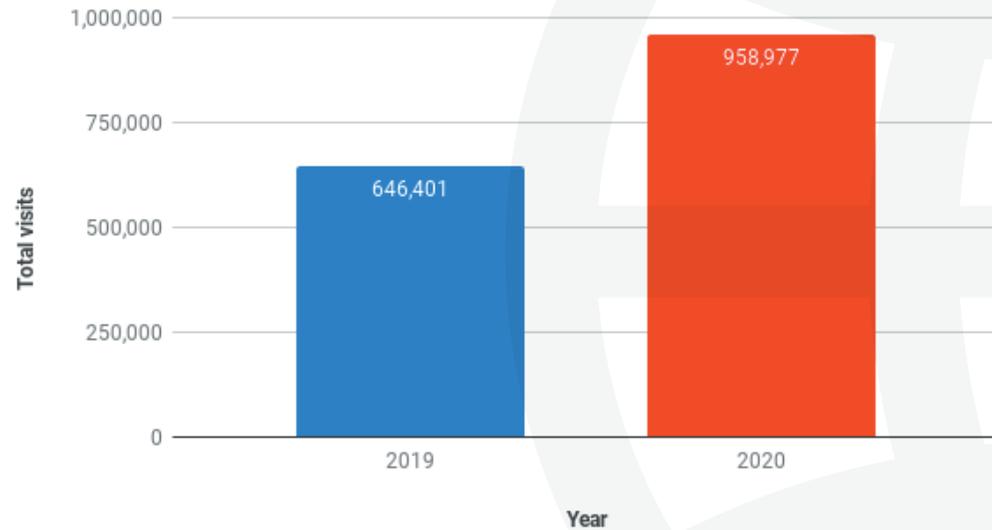
Technical Reviewers - 27

Senior Reviewers - 144

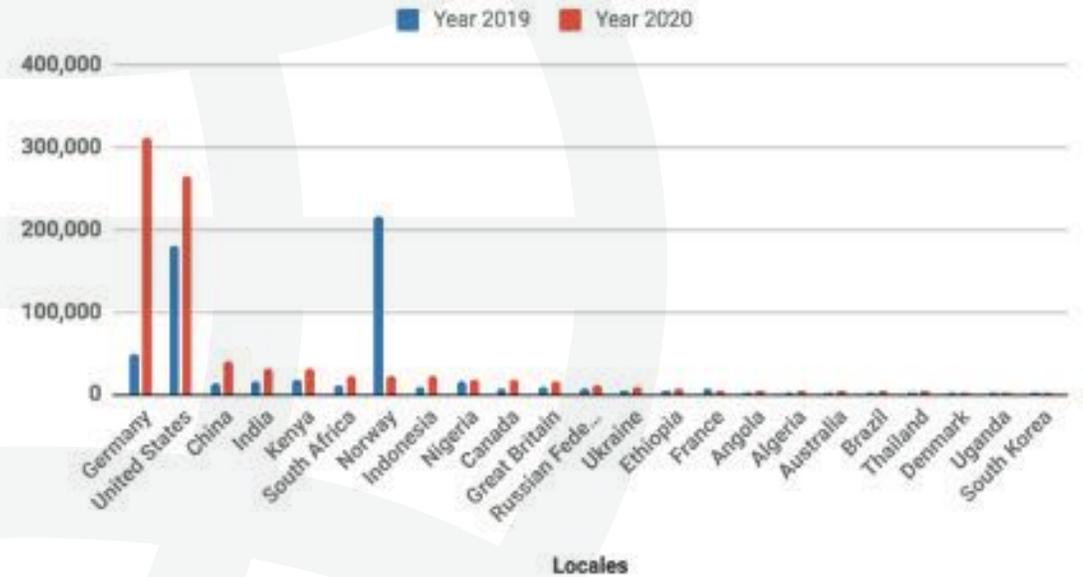
Junior Reviewers - 21

# Web Visits by country, years 2019 and 2020

Total web visits per year (www.ajfand.net)



Web visits by country year 2019 and 2020 [Top 20]



The journal is also accessed through other databases

## Web Visits Year 2020 – Number of visits by country, by rank

Germany	312,681
United States	264,607
China	40,097
India	30,732
Kenya	30,514
South Africa	23,442
Norway	23,137
Indonesia	22,073
Nigeria	19,046
Canada	16,975
Great Britain	15,287
Russian Federation	10,612
Ukraine	9,905
Ethiopia	6,794
France	5,646
Angola	5,575
Algeria	4,519
Australia	4,043
Brazil	3,979
Thailand	3,609
Romania	3,433
Uganda	3,397

Morocco	3,393
South Korea	3,306
Italy	3,204
Netherlands	3,173
Egypt	3,003
Sweden	2,938
Turkey	2,935
Japan	2,764
Philippines	2,764
Iran	2,691
Benin	2,673
Tanzania	2,629
Mauritius	2,608
Vietnam	2,532
Ghana	2,525
Malaysia	2,373
Denmark	2,246
Rwanda	2,103
Pakistan	1,826
Malawi	1,740
Poland	1,616
Saudi Arabia	1,611
Zimbabwe	1,579

Burkina Faso	1,572
Swaziland	1,214
Portugal	1,162
Taiwan	1,130
Switzerland	1,113
Czech Republic	1,073
Seychelles	1,053
Mexico	1,041
Spain	931
Iraq	930
Belgium	928
Ivory Coast (Cote D'Ivoire)	895
Botswana	881
Ireland	857
Jordan	848
Greece	806
Liberia	804
Austria	794
Sri Lanka	775
Hong Kong	765
Colombia	750
Cameroon	735

Chile	724
Senegal	722
Hungary	719
Bangladesh	699
Gambia	691
Peru	671
Finland	600
Zambia	599
Unknown	536
Nepal	532
Singapore	529
Madagascar	472
New Zealand	469
Ecuador	455
Niger	445
Sudan	437
Uzbekistan	423
Mali	418
Bulgaria	408
United Arab Emirates	400
Namibia	375
Kazakhstan	352

## Web Visits Year 2020 – Number of visits by country, by rank

Republic of Serbia	338
European country	329
Lebanon	325
Israel	303
Uruguay	297
Argentina	295
Tunisia	272
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	242
Paraguay	232
Trinidad and Tobago	222
Estonia	214
Sierra Leone	205
Somalia	198
Mozambique	195
Togo	172
Costa Rica	170
Papua New Guinea	167
Croatia	157
Honduras	152

Albania	147
Lithuania	146
Jamaica	132
Belize	111
Luxembourg	101
Slovak Republic	101
Congo	96
Latvia	93
Burundi	92
Unknown	92
Moldova	84
Syria	84
Lesotho	83
Cambodia	81
Guyana	79
Venezuela	68
Chad	66
Malta	65
Bhutan	65
Armenia	64
Virgin Islands (British)	63
Guatemala	63

Fiji	58
Panama	57
Guinea	54
Belarus	53
Macedonia	51
Bahrain	51
Qatar	51
Oman	51
Libya	49
Gabon	49
Bosnia- Herzegovina	48
Mauritania	43
Cyprus	39
Myanmar	39
Slovenia	38
Maldives	37
Kuwait	37
Azerbaijan	36
Palestinian Territories	36
Georgia	33
Dominica	31

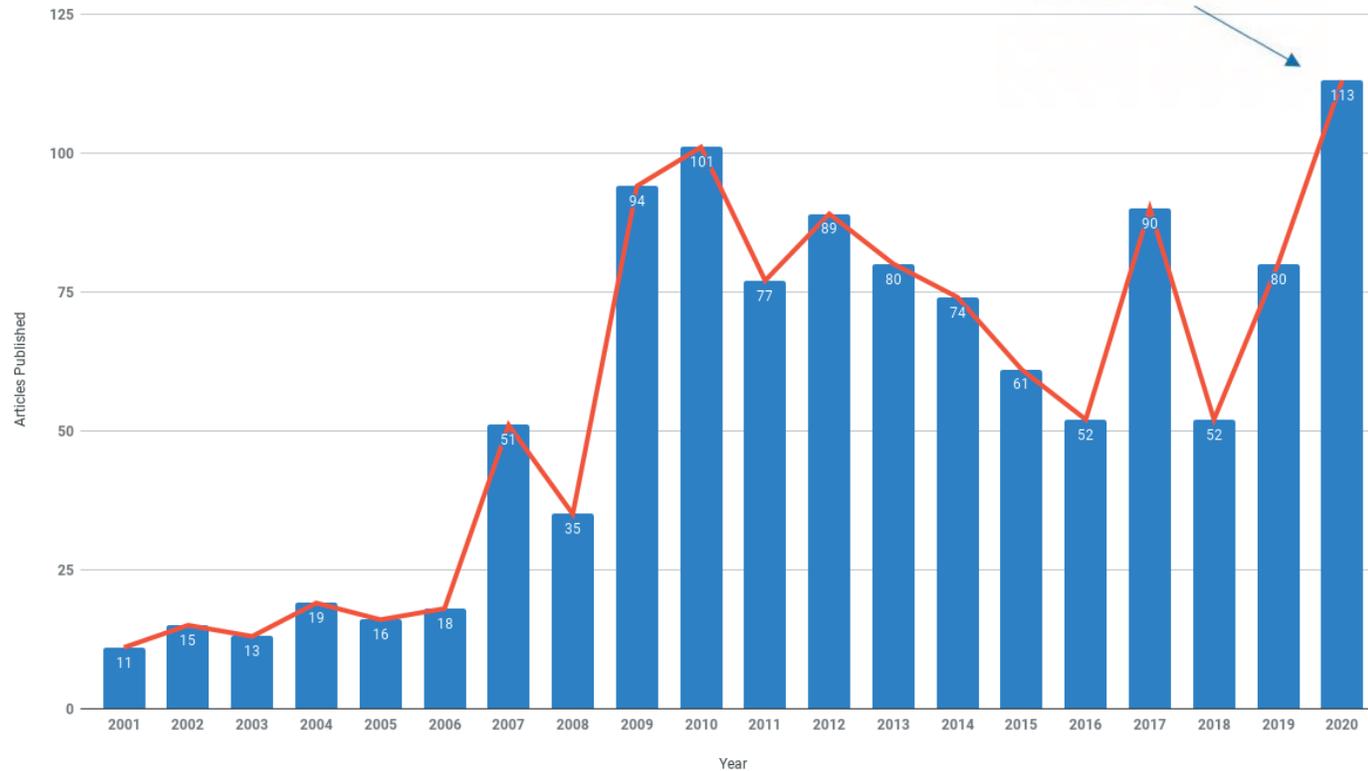
Djibouti	31
Macau	30
Mongolia	29
Puerto Rico	29
Yemen	28
Bolivia	27
Haiti	26
Cuba	25
Barbados	22
Nicaragua	20
Laos	19
New Caledonia (French)	19
Kyrgyzstan	18
Saint Vincent & Grenadines	18
Brunei	16
Darussalam	16
Guam (USA)	14
Cape Verde	14
Montenegro	14
Bahamas	12
El Salvador	10

