



**2015 BHEARD Scholar**  
**Zennah Chepkoech**  
**Kosgey**

# Profile

<b>Country of Study:</b>	United States
<b>University:</b>	University of Minnesota
<b>Department:</b>	Plant Pathology
<b>Student Position:</b>	Graduate Research Assistant – Ph.D.
<b>Hometown:</b>	Eldoret, Kenya
<b>Home Institution:</b>	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization
<b>Home Position:</b>	Research Assistant
<b>Mentored By:</b>	Home: Ruth Wanyera, Kenya US: Dr. Ruth Dill-Macky and Dr. Matt Rouse, University of Minnesota

## **Research Area: Plant Pathology**

**BHEARD PROGRAM START DATE:** August 2015

**UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION:** B.Sc., General Science (Botany), Moi University, Kenya

**GRADUATE EDUCATION:** M.Sc., Plant Breeding, Egerton University, Kenya

**RESEARCH INTERESTS:** Plant pathogens are very diverse and for a plant pathologist, it is crucial to have knowledge on how to differentiate different pathogens causing different diseases. This is the reason why Zennah is in love with plant diseases and their causative pathogens because by understanding the pathogens' mechanisms of overcoming the resistance in crops, Zennah is in a position to come up with feasible management strategies for different diseases.

Zennah's proposed research at the University of Minnesota is to characterize resistance in wheat crop to Fusarium Head Blight and Stem Rust diseases. In Kenya, her research will also focus on race pathotyping of stem rust isolates.

**PERSONAL STATEMENT:** Zennah's future goal is to use her knowledge and experiences she has gained from the University of Minnesota to alleviate poverty in Kenya by working with research scientists in KALRO and/or agricultural research focused universities. Zennah will actively participate in screening for resistance against stem rust and Fusarium Head Blight diseases either in the greenhouse, field or use of molecular markers. The goal is to have resistant wheat varieties to both stem rust and Fusarium Head Blight released to farmers.

**WHEN I AM NOT WORKING I ENJOY:** Zennah likes to socialize. She gets along very well with different people having different personalities. When Zennah is around very young kids and very old men/women, she gets peace in her heart ... they are her favorite company.

Zennah loves hanging out with friends, either having lunch/dinner together, bicycle riding (during weekends when the weather is good) and swimming. When she is on long breaks, road trips are the best way to get out and explore. Curiosity drives Zennah out of her comfort zone, just to find out what's going on in other places. When she's indoors, listening to music as she dances is one of Zennah's favorite activities. She also enjoys watching documentaries.