



Akissa Bahri

Akissa Bahri, an agricultural engineer by training, has worked in water research in the fields of water resources development and management, agricultural use of marginal waters and biosolids, and their impacts on the environment with a focus on water quality and water use efficiency. She has been dealing with the double-sided problems of dwindling water resources and the risks of soil deterioration associated with land application of brackish and reclaimed waters and sewage sludge. She has a long-standing interest in how a more integrated approach to managing water, stormwater, wastewater, fecal sludge, biosolids and solid wastes can contribute to meeting water demand and protecting the environment.

From 1987 to 2005, she was responsible at the National Research Institute for Agricultural Engineering, Water, and Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources in Tunisia, (1) for setting up and managing a laboratory for research on sustainable management of agricultural water; (2) for leading the National Commission for Agricultural Water Research Programming and Evaluation; and (3) for coordinating the utilization of loans to Tunisia targeted on increasing research capability. She was thus able to influence the research directions and the results' transfer with a strong focus on efficient agricultural water use. She was also a member of the team that drafted the Tunisian policy and regulations regarding water reuse and biosolids management. She has developed an extensive practical experience in those fields, both in Tunisia, other semi-arid areas of the Mediterranean region, the Middle East and in Africa.

As Director for Africa at the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) from 2005-2010, based in Accra (Ghana), she has been responsible to spearhead, direct and oversee research and administration offices in the Africa region (Ghana for West Africa, Ethiopia for East Africa and South Africa for Southern Africa) to achieve IWMI's goals and act as IWMI's representative in the geographic region.

As Coordinator of the African Water Facility (AWF) at the African Development Bank from 2010-2015, an initiative of the African Ministers' Council on Water, she managed a portfolio of 98 projects in 51 countries, totaling 124 million euros. With a new Strategic Plan repositioning the AWF as a Project Preparation Facility in 2011 and launched projects all over the African continent and in Fragile States such as Darfur, Somaliland, and others, she has contributed to institutional and partnership building and putting knowledge into action by introducing innovative ideas to create enabling environments and mobilize resources to ultimately help the disadvantaged communities cope with change and generate their own development. At the end of 2014, the AWF reported highly positive resources mobilization results through its project preparation activities. Every Euro in AWF funding directed at the preparation of investment projects had a leverage factor of about 35. All these have culminated to the African Water Facility being recognized as "Project Preparation Facility of the Year" at the Africa investor CEO Infrastructure Developers and Investment Summit 2015.

She has authored numerous papers and reports plus a number of contributions to books, reports, proceedings and conferences. She has built, strengthened and led teams of professionals during her

career and has developed partnerships with various organizations that led to the development of projects. She joined the National Research Institute for Agricultural Engineering, Water, and Forestry (INRGREF) in July 2016 and the National Agricultural Institute of Tunisia (INAT) in February 2017, Tunis, Tunisia, as Professor.

She is member of different international boards and of various academies (International Water Academy, World Academy of Sciences for the Advancement of Science in Developing Countries (TWAS), African Academy of Sciences), and member of the IWA Fellows Program. She has been awarded by the Guinness Foundation (January 1984), the International Foundation for Science (Sweden) (May 1993), the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (1996), and the