## Web Visits Year 2020 – Number of visits by country, by rank

Reunion (French)	9	Grenada	1
Dominican Republic	8	Central African Republic	1
Saint Kitts & Nevis	8	Samoa Islands	1
Anguilla	8	Monaco	1
Sint Maarten	8	Unknown	1
Afghanistan	8	Jersey	1
Suriname	5	Tonga	1
Eritrea	5	Martinique (French)	1
Curacao	4	Bermuda	1
Antigua and Barbuda	4	Micronesia	1
Iceland	4	Vanuatu	1
Solomon Islands	4	Turks and Caicos Islands	1
Unknown	3	Gibraltar	1
Anguilla	2		
Equatorial Guinea	1		

# Articles published per year

Articles Published per Year - TREND

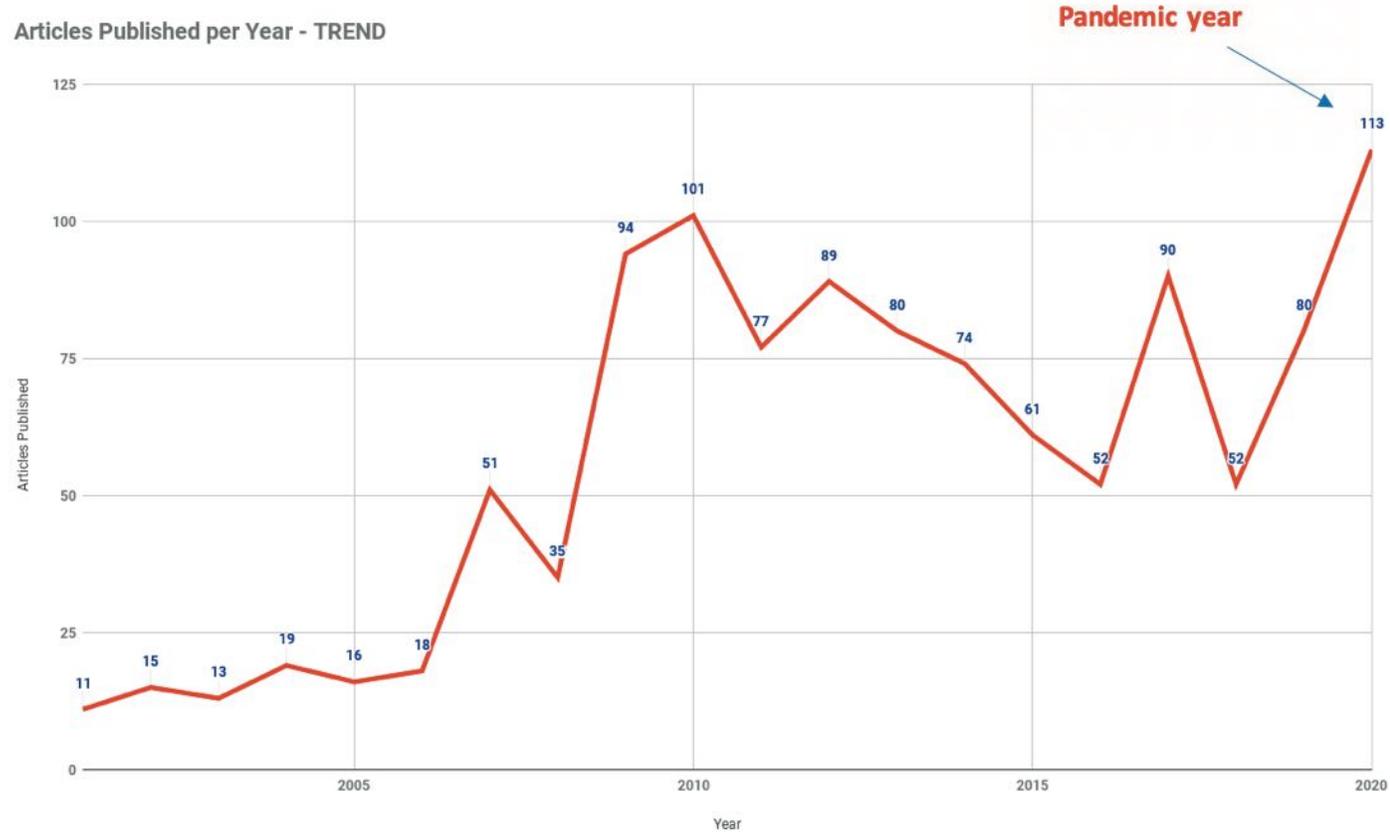


Number of articles published to 2020 is 1141

- Current number of articles in circulation - 510
- Total number of articles rejected - 91
- Total number of articles withdrawn - 55
- Total number of articles deleted - 45\*

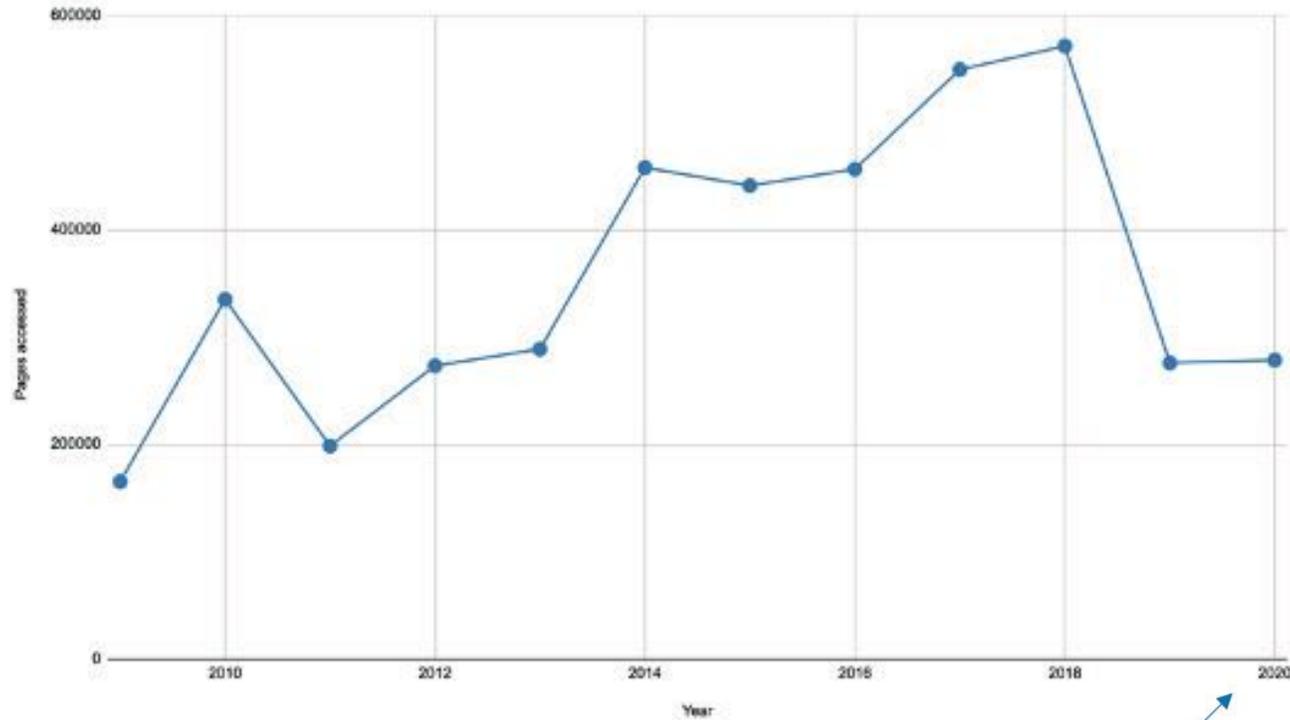
\*Deleted here means that an article has not received feedback from the author for over a year and thus has been deleted from our system. These are normally deleted after sending reminders to the author(s) several times, with no response.

# Articles published per year



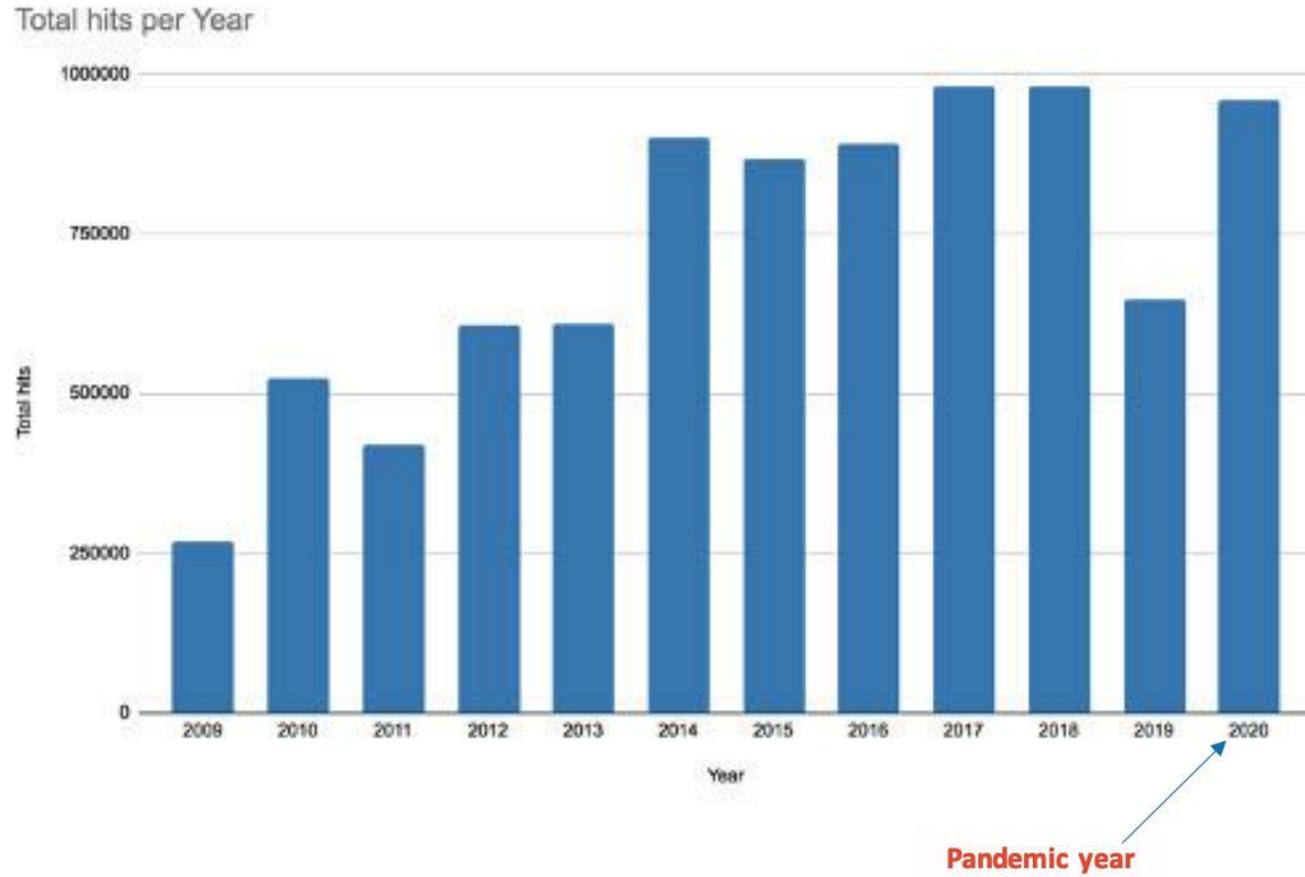
# Access Trends

Pages accessed per Year



Pandemic year

# Access Trends



## Indexing and Partnerships

AJFAND is indexed by, and can also be accessed through the following databases:

