



2015 BHEARD Scholar
**Vinjeru Jennifer
Mkandawire**

Profile

Country of Study:	Kenya
University:	Egerton University
Department:	Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness Management
Student Position:	Graduate Research Assistant - M.Sc.
Hometown:	Mzimba, Malawi
Home Institution:	Ministry of Agriculture
Home Position:	Agribusiness Officer

Research Area: Agribusiness Management

BHEARD PROGRAM START DATE: August 2015

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION: B.Sc., Agribusiness Management, University of Malawi

RESEARCH INTERESTS: Vinjeru is interested in value addition. The agricultural sector is the primary means of support for the poor majority of which live in the rural areas. If poverty is to be reduced, there is need to put significant emphasis on improving agricultural productivity and growth.

Agribusiness in Malawi is still in its early stages because most of the produce is sold in its raw form. Smallholder agriculture is associated with insufficient value addition. Smallholder farmers fail to meet the growing demands for both domestic and international market because they normally produce and sell raw primary commodities. Reducing the challenges faced by the small-scale farmers would enhance their competitiveness and help to set up growth in the agricultural sector.

It is with the above stated facts that Vinjeru intends to focus on this area of the study which will help the country of Malawi at large to come up with better means of addressing the marketing problems faced by smallholder farmers. This will ultimately lead to the improvement of the farmers' economic well-being through increased income which will positively contribute to the economic development of the country.

PERSONAL STATEMENT: Vinjeru believes in working to make a difference in the lives of those we are rendering our services to, in this case the rural farming community. Three years of professional work experience in the field of agribusiness has given Vinjeru the vast knowledge and command to cope with modern business challenges as an officer who deals with small and medium enterprises. Vinjeru feels that current fast growing and competitive business world need vital strategic thinking and an adept to change hence the need to acquire advanced knowledge and skills to serve the SMEs better.

Vinjeru's current M.Sc. program will help her to enrich her skills and broaden her knowledge and understanding of her field. Vinjeru's objective is to develop a career in business development in relation to agricultural Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

WHEN I AM NOT WORKING I ENJOY: In her spare time Vinjeru usually loves listening to Bible teachings and music. Sometimes Vinjeru likes to be a little adventurous, travel and see places.