



2016 BHEARD Scholar
Zachary Simba Mbaka

Profile

Country of Study:	South Africa
University:	University of Pretoria
Department:	Natural and Agricultural Sciences
Student Position:	Graduate Research Assistant—M.Sc.
Hometown:	Nairobi, Kenya
Home Institution:	Tegemeo Institute—Egerton University
Home Position:	Research Assistant
Mentored By:	Dr. Lilian Kirimi

Research Area: Agricultural Economics

BHEARD PROGRAM START DATE: July 2016

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION: B.Sc., Agribusiness Management, Egerton University, Kenya

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Zachary's research interest is in Agricultural Economics, specifically in environment and resource economics. The agricultural sector in Kenya has faced a myriad of challenges that have subsequently led to food insecurity. Among them; erratic weather conditions, pest and diseases, low soil fertility and management, creeping inflation, land fragmentation and poor policies. Therefore, Zachary will carry out continuous agricultural research with specific emphasis on environment and natural resource in order to address the above salient challenges.

One of Kenya's Millennium Development Goal and Vision 2030 is to make its citizens food secure. Therefore a Master of Science degree in Agricultural economics will equip Zachary with the necessary analytical tools to do better research and come up with policies that are in tandem with those goals (MDG and Vision 2030).

Zachary intends to research how innovations in agriculture will help in optimal use of agricultural resources, consequently making Kenya and the world at large food secure. Zachary's research interest at Tegemeo institute has not changed much because it has been to come up with plausible research that will advise the Government and other stakeholders on how to deal with the food insecurity in Kenya.

PERSONAL STATEMENT: Zachary's dedication to improving and becoming the best agricultural data analyst has just been enhanced by the Agricultural Economics master's degree he is pursuing. The multicultural interactions at the University of Pretoria, the motivation from the hardworking lecturers, and his inner drive to excel and improve his skills, has increased Zachary's urge to pursue his doctorate at a later stage. Zachary is willing to empower others through sharing the knowledge and skills he has acquired. This is necessary if Kenya is to improve its approach to food security issues in Kenya and beyond.

WHEN I AM NOT WORKING I ENJOY: In his free time, Zachary enjoys reading agricultural and financial journals and publications, empowering the youth through good moral sensitization and career development, and following up on current affairs in the media.