- Scopus <https://www.scopus.com/sources>
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) <https://doaj.org/>
- African Journals Online (AJOL) <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajfand/about>
- Google Scholar <https://scholar.google.com/>
- Food Science and Technology Abstracts <https://www.ifis.org/fsta>
- Bioline International <http://www.bioline.org.br/journals>
- CAB Abstracts <http://www.cabi.org>
- EBSCO Information Services <http://www.ebscohost.com>
- Chemical Abstracts Service <https://www.cas.org/>
- Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA) <http://www.fao.org/agora/en/>
- FAO Sustainable Food Value Chain Development (SFVC) Knowledge Platform <http://www.fao.org/documents/en//>

# Indexing and Partnerships



## Libraries and Institutions

- African Union (AU) Library
- University of Botswana Library
- University of Zimbabwe Library
- University of Nairobi (through AJOL)
- Hawassa University (Ethiopia)
- University of University of Ghana, Legon

AJFAND is an accredited journal by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in South Africa.

<http://research.ukzn.ac.za/DoHETAccreditedJournals.aspx>

## Digital Object Identifiers (DOI)

AJFAND uses CrossRef <http://www.crossref.org/> DOIs to provide published articles stable, persistent links that preserve scholarly citation records and link AJFAND content to other publishers and organizations. AJFAND readers can easily link from our references to other relevant articles and *vice versa*, increasing research visibility and Journal Influence Factor.

## Indexing and Partnerships

We receive occasional requests concerning whether AJFAND is indexed and by whom, and to indicate the journal's impact factor. There are those, rightfully so, who would wish to see the journal in the same league as well established international journals, household-name types, and why not? The information provided below will be a standing piece on the AJFAND website and will be updated whenever there is need to do so. Please visit it regularly to see whether your journal, your baby, is growing or not. As custodians of the baby, we are keen to see it grow.

As Founder Editor-in-Chief of AJFAND, I wish to extend the secretariat's appreciation, and also on behalf of ALL THE AUTHORS and REVIEWERS, for making it possible to reach this level of international recognition. Remember, the first issue of the journal was out in 2001 and we did not begin to get any recognition until 2006, five years later. It has taken years and persistence, commitment, consistency with occasional lapses, and a belief that what we were doing was the right thing for Africa, and indeed the rest of the world.

Our financial base is still weak but this we hope will change with time. If any of you has novel ways of raising funds that does not distract from our core business, please let us know.

**Ruth Khasaya Oniang'o**  
Editor-in-Chief



## Indexing and Partnerships

	Name of Institution	Contract Brief	Date Commenced
1.	University of Toronto, Canada Bioline International <a href="http://www.bioline.org.br/nd">http://www.bioline.org.br/nd</a> CANADA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online publishing of AJFAND materials on Bioline website and monitoring the published material in terms of visits, requests and readership. Helps with quality assurance and tracking of usage of various AJFAND products</li> </ul>	April 2006
2.	GALE / Cengage Learning <a href="http://www.gale.com">http://www.gale.com</a> USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of AJFAND materials in GALE's publishing programs whose materials are used for teaching and learning purposes</li> </ul>	July 2008
3.	Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) a division of The American Chemical Society <a href="http://www.cas.org">http://www.cas.org</a> USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of valuable indexing and abstract service</li> <li>• Bibliographic citation for journal articles selected for inclusion in CAS products and providing pointers to the original article</li> <li>• In 2008, 15 articles out of nearly 40 published were indexed</li> </ul>	June 2008
4.	International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR) <a href="http://www.iifir.org">http://www.iifir.org</a> FRANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digitizing AJFAND articles selected by IIR for use in Fridoc (bibliographical database) to be accessed by European readers</li> </ul>	January 2009

## Indexing and Partnerships

	Name of Institution	Contract Brief	Date Commenced
5.	CABI Publishing <a href="http://www.cabi.org">http://www.cabi.org</a> UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing of AJFAND materials in CABI full-text online subscription products which includes indexed bibliographic databases, CAB abstracts and/or Global Health and a most valued archiving service, while allowing AJFAND to retain its independence</li> <li>• Published AJFAND full text articles are readily available from the CABI archives on the website <a href="http://www.cabi.org">www.cabi.org</a></li> </ul>	January 2009
6.	Cornell University Albert R. Mann Library <a href="http://www.teeal.org">http://www.teeal.org</a> USA	<p>TEEAL – The Essential Electronic Agricultural Library</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replication of electronic text of the AJFAND publications in a database by means of external hard drive. Hard drives are installed in universities and research institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>THE TEEAL PROJECT CLOSED IN YEAR 2020</b></p>	January 2009
7.	EBSCO Publishing <a href="http://www.ebscohost.com">http://www.ebscohost.com</a> USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissemination of AJFAND publications in text, image and other electronic formats that may exist so as to reach a wider audience through EBSCO's databases.</li> </ul>	August 2009

# GOODWILL MESSAGES



**Prof. Joseph Allotey**  
Ex-Professor University of Botswana  
alloteysenior@gmail.com

### Introduction

AJFAND (African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development) was founded by the indefatigable and excellence-oriented Founder Editor-in-Chief, Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o, in August 2001. At its inception, and for the first two issues, the name was AJFNS (African Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences). Prof. Oniang'o recognized the need for a high-level journal in the disciplines of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development in Africa, based on the paucity of scientific publications from Africa 20 years back (2001-2021). AJFAND was founded at a time when Africa was becoming disillusioned by the ravages of food shortages, malnutrition and famine among others and, hence, AJFAND offered the much-needed communication outlet for scientific research and development information dissemination in the disciplines mentioned in the continent. To date,

AJFAND remains one of the very few internationally recognized journals from Africa, where scientists from Africa and other parts of the world can submit research works, most of which are relevant to Africa.

### Some background information on the African food situation and AJFAND inception 20 years back (2001-2021)

The African situation in some regions in Africa, 20 years back (2001-2021) was aptly described in a publication entitled "Famine in Southern Africa" [1]. In the publication, it was reported "Southern Africa is again reeling from devastating regional cocktail of drought, floods, economic downturn and political instability by the raging HIV/AIDS pandemic, WFP's regional director for East and southern Africa, Judith Lewis, has warned that food has to start arriving in three-to-four months to avert

'all-out-disaster'". From the publication given, it was observed that the situation was particularly severe in one of the countries in southern Africa and that according to recent WFP assessment, malnutrition rates were soaring in health and nutrition centers, and that the effect of HIV/AIDS was highlighted in the Washington Post of May 10, 2002. This epidemic, according to the report "has further cut into the particular country's crop production by leaving the elderly, children and orphans to care for the sick, assume the responsibilities of planting and harvesting crops, or take odd jobs for extra income". The UN at the time estimated that 700,000 tons of food aid was needed that year (2002) and the WFP was mobilizing resources that would take months for food to be channeled through that particular country's poor infrastructure [1].

The narrated scenario above brings to mind the question posed by Prof. Oniang'o in AJFAND under the Commentary: "Who will feed Africa tomorrow?" [2]. This question was asked ten years after the "Famine in Southern Africa" narrative. Prof. Oniang'o in answering this question reported "it is only by ensuring a robust food security system that Africans can enjoy good nutrition through the lifecycle, and 'it can be done'"; and that understanding of the complex factors contributing to food security on the continent and the role of women in Agriculture cannot be over-emphasized. Prof. Oniang'o in AJFAND [2] reported that everyone needs food and that she spent the past two decades arguing that most of Africa's food security depended on the sweat of women, toiling away on wasted land, without adequate inputs, amid serious weather variability. She made clear these aspects of food security to policy makers. Prof. Oniang'o noted that only when the

population is food secure and food is accessible to them, despite depredations of economics or climate, can they be expected to innovate and produce in a productive and entrepreneurial way. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines food security as a "situation that exists when all people, at all times have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life [3]. Food is, thus, a prime requirement for the survival of mankind.

Researchers in various fields of food science and technology, nutrition, food hygiene and agriculture, are aware of the food crisis and its impact on the economy, health, environment and total productivity in all countries of Africa. They are aware of the Lagos Plan of Action in the areas of food self-sufficiency and development of scientific research, and cognizant of the efforts made by governments in these fields

in Africa. A nation's food production covers all factors or agents that act in concert to make food available at affordable prices by all segments of the population. Prior to 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the private sector (the part of the national economy not under direct state control) in most African countries was actively involved in food production, food processing, preservation, storage, marketing and ultimately generating income and jobs and enhancing food security. A look at the African food production some years back can be summarized as: Africa exported cereals in 1938; Africa was self-sufficient in 1950; Africa was importing 10 million tons of cereals in a year in 1976; Africa imported 13 million tons of cereals in 1978; Africa imported 31 million tons of cereals in 1983; and from 1983-1985, Africa experienced disastrous drought and food shortages [4]. It has been observed that if grain imports in Africa continue to rise, and if grain

harvests continue to shrink in Africa, the second most populous continent, we have to ask where tomorrow's grain will come from. Certainly, countries such as USA, Canada, Australia and Argentina that dominated world grain exports for the last half century, may not be able to export much beyond the current level, considering the current world food crisis.

The COVI-19 pandemic is disrupting the world as we knew it, with a heavy toll on human lives and economic activities. Its rapid global spread is threatening to affect millions of people already made vulnerable by food insecurity, malnutrition and the effects of conflict and other disasters [5]. The WFP is working with governments to strengthen and expand social protection programmes to address poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, sustain food production, trade, distribution and consumption, support national health systems through supply chains, data collection and targeted nutritional

services for the most vulnerable; and provide alternatives to school feeding where educational activities have been suspended in the wake of the pandemic [5].

### **AJFAND inception, experiences and achievements looking back 20 years (2001-2021)**

What are the experiences and achievements of AJFAND looking back 20 years (2001-2021) since its inception and how can these contribute towards providing sound food, agriculture, nutrition and development goals for the growing population in Africa, while addressing the issues of food security, food safety, food sufficiency, nutritional security, malnutrition, food policies, agriculture and developmental issues in Africa?

AJFAND at inception in August 2001, and for the first two issues was given

the name AJFNS (African Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences) and then changed to AJFAND to increase coverage in food, food related disciplines, nutrition and agriculture among others. With the inclusion of other disciplines, namely Agriculture and Development, the scope and coverage of AJFAND became not only unique but the journal was a pioneer in Food, Agriculture and Development, and led with excellence, fostering the much-needed interaction between professionals in the scientific community for research information dissemination, the private sector, government, development oriented bilateral and multilateral agencies and other interested groups in Africa. Hon Prof. Ruth Oniang'o, the Founder Editor-in-Chief of AJFAND from inception observed in the first issue, that the journal is "an effort in putting together the case for Food and Nutrition in Africa; Africa ranks lowest in the world in terms

of availability of food and the quality of food; it is in Africa where malnutrition still has a grip on both the children and the adults; it is in Africa where hunger, deprivation and death still haunt the population; and it is in the same Africa where natural resources abound. The journal is meant to create awareness of the multiplicity of challenges facing Africa, that lead to food and nutritional deficits. The journal will highlight both biotic and abiotic challenges, amongst which we shall discuss issues as politics, policy and governance as they relate to nutrition; and will hopefully provide a platform for resolving these problems, hence, improving the quality of life in Africa" as given in Vol.2; No.2, 2001).

Suffice to say that research and research information dissemination play an important role in the accomplishment of AJFAND to make Africa food secure. AJFAND has over the past 20 years contributed in the direction of making

the continent food secure by publishing important and relevant research work in the disciplines and areas mentioned earlier, mainly from Africa and beyond. Prof Oniang'o reported that one has the right to worry about the future of Africa's food security [2]. Since food is vital to life, Oniang'o suggested that young people in Africa should go into farming as this is a strategy whose time has come and we should all engage young people in national and global discussions that affect them [2]. There are many implications with regard to farming, which necessitates our understanding of the factors involved including nutritional needs, food security, research in agriculture including pest management, post-harvest loss prevention, developing a clear land policy to ensure proper usage, getting land demarcated for tenure purposes where necessary, and use of indigenous knowledge in food technology. Losses in food production start from the field by

the activities of insect pests and other agents of bio-deterioration such as fungi. The current world crisis in food production is due, in part, to avoidable losses incurred during the storage of agricultural produce and losses can occur at all stages of the post-harvest system such as during drying, threshing, cleaning, sorting, storage, processing and distribution. Losses in storage may be due to insects, mites, fungi, rodents and birds. These agents can also be cited for losses of agricultural crops in the field. The damage caused by insect pests in stored food commodities is revealed as loss of: weight, food value, quality, monetary value, goodwill, and seed for next year planting [6]. On average, it has been estimated that at least 10% of food is lost in storage [7] and one estimate has put the annual value at US\$1 1.5 billion for the developing world. Estimates of losses of grain from the time of harvest until consumption by man vary from country

to country in Africa and may range from 1-50% [6].

The need arises, therefore, for a programme/forum to bring especially young scholars in various disciplines (food science, food technology, nutrition, plant protection, insect pest management, agriculture, food microbiology, biochemistry), from universities and research institutions to share research findings, exchange ideas and work in collaboration on scientific problems associated with food production in Africa. Thus, scientists from the various disciplines cited should be encouraged for their contributions toward food production; food availability, food accessibility; food protection and food safety, taking the environment into consideration.

From the facts presented so far, it can be said that the objectives of AJFAND to create awareness of the multiplicity

of the challenges facing Africa in food production, the need to encourage young farmers and scientists, professionals, non-governmental organizations, and interested groups; working on food, agriculture, nutrition and development issues; and to publish research work and finding solutions to the food problem in Africa; are laudable.

### **Association with Prof. Oniang'o and AJFAND, looking back 20 years (2001-2021) AJFAND publishing**

Prof. Oniang'o was one of the main invited speakers at the 14th SAA FoST International Congress and Exhibition/ ECOSA FoST, ICC and ARE-Irene, Conference in Pretoria, South Africa, from 2-4 September, 1997. At the Conference, Prof. Oniang'o discussed with me, the full implication of edible insects, sustainability and utilization as food in Africa, based on my poster presentation: "Post-harvest quality

deterioration of *Imbrasia belina*, an edible caterpillar" [8]. This memorable Conference served as my first contact with Prof. Oniang'o, a very distinguished and outstanding scientist at the Conference whose leadership and impact cast lasting impression on the delegates and those she came in contact with. Prof. Oniang'o communicated with me soon after the Conference and expressed her great interest for food security in Africa and the need to address important issues such as malnutrition, hunger and poverty on the continent; while considering the most effective way of dissemination of research work among scientists in Africa; as there were few active and regularly published journals from Africa, 20 years ago (2001-2021). Observations on the situation at the time, prompted Prof. Oniang'o to find a solution to the problem by founding AJFAND in August 2001. Prof. Allotey as entomologist in collaboration with a

mycologist and a food microbiologist published a paper entitled “Insect-mycoflora interaction in maize flour” in the first issue of the journal at its inception with Allotey as corresponding author [9]. This was a post-harvest research. Interaction between insects and micro-organisms in the food-ecosystem especially during storage can lead to the contamination of the food product and, therefore, make it unwholesome and unavailable to the consumer, or when otherwise consumed can lead to disease conditions or ill health and hence, nutritional/food insecurity. Specifically, interaction between insects and moulds in the food storage ecosystem can lead to increase in the production of toxins (mycotoxins). The mycotoxins are health hazards. For example, aflatoxins associated maize infestation by insects and moulds (such as *Aspergillus flavus*) can affect children, leading to deformity and mental retardation. The journal has

certainly come to stay, with a mission and scientists in food and food related sciences, nutrition, agriculture, and plant protection can now have a good future outlook in terms of the desired journal from Africa. One gets the benefits of publishing in AJFAND with a Founder Editor-in-Chief, who not only has the vision and the drive but is determined to make the journal succeed in its goals. Indeed, the benefits from AJFAND cannot be overemphasized. I am strongly in support of AJFAND from its inception and have been submitting papers for publication in the journal. Below are some of my publications on food, food safety, and related areas as published in AJFAND: A short communication on the “Utilization of useful insects as food source”, published in AJFAND in 2003 [10]. Reference for this important publication on useful insects as food for global awareness was given in the BIO-NET INTERNATIONAL: The global network for

taxonomy in the Monthly Bulletin No.46 June 2004 p3., thus bringing AJFAND globally to taxonomists, including those interested in exploring the existence of edible and potential edible insects; Profile of Prof. Joseph Allotey published in AJFAND in 2003 [11]. Concerning food protection of stored legumes, specifically soya beans and the role of the biology of the most destructive bruchid pest of pulses in Africa, *Callosobruchus maculatus* and the control measures, Allotey and Oyewo published a paper in AJFAND in 2004 [12]. As an encouragement to young scientists undertaking research in Africa; AJFAND published an editorial entitled “Overcoming challenges, the case of the young scientists in Africa” by Prof. Allotey in 2005 [13]. Cockroaches have been found to be prevalent in homes, particularly in food preparation areas. Members of the multidisciplinary cockroach research team (with Prof. Allotey as Project co-ordinator),

published a paper entitled “Microbiological studies of cockroaches trapped from three localities in Gaborone” in AJFAND in 2006 [14]. Prof. Allotey in collaboration with a mycologist and a biochemist, published a paper entitled “Control of *Tribolium confusum* J. du Val by diatomaceous earth (Protect-ITTM) on stored groundnut (*Arachis hypogaea*) and *Aspergillus flavus* Link spore dispersal” in AJFAND in 2010 [15]. Control methods for insects in stored food commodities can be hygienic, physical, chemical, and biological. However, the integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach, whereby all these methods are combined to give effective management of the pest is recommended. IPM reduces much reliance on chemical insecticides. Biological methods such as the use of insect parasites or parasitoids and predators can be used in the field storage conditions (barns), but is not

acceptable in domestic storage, since the parasites/predators are considered as food contaminants. As insects spread the spores of contaminant toxigenic *A. flavus* in groundnuts, they enhance the production of aflatoxins. Aflatoxin contamination of groundnuts (peanuts) is a serious problem worldwide because the contaminated product impacts quality as well as marketing and may affect consumers, both humans and animals. It is important to start management of aflatoxin production from the field through harvesting, drying, processing and storage. In the latter case, there is need to modify the storage conditions to minimize insect and microbial activity leading to aflatoxin production. Food safety is a scientific discipline describing handling, preparation and storage of food in ways that prevent food-borne diseases. Food can transmit disease from person to person and food poisoning from microorganisms

(bacteria and fungi) can cause many disorders in the body or general ill health. The street food vendors will take their food business to where people are, regardless of the conditions of the surrounding area or environment. AJFAND published a Guest editorial entitled "Food safety and the environment" by Prof. Allotey in 2011 [16]. For food safety, it is important to observe the following: Mycotoxin production and other contaminants; Pesticide residues in food; Product quality determination; Risk assessment; Quarantine and regulatory issues; among others. It is important to control insects infesting stored groundnuts and prevent the spread of contaminant Fungi. Prof. Allotey published a paper with a mycologist, entitled "Mould contamination of ready-to-eat cereal based foods retailed in Lesotho with special reference to toxigenic *Aspergillus flavus*" in AJFAND in 2011 [17]. Cereals and legumes are the

principal source of daily energy and protein. No nation in Africa can afford to be complacent with the problems posed by insects to food production in Africa. *Callosobruchus maculatus* is a primary and major pest of cowpea, *Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp. Severe infestation by *C. maculatus* can lead to stored legume losses of up-to 30% within six months. There are several methods which are used to control this pest in store. Prof. Allotey in collaboration with a nutritionist, a food technologist, and a food scientist, published a paper entitled "Comparative study of the effects of steam and solar heat-treated cowpea seeds on some aspects of the developmental biology and control of *Callosobruchus maculatus*" in AJFAND in 2012 [18]. Steaming is thought to cause some physical modification of starch gelatinization and protein denaturing leading to a case hardening 'effect' on the surface cell layers of the cotyledons and could, therefore, be used

to prevent *C. maculatus* infestation of cowpea seeds meant for long storage and consumption since the cooking properties and processing qualities are not affected. Solar heating of cowpeas to control *C. maculatus* is one of the safe methods. Cowpeas serve as an important dietary protein for many people in Africa. It is during storage that cowpeas suffer heavy quantitative and qualitative losses from the attack of *C. maculatus*. Africa produces more cowpea (*V. unguiculata*) than any other continent but utilization in many countries is reduced due to seed destruction by the larvae of bruchids.

## Collaboration with Prof. Oniang'o

Prof. Oniang'o has been active in promoting and organizing discussion groups and workshops to ensure that journal editors in Africa are given information on the prevailing situation of scientific journal publishing in Africa. On this note, SAJE (Society of African Journal Editors) workshop was organized for editors of journals from different countries in Africa. While collaborating with Prof. Oniang'o and through her initiative, the following can be highlighted: Launch of SAJE: I represented the University of Botswana for the launch of this important Society for African Journal Editors (SAJE) workshop, which took place in Nairobi, Kenya, at Lenana Mount Hotel, from 15-18 December, 2004 and presented the paper; entitled "Capacity building for students' authorship and research" [19]. This was published in the Proceedings of the Launch Meeting of Society of

African Editors (SAJE) edited by Prof. Oniang'o; and sponsored by Rockefeller Foundation and Rural Outreach Program (ROP). Other sponsors were: ASERECA, INASP, IFPRI and MOSANTO CO., USA. The strategic plan for SAJE can be given as Vision: To facilitate publishing of high quality African scholarly journals and research papers, complying with the highest international standards; Mission: To build capacity by training editors, reviewers and authors for African scholarly journals; To systematically increase the number of African journals in international indexing systems; To bridge the widening gap between researchers in Africa and their colleagues in other continents; To put mechanisms in place that will increase sustainability of African scholarly journals. These include effective mobilization of potential resources and continuous evaluation of actions of SAJE. Based on my presentation at SAJE launch and the

support of the founder Editor-in-Chief of AJFAND, Prof. Oniang'o, I encouraged my M.Phil. student, Mr. Sejakosi Mohale who had then just graduated (2004), to publish a scientific paper on his own, entitled "Environmentally friendly way of controlling stored product insect pests" [20] (AJFAND: STUDENT SECTION). I was a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of AJFAND; member of the International Advisory Board and Quality Assurance Editor for AJFAND in 2006/7.

Through the initiative of Prof. Oniang'o, I represented Botswana at the 2001 ECSAFoST Meeting at SAAFoST Biennial Congress, 10 - 12 September 2001, in Durban, South Africa. I was the main contact person in the department of Biological sciences for the invitation of Prof. Ruth Oniang'o from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, to give a public lecture on Food Security, and discussion on academic

co-operation between the University of Botswana and other Universities offering academic programmes in Food related Sciences in 2002. There was a special invitation (Prof. Oniang'o and Prof. Allotey) to represent Africa at the IUFoST 12th World Food Science and Technology Congress, July 16 - 20, 2003, in Chicago, USA. The theme was "Feeding the World: opportunities without boundaries. Symposium: The (healthy, sustainable) Food Chain. Food Processing and Food safety". I was instrumental in contacting the Founder Editor-in-Chief, Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o; as Guest speaker at the University of Botswana, Office of Research and Development APRIL RESEARCH SEMINAR in 2008. Prof. Oniang'o delivered a lecture "The challenge of getting Africa onto the Global Map of Scholarly Publishing: The case of AJFAND", Friday, April 4th 2008 3:00pm, at the Faculty of Business Block 245/130, UB Main

Campus. The abstract of this important lecture on AJFAND as we look back, 20 years (2001-2021) has been given. Abstract: "Publishing a scholarly peer review journal poses some unique challenges for many African countries. The experiences of AJFAND, a journal published in Kenya provides some lessons in these challenges. It is one of the pioneer journals in Africa and focuses on food and nutrition and related areas, and attempts to link research and development. AJFAND has been one of the journals that have pioneered exclusive electronic publishing in Africa. This helped reduce the distribution costs substantially. The print version days saw three fourths of the cost go to postage. Efforts to collaborate with Kenya Posts Authority to give us some concessions did not bear much fruit. The number of visits to the journal website, however, has been steadily rising. Among the challenges the journal has faced include getting a

sufficient number of dedicated reviewers as well as sustaining the publishing and distribution costs. Relatively few individuals or even institutions within Africa have the resources to subscribe to a journal. Another limitation is that internet access is not available to many potential readers, although this has changed substantially in the recent past. On the positive side, there are many young and enthusiastic contributors who submit articles. Some of the issues addressed are uniquely African, and may not be relevant for publication in journals published outside the continent. For this and many other reasons that will be highlighted in the present presentation, publishing AJFAND remains relevant."

Through collaboration with Prof. Oniang'o, we published a book chapter together, entitled "Food safety and the role of government" [21] in the book "NOT BY BREAD ALONE: FOOD SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE IN

AFRICA". Prof. Oniang'o presented our collaborative (with Prof. Allotey and Ms. Malaba) paper entitled "Contribution of indigenous knowledge and practices in Food Technology to attainment of Food Security in Africa" at the 12th World Congress of Food Technology: Feeding the World-Opportunities without Boundaries, July 16th-20th, Chicago Hilton and Towers, in Chicago, ILL. USA [22]; and published a paper of the same title in the Journal of Food Science [23]. This important paper was republished under UNIT: World Hunger and Malnutrition, in Annual Editions: Nutrition; in 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/8, and 2008/9; which reported 'To ensure food security in Africa, the authors outline the vast potential of indigenous knowledge (IK) and practices to realize sustainability. The advantages of exploiting sustainable and community-based indigenous practices and systematically documenting the potential of IK as environmentally

friendly before considering external source interventions are argued". This brings the question: what is indigenous knowledge (IK)? IK is knowledge that is unique to a given culture. Communities use IK at the local level as the basis for decision making pertaining to vital activities in which food security is included. As such, IK is the most important and often only asset for many poor, rural societies and its significance increases as other resources disappear or dwindle. Building on this IK to ensure food security in Africa can be particularly effective as this is an asset that the people of Africa control and certainly one with which they are familiar with. Utilizing IK will help increase the sustainability of food security efforts because the IK integration process provides for mutual learning and adaptation, which in turn contributes to the empowerment of local communities. Thus, IK systems will empower local communities in

Africa, enabling them to shape their own food security agenda by actively participating in it. My contribution can be given: As a post-harvest scientist and one very well acquainted with post-harvest systems, it is a well-known fact that African communities offer a number of indigenous knowledge and practices in Post-harvest technology and Food technology that are favourable to food supply, food quality and food safety and thus, directly contribute to food security. As such indigenous knowledge and practices in Post-harvest Technology and Food technology that have proved capable of ensuring food security need to be implemented before considering the introduction of external ones if food security is to be realized in Africa. Emphasis of the same should be made for foods that are adapted to local conditions thus, improving food access, safe food availability and utilization to meet local and regional needs. Post-harvest technology aims

to make the best possible use of raw food material available so that the consumer is supplied with products in the desired form. A substantial amount of food is lost post-harvest and these losses can occur at all stages of the food system as mentioned earlier. It is important to know where these losses are occurring and to reduce them so that valuable sources of protein from pulses can be used more fully. Africa's indigenous food crops are under-exploited, yet these have been accepted by communities through habit and tradition and are appropriate and desirable food resources. These include traditional staples, oil crops, fruits and vegetables, milk, meat, edible insects, fish and so on. Some of the well documented successful practices are: Sun drying of fruits, vegetables and edible insects, Solar drying techniques, Storage of roots, tubers, bananas and plantains, etc. There was a very extensive and comprehensive review

in AJFAND in 2017, of the book ENTOMOPHAGY (Insects as Food), with S.K. Shrivastava, J. Allotey, A. Prakash, and J. Rao as authors [24]. There has been growing consumer and investor interest in alternative proteins which include insects. Edible insects have the potential to play a major role in reducing hunger and malnutrition in Africa and other parts of the world, since they are very rich in proteins and micronutrients especially with the current world food crisis due to 2020 COVID-19 [25]. The increased availability and affordability of insects as protein source will help consumers diversify their diets in order to ensure a more secure food and future for Africa and the world at large.

**Current status of AJFAND special reference looking back 20 years (2001-2021)**

AJFAND has been one of the few journals to be founded by a practising

Food and Nutrition Scientist with a passion for food and nutritional security in Africa. Prof. Oniang'o has worked tirelessly on these issues by conducting research, discussing at national and international fora about food security, malnutrition, and hunger in Africa, which led eventually to the founding of AJFAND among other undertakings. The Rural Outreach Program which she founded, and as the executive director assisted AJFAND in many ways through sponsorship together with international and local sponsors. Some of these sponsors still contribute to the management and publishing of AJFAND. However, AJFAND currently still needs the involvement and contribution from more sponsors both international and local as well as committed reviewers, authors, researchers, dedicated young scientists to run with the vision and future outlook. AJFAND has continued to disseminate and share food, agriculture, nutrition and

developmental issues on the continent. AJFAND has resourced from both social, nutritional, food science, and food related research and information as well as issues on food security that affect the development of the continent. Looking back 20 years (2001-2021), and to illustrate the coverage of topics covered, it would require going through all the publications. We can, however, look at the contents of one selected volume to show the range of topics covered by AJFAND Volume 5 (No.1) 2005: 1. Guest Editorial: Overcoming challenges: the case of the young scientists in Africa; 2. Production and use of a shelf stable bovine blood powder for food fortification as a food-based strategy to combat iron deficiency anaemia in sub-Saharan Africa; 3. Predictors of birthweight in healthy women attending a rural antenatal clinic; 4. Vegetable consumption pattern of households in selected areas of the old Rivers State in

Nigeria; 5. A review of past and present research on aflatoxin in Uganda; 6. Role of vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid) on human health: A review; 7. Hygienic and sanitary practices of vendors of street foods in Nairobi, Kenya; 8. Methods of preparation and the energy, protein and mineral values of three Cameroonian dishes "Corn Chaff", "Nnam Owondo/Ebobolo" and Nnam Ngon/Ebobolo"; 9. Potential toxicity of some traditional leafy vegetables consumed in Nyahg'oma Division, Western Kenya; 10. Evaluation of Lathyrus sativus cultivated in Ethiopia for proximate composition, minerals, A-Odap and anti-nutritional components. From the content in this issue and all other issues of AJFAND to the present, AJFAND provides a platform for resolving important issues on food and food-related problems and hence, improving the quality of life in Africa.

With growing international recognition, it is worth noting that AJFAND was one

of the journals that pioneered exclusive online publishing in Africa. The number of visits to AJFAND website has been steadily rising for the past 20 years (2001-2021). In spite of the challenges, AJFAND is forging ahead with its goal of making the continent more research oriented through encouragement of research work publishing, made available and accessible through internet access to scientists in Africa. Some of the information from recent volume, volume 20 No. 7 includes: 2019 AJFAND "Statistics: 119 articles (192 English and 7 French) were submitted. 80 were published; 18 were withdrawn, 12 were rejected, 8 were deleted; 71 were among the 336 in process in 2020" (Editor-in-Chief). AJFAND is now indexed in not less than eleven data bases which include SCOPUS, Directory of Open Access Journals, African Journals online (AJOL), Google Scholar, Information services, Chemical Abstract Services, Access to

Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA) and FAO Sustainable Food Value Chain Development (SFVC) Knowledge Platform. AJFAND is now ranked in SCI Journal Rank (SJP) which is an alternative measure (to traditional matrix). SJP indicator is a measure of scientific influence of scholarly journals that accounts for both the number of citations received by a journal and the importance or prestige of the journal. Where such citations come from, SJP retrieves information for various indicators from the SCOPUS data base. AJFAND uses Digital Object Identifiers (DOI); and there is much more recent information on AJFAND, obtainable from the website. I would like to encourage you to visit the AJFAND website and not only to support but also to submit perhaps your long-awaited manuscript, which is in line with the aspirations and future outlook of this important journal. It is your turn.

## Conclusion

Certainly, I have been greatly impacted by Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o from my first contact with this celebrated and distinguished Food and Nutrition Scientist, who would wish nothing but to see 'Food' on the table of every consumer in Africa and to see Agricultural developments policy that favours mostly women who, as has been known for years are in the frontline for food production in Africa. As suggested by Prof. Oniang'o, one would wish to see young men in Africa going into farming, making it their career and be determined to make Africa food sufficient and food secure in the future. From now on, the question "Who will feed Africa tomorrow?" and with the global COVID-19 pandemic and world food crisis, our perspective of Africa relying completely on outside "help" alone has changed, never to be revisited.

Prof. Oniang'o has greatly influenced my understanding of the various aspects of the FOOD CHAIN, the World hunger problem through conferences and workshops; and what Africans can do to help solve the food problem through improvement on indigenous knowledge, with which Africans are very familiar.

Africa and through AJFAND has over the past twenty years (2012-2021), seen growth in scientific communication through publishing in AJFAND. Indeed, AJFAND deserves great commendation for its achievements over these 20 years (2012-2021), looking back. As a scientist and through my association with the AJFAND Founder-Editor-in-Chief, Prof. Oniang'o, I have been more enlightened by the amount of research conducted in various food-related disciplines and published in this journal, from Africa, right from its inception, over the past 20 years (2012-2021). Some of the international recognition

and achievements of AFAND have been highlighted. We look forward to more international and local sponsors for this esteemed journal, AJFAND from Africa and congratulate Hon. Prof Ruth Oniang'o, a rare academic luminary from Africa. Well done!

This article is based on my personal opinion regarding Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o and AJFAND and has not in any way received input from Prof Ruth, or anyone at the AJFAND secretariat.

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family encouraging the publication of AJFAND, looking back these 20 years (2001-2021). Acknowledgement is also extended to those who have helped in many ways.

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Entomophagy (Insects as food source), Shrivastava, S.K, Allotey, J, Prakash, A, and Rao, J [authors]. Publishers: Applied Zoologists Research Association (AZRA) 2017 Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India; 188pp. African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development, 2017; 17(3):1-3.

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**Allotey's Bio**

Prof. Allotey was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's best Research prize: Applied Zoologists Research Association Honorary Fellowship Award. He has a particular interest in stored products, post-harvest systems, food safety and food security in Africa; gave Key address Conference "Probing Biosciences for

Food Security and Environmental Safety"; Cuttack, India; key note on Food Security Symposium, Australia. He was profiled in African Academy of Sciences (AAS), 2000 Outstanding Intellectuals, 21st Century; Entomology, (IBC) Cambridge, England, Man of the Year 2000 American Biographical Institution (ABI), USA; AJFAND, 2003; Uttar Pradesh Journal of Zoology "Profiles of Zoologists of Repute; member of many Professional Associations; External Examiner & Assessor, many Universities; published a number of research papers including over 88 refereed research papers (55 published research papers in International Journals, 10 Research papers in Refereed Conference Abstracts, 23 Research Papers in Refereed Conference Proceedings), 46 non-Refereed Conference/Workshop papers; 7 Technical Bulletins; 10 books; and 10 Book Chapters.

***I first met Prof Joseph Allotey way back in 1997. Reading through his writings above (whose details have truly amazed me), one can see how far we have come. It is like we became each other's mentor. I will forever value his support and sacrifices to the the growth of AJFAND. God bless you Prof Joseph Allotey.***

***[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]***

***- END -***



**Dr. Leslie Chan**  
lesliekw.chan@utoronto.ca

It is with immense pleasure and great admiration that I send my congratulations to AJFAND and its Editor-in-Chief the Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o on the 20th Anniversary of the journal. As a pioneering Open Access peer review journal, two decades of uninterrupted publication of high quality research papers, is a truly significant milestone and a major accomplishment match by few others. The journal has served as a community for a new generation of food and nutritional scholars from Kenya and beyond. It has grown from a local publication with limited readership and contributions to a journal with truly international reach and impact far beyond the region. As food and nutritional security are issues of global concern and research and knowledge sharing on these issues are central to achieving the SDGs, the enormous importance and contributions of the journal to the well-being of people everywhere cannot be overstated. I wish

the journal continuous success and growth from strength to strength.

#### **Leslie Chan's Bio**

Leslie Chan is an Associate Professor in the Centre for Critical Development Studies at the University of Toronto Scarborough and the director of the Knowledge Equity Lab. Leslie's teaching and professional interests center on the geopolitics of knowledge production and circulation, with a focus on how networking technologies are enabling new forms of collaborations, while also amplifying and reproducing embedded power relations and inequality. In particular, Leslie has been exploring the dynamics of university-community partnership and the patterns of meanings around knowledge co-creation, participatory research, and how community-engaged modes of knowledge production could contribute to different frameworks of research impact assessment. Since 2000, Leslie

has served as the director of Bioline International, an open access platform for scientific journals from the global south. He has been a long-time advocate of open access and open science as a means to improve equitable participation in science and to expand the scope of science to embody multiple ways of knowing.

*When Dr Chan visited us in Nairobi to run workshops for about 30 or so African run scholarly journals 20 years ago, we were in our 3<sup>rd</sup> print issue of the journal. I was on the verge of giving up this venture when Dr Chan encouraged us to proceed. It was at that workshop in 2001 that I said: “Either we go digital or we fold up”.*

*So, we went digital and have never looked back. Through his platform Bioline International, Dr Chan and his team provided quality assurance and checked everything we published and alerted us of any mistake there might be. In other words, Dr Chan helped us to rise to the highest standard possible, and now we are indexed in SCOPUS.*

*Also, Dr Chan invited me to give a lecture at the University of Toronto, where I found him assisting more than 150 journals from developing countries. AJFAND was one of them. Leslie, we owe you a lot. At the time, you believed more in us than we did ourselves. Indeed, every culture has knowledge worth sharing. THANK YOU Leslie.*

*[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]*

*- END -*



**Dr. Sue Horton**  
sehorton@uwaterloo.ca

No longer a teenager! Congratulations to AJFAND on this 20th anniversary, and to the wonderful editorial team, ably led by Dr. Oniang'o. It has been my pleasure to be associated with the journal first as a technical editor and currently as an Associate Editor, since 2009. I look forward to the journal's continued success.

#### **Sue's Bio**

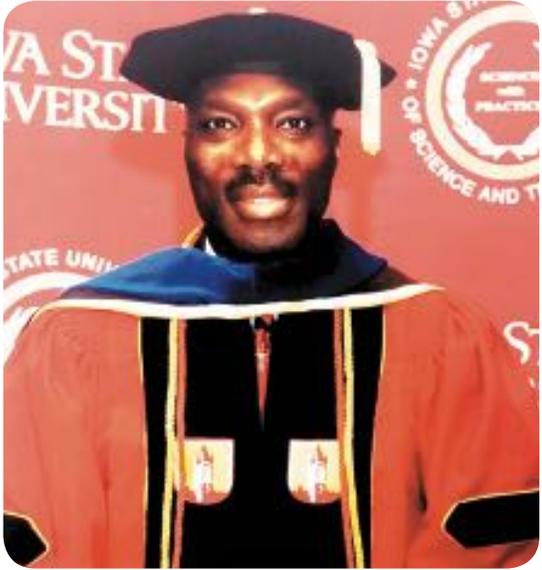
Susan Horton is Professor of Global Health Economics at the University of Waterloo, a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. Her earlier work on the economics of nutrition is well known, and more recently she has worked on non-communicable disease in low- and middle-income countries. She is currently Deputy Chair of the new Lancet Commission on Diagnostics, with expected publication early fall this year.

Sue has worked in more than twenty low- and middle-income countries including Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana, and consulted for over a dozen UN organizations, international development banks and international research organizations. According to Google Scholar, there have been more than 20,000 citations of her work to date.

***In 2009, Sue Horton offered to help with the editorial process of AJFAND. Since that time, she has assisted with peer review, technical review and general advice. Sue is always quick and thorough. Our speed of concluding a manuscript has been heavily enhanced by Dr Horton's involvement in our work. Thank you, Sue, for your unrelenting support. Stay blessed.***

***[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]***

***- END -***



**David Kwaw-Mensah**  
 dkwawmensah@gmail.com

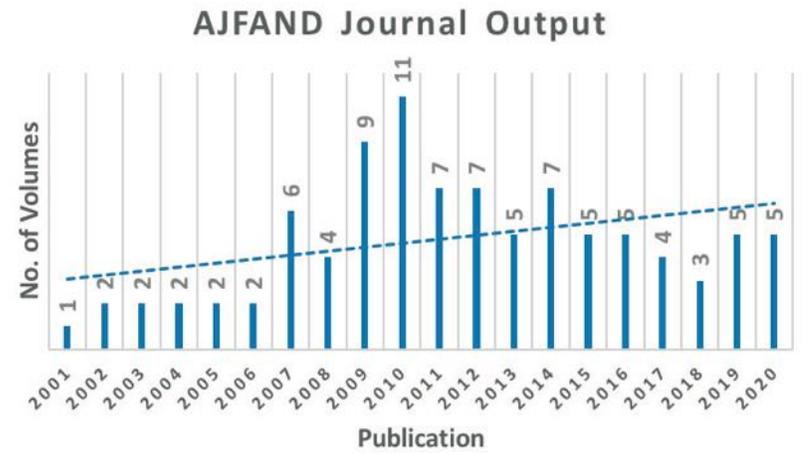
**The AJFAND**

It is my great privilege to write this commentary to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (The AJFAND). What an incredible journey of scientific success and great impact of The AJFAND on Africa and globally. In the year 2012, I was privileged to be invited as a reviewer by Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o (The Editor-in-Chief) of The AJFAND. I knew immediately at her invitation, that an opportunity awaited me to learn and grow in scientific knowledge as a prospective reviewer through my exposure to research by colleagues in universities and research institutions across Africa. I also knew that the task ahead of me as prospective reviewer meant my credibility, objectivity, and integrity as a scientist, an academic, and as a scholar would be tested. Therefore, I saw my invitation as a reviewer by

The Editor-in-Chief as a higher calling to service to Africa, and as an opportunity to grow as an African scientist and as a scholar.

Twelve years prior to my invitation by the Editor-in-Chief, The AJFAND had initiated its humble journey with the publication of its very first Volume (Figure 1).

Subsequently, the number of published volumes of the journal per year increased at the rate of 4.7 volumes per year and a total of 94 volumes over two decades between 2001 and 2020.



**Figure 1: AJFAND publications and number of volumes per publication per year**

Since 2012 when I started reviewing manuscripts for The AJFAND, I have seen a steady growth in the quality of the Journal by the quality and volume of manuscripts that I have been privileged to review for The AJFAND. Over the past two decades since 2001, the yearly number of volumes published by The AJFAND has steadily increased from one (1) to six (6) in the 2007, and 11 in the 2010 (Figure 1). An average number of seven (7) volumes of the Journal was published between 2011 to 2014, which depicts the volume and quality of research that the scientific and the intellectual community in Africa is engaged in for the development of Africa. Therefore, the scientific basis for development interventions in agriculture and human nutrition by the Governments in sub-Saharan Africa has been adequately documented with peer-reviewed research data and information in the AJFAND (Figure 1). Therefore, all that Governments in the sub-region

need for sustainable development in agriculture, food security, and human nutrition to improve the livelihoods of the populations is political-will. Thanks to The AJFAND, an internationally reputable Journal for Africa by African scientists, researchers, and scholars.

The credibility, competitiveness, and impact of The AJFAND, is well-documented through its indexing and partnerships. The AJFAND is indexed in the following databases and libraries.

- Scopus
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- African Journals Online (AJOL)
- Google Scholar
- Food Science and Technology Abstracts
- Bioline International
- CAB Abstracts
- EBSCO Information Services
- Chemical Abstracts Service
- Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA)

- FAO Sustainable Food Value Chain Development (SFVC) Knowledge Platform
  - African Union (AU) Library
  - University of Botswana Library
  - University of Zimbabwe Library
  - University of Nairobi Library
- The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) in South Africa has accredited The AJFAND, and The Hawassa University (Ethiopia) Journal Reputability New Guidelines has also listed The AJFAND as an accredited Journal for publishing.

Regarding its impact, The AJFAND is ranked in the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), an alternative measure to traditional matrix of Journal impact. The SJR indicator is a measure of scientific impact of Scholarly Journals and also accounts for the number of citations and importance, or prestige of the Journal where such citations are drawn from. The SJR also retrieves information

for various indicators from the Scopus database.

The success story of The AJFAND would not have been possible without the leadership of the Editor-in-Chief, the Assistant Editor, the Editorial Assistant, and the journal's dedicated manuscript reviewers.

### The Editor-in-Chief

Hon. Prof. Ruth Khasaya Oniang'o is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of The AJFAND. The success and credibility of the journal cannot be mentioned without referencing her leadership and careful selection of talented and dedicated manuscript reviewers from Universities and Research Institutions across Africa and globally. Hon. Prof. Oniang'o is a high-profile Kenyan scientist, a researcher, an educator, and a cutting-edge scholar who also served in the Kenyan Parliament between 2003 and 2007. While in parliament, she

helped to pass the Kenyan Biosafety Bill, and the Nutritionist and Dietetics Bills. In 2005, Hon. Prof. Oniang'o established the Diana Elukhambi Health Center in Kakamega. Her international reputation and visibility cut across several international organizations including The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), The World Health Organization (WHO), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (The Gates Foundation), where her views on Africa in general, and East Africa in particular are sought as an expert consultant for developmental purposes. Others include the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC), The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Consultative Group on International Agriculture (CGIAR), The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and Harvest Plus. She is the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Sasakawa

Africa Association. She also Chaired the Kenyan Government's Thematic Group for food security and nutrition and served an advisor to the University of Leeds Africa College Initiative. Hon. Prof. Oniang'o also represented Africa as advisor to the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). Dr. David Kwaw-Mensah was born in Ghana and had his basic and undergraduate education in Ghana. His undergraduate degree is in Agriculture (Crop Science, Agronomy) from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana.

Dr. Kwaw-Mensah's advanced degrees include a PhD in Agricultural Extension Education, and a PhD minor in Environmental Science (soil and water quality) from Iowa State University, USA. He holds master's degrees in agricultural land-use planning (University of Pretoria, South Africa) and soil management (Iowa State University, USA).

Dr. Kwaw-Mensah's professional experience includes teaching High School Physics in Ghana and Zambia. He also taught at the Namibia University of Science and Technology, then Polytechnic of Namibia, and at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. In the USA, Dr. Kwaw-Mensah worked at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln as an Extension Educator where he also taught. Currently, he teaches at Iowa State University.

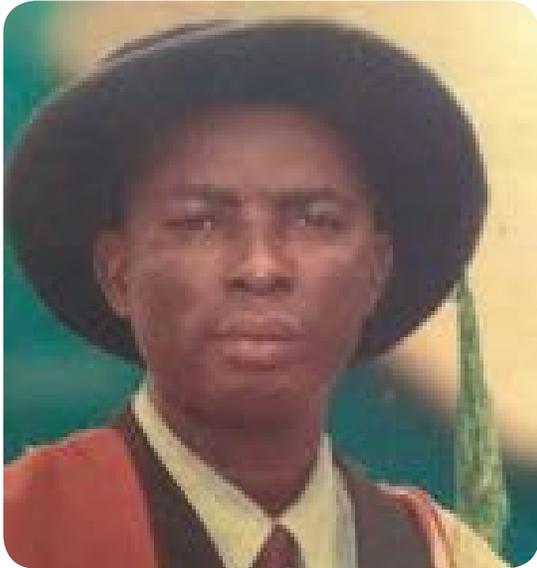
***In 2013 I met Dr Kwaw-Mensah at the Annual World Food Prize Forum and we engaged quite a bit regarding his work, especially that he had majored in Agricultural Extension, an area I have been passionate about as it provides the***

***only meaningful avenue to reach farmers with relevant information. We then moved on to discuss AJFAND, and as I always do with any scholar who shows interest, I asked him whether he would like to be a reviewer. He did and has been extremely helpful since.***

***He has wide experience in both Africa and the WEST. Thank you so much Dr Kwaw-Mensah, for staying the course with us.***

***[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]***

***- END -***



Dr. Elijah Obayelu  
obayelu@yahoo.com

I got to know about **African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND)** in 2011 through a publication from one of my colleagues. Some of the questions I asked then were: How long does it take from submission time to publication time? Does the journal collect a processing charge? When I checked the journal homepage, I observed that the journal publishes regularly (at least 6 issues in a year) without any page charge. I was also motivated to publish in the journal by the picture of the lead author published with the article. I, therefore, sent a paper titled “Comparative Analysis of Households’ Socioeconomic and Demographic Characteristics and Food Security Status in Urban and Rural Areas of Kwara and Kogi States of North-central Nigeria” to this journal in the year 2012. The paper was accepted after addressing the issues raised by the reviewers but to my amazement, I was

asked to pay a processing charge before publication of the article. I protested against this by pointing the attention of the Editor to what I read about the journal before sending my article but the Editor explained to me the reasons for charging processing fees. She said they have to do that in order not to be out of production, payment of AJFAND staff and other things to keep the journal online. The question I asked myself was “why does it have to start with my paper?”

I, however, agreed with the editor, having seen that there is hardly a journal publishing as an open access without processing fees. I proceeded to pay having seen that the standard of AJFAND has not been compromised with the rejection rate I saw in their tracking system, which the author can easily access to check the status of their paper. I have difficulty in paying the charge because necessary information

to pay through wire transfer was not provided on request. I was told that AJFAND only accepted payment via Western Union Money Transfer. When I could not do this through my bank in Nigeria, I had to approach a friend who was studying in USA for payment on my behalf to AJFAND and I paid the naira equivalent into his account in Nigeria. I was happy to see my paper published in Volume 12, Issue 3, pages 6026-6054 of AJFAND in 2012 (available at <http://www.ajfand.net/Volume12/No3/index3.html>).

I am happy to see that AJFAND has presently progressed to Volume 20, Issue 6 as at the time of writing this, which implies that the journal has not missed any year of publication since 2012 when I first published with them. I am happy to be a part of AJFAND members of Editorial Board today and proud that the name of the journal has not been soiled or tagged as a predatory

journal. This might not be unconnected with the journal thorough review exercise and high level of rejection rate of the unmerited papers. I am glad to also see AJFAND been recognized as one of the ranking journals in the world and index by high rank publishers like the Scopus.

I have no regret for being a part of AJFAND reviewers and one of those that have published in the journal. My two times invitation by the journal as a guest editor made me proud as one of my presentations titled “Post-harvest Losses and Food Waste: The Key Contributing Factors to African Food Insecurity and Environmental Challenges” was sighted with a special request from AJFAND and from me to be re-produced by the World of Food Science in 2014, which was gladly approved. As one of the AJFAND technical reviewers, the standard of AJFAND manuscript review has not been compromised but with more stringent measures to ensure better quality.

I, therefore, highly recommend AJFAND as a journal to publish with for quality contents, output and wider dissemination.

Wishing AJFAND and the management a perpetual life.

**Abiodun Elijah Obayelu**  
**Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management,**  
**Federal University of Agriculture,**  
**Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Nigeria**

**Obayelu’s Bio**

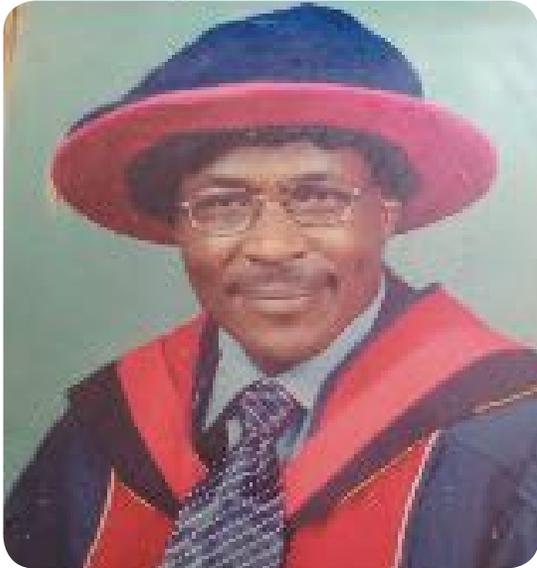
Dr. Obayelu, Abiodun Elijah started his educational career in University of Ilorin, Kwara State Nigeria where he obtained Bachelor Degree in Agriculture (Agricultural Economics and Farm Management) and Master in Business Administration (MBA). He has Master of Science degree and Ph.D in Agricultural Economics from the University Ibadan,

Nigeria and presently lectures in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management, Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB) Ogun State, Nigeria since 2009. His areas of interest include: Food and Consumer Economics, Agricultural Development and Policy. He has over 10 years’ experience in African Agricultural Research and Development and contributing extensively to emerging issues in agriculture as part of his research and consultancies for international and national organizations. He is endowed with a pleasant personality and capability to work effectively in multi-cultural environments and has participated in funded research projects. Astute in research, which has resulted in publication of over 80 scholarly articles and has participated in conferences/workshops/short courses across the world. Dr Obayelu is a member of many International Learned Societies/Professional Associations.

Has reviewing and editorial experience for many journals among which are AJFAND and published edited books.

***Dr Elijah Obayelu is such a gentleman! We were very nervous about introducing processing charges in 2012, after 11 years of publishing without authors having to pay anything. We had to start with an author and it just happened to be Dr Obayelu. Not only did he pay, but also agreed to join and assist with the review and editorial processes. Dr Obayelu, thank you so much for your very effective support.***

***[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]***  
***- END -***



**Dr. Arthur Kwena**  
arthurkwena@gmail.com

Time runs very fast. It's difficult to believe 20 years have passed since inception of AJFAND journal. I clearly remember the time of inception which was immediately after the International Conference of Nutrition in Vienna Austria in 2001. It was the first time I was also meeting the long-time Managing Editor, and founder of the journal face to face. The inaugural edition was launched and ever since there has been no turning back.

As an author in the journal, I was privileged to have two papers published in the year 2012. The rigorous process of reviewing any article in the journal was what impressed me most. The articles eventually accepted are usually of very high national and international standards. Later on, I was also invited to contribute to the journal as a guest editor, first on the topic of Protein Energy Malnutrition and thereafter on handwashing as a public health measure against infection by Covid-19, in 2020.

The latter came at a time when the country and the whole world was at the peak of the infection and any means available was, therefore, required to sensitize the public on how to protect themselves against the pandemic. Covid-19 is still with us and handwashing is still a frontline measure to protect ourselves.

As a reviewer I have lost count on how many articles I have reviewed for the journal. The most memorable was when I was requested to review articles from WHO for a special edition of the journal. It was a humbling experience for me. Otherwise reviewing is a purely voluntary process.

At personal level, the journal publications have enabled me climb up my academic career from Senior lecturer to my current position of Associate Professor. The old saying 'Publish or perish' at University still stands. The journal has also provided a forum to disseminate

research findings from my area of specialization and interest.

Most of my colleagues at the College of Health Sciences, Moi University, now know about the journal and some have also submitted manuscripts for consideration for publication.

The milestones achieved by the journal to current date are enormous and the future looks bright.

### **Kwena's Bio**

Professor Arthur Kwena is Associate Professor of Medical Biochemistry, School of Medicine, College of Health Sciences, Moi University. He holds BSc, PG certificate, MSc and PhD degrees. He first worked as a Research Scientist before joining Moi University as a Lecturer and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Medical Biochemistry. He was Head of Department for a period of 7 years, Acting Dean School of Medicine, Moi University for a period of 7 months. He has coordinated the Community Based Education and Service (COBES) 2 for a period of ten years.

He has supervised many postgraduate students and has externally examined in several Universities. He has published many articles in National and International Journals.

He was accorded various awards among them the Dr. Charles C. Shepard Award for the CDC/KEMRI malaria Insecticide Treated bed-nets programme and the Seeding labs Instrumental award Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

He is a reviewer in several journals, key one being the AJFAND.

***I still remember the first time I met Arthur in Vienna in 2001, I could tell he was not convinced that he should submit a manuscript to us. Well, the rest is history. He is now one of our most ardent advocates and contributors. Thank you Prof Kwena, for your unwavering support over the years.***

***[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]***

***- END -***



**Dr. Mercy Lung'aho**  
mglungaho@gmail.com

**“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.” Pablo Picasso**

I grew up at a time when family, friends, and strangers would often ask: ‘What do you want to be when you grow up?’ It was an innocent question meant to inspire young children, but it was a burden for me. I should explain. When my mother was pregnant with me, she had anemia. As a result, I was born prematurely, weighing 1.8kg, anemic myself, the doctors gave me 72 hours to live. Because I survived, I heard the story of my birth too many times. And each time I heard it as a teenager, it brought up in me deep questions: What is the meaning of life? What is my purpose in life? What can I contribute to the world? Why am I here?

I was always searching for my purpose. I remember the day, sitting in the Mann Library at Cornell University, that I realized that I enjoy reading research papers. I enjoyed learning. I looked

up peer-reviewed academic journals covering food and nutrition issues in Africa, they weren’t many, and that is how I ‘met’ the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND). From time to time, I would look up the journal’s website and scan through the publications. I would also look up the journal’s Editor-in-Chief and founder (Prof. Ruth Oniang’o) tracing her journey as if trying to find my career path as a young African female scientist looking to make a difference in the world.

A few years ago, when Prof. Oniang’o asked me to be a reviewer for AJFAND, I don’t think she knew what that moment meant to me. I was too timid to explain to her its significance. Although I was anxious about it, I was also humbled and grateful. I see peer-reviewing as a significant element in the process of advancing academic knowledge in any field. I don’t take lightly the responsibility of reviewing a manuscript submitted

to AJFAND. With each manuscript I review, I carefully reflect on the impact my review can have on ending malnutrition in Africa.

I review for AJFAND because I believe in Prof. Oniang’o’s vision. It is an open secret that the process of publishing in peer-reviewed journals remains a daunting task for researchers and academics in Africa. Rejections by international journals may, at times, not be scientifically grounded. It can be argued that this is experienced more by African authors [1]. Instead of whining about it, Prof. Oniang’o decided to create a platform where African authors could publish their food and nutrition research work. I have watched the journal grow, increase its regularity, improve its content, and is now indexed by SCOPUS. This is also an amazing journey of resilience from one of Africa’s leading luminaries. The impact of her vision, resolve, and resilience cannot be understated.

I am on a personal journey of improving myself as a communicator of research through my writing and my role as a peer reviewer. It has not been easy, but it has been an honor and a pleasure wading through the challenges of peer-reviewing. I am grateful for this opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute. I value high-quality research, and as I reflect on improving the quality of my reviews, I grow into my purpose - I am helping end malnutrition in Africa. I will leave a legacy of a nourished world.

1. Tarkang, E. E., & Bain, L. E. (2019). The bane of publishing a research article in international journals by African researchers, the peer-review process, and the contentious issue of predatory journals: a commentary. The Pan African medical journal, 32, 119. <https://doi.org/10.11604/pamj.2019.32.119.18351>

***Dr Mercy Lung'aho has become someone I can count on anytime I think of: "who can do this quickly?" when a manuscript is purely NUTRITION. She is thorough, she helps others, especially younger scholars to finalize their manuscripts, and she introduces many to AJFAND. I know Dr Lung'aho has a great career ahead of her. Thank you Mercy. You can always count on my support.***

***[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]***

***- END -***



**Ms. Audrine Mikhala Makaka**  
amikhala@gmail.com

As a fresh graduate with a Master's degree in Nutrition, my time at AJFAND was pivotal in not only developing my budding career but also my personal and professional networks.

AJFAND provided an enabling environment that enabled me to grow in the world of academic writing. AJFAND shaped my practical understanding of how research articles are developed and books are reviewed. I also developed an in-depth understanding of what to look out for while conducting a scientific review of a scholarly article. Further, I learned how to tell apart predatory journals from genuine academic publishers while selecting a journal to publish an article. This experience lit a spark in me for all things research and community development.

While at AJFAND, I was capacity strengthened through organized write shops focused on scientific

writing, proposal development, thesis presentation and submission of journal articles. Most invaluable were the training in developing presentations and academic posters. The training involved the development of PowerPoint presentations or posters, review and dry run of actual presentations. Feedback sessions where input was provided to enhance presentation, training, time management and communication skills were critical to my professional development. The skills learned at AJFAND have been core in public speaking activities that are key for success at my current role.

My most memorable experience at AJFAND was when I was presented with an opportunity to attend the Planting Seeds for the Future of Food conference in Switzerland which was enabled through a Nestlé Research fellowship. I got a chance to present a scientific

paper to hundreds of attendees who included academic researchers, business people and development practitioners. This was a great networking platform among numerous local, regional and international professional development opportunities AJFAND offers its staff.

My experience at AJFAND has catapulted me to where I am today and gives me hope for an even brighter future. It is a place that actively molds your professional and personal attributes to make a positive impact by contributing to collaboratively solving global problems.

### **Audrine's Bio**

Audrine Mikhala Makaka is a registered Nutritionist and member of FoSTeP-K. She has experience in integrating Social Behaviour Change Communication approaches while combining monitoring & evaluation to nutrition programming. Audrine has been engaged in coordinating nutrition needs assessment and impact evaluation, SBCC formative assessments and use of results in developing communication strategies, tools, and materials for increasing community access to health information. These include: SBCC strategy for Maternal and Neonatal Health (MNH), Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN), IEC materials, audio, and visual content for MNH, MIYCN, family planning and reproductive health. Audrine has coordinated county teams in disseminating MNH and MIYCN strategies at community level. She is also a former Editorial assistant and

current reviewer at Africa Journal of Food, Nutrition, Agriculture and Development (AJFAND) with ability to develop papers for publishing and abstracts for conferences and book reviews. Audrine holds a MSc. in Human Nutrition and BSc. in Biochemistry.



***Audrine came to us straight from McGill University in the USA. Her mother who had known me called and asked if I could take on her daughter. Audrey never disappointed. I knew she would not stay with us for too long. Indeed, within no time she had a good job, but also stays connected. Thank you Audrey and we wish you a great future. I am sure you continue to put your NUTRITION knowledge to good use especially during this time of COVID-19.***

***[Editor-in-Chief, AJFAND]***

***- END -***

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**Amaryllis flower**  
determination, beauty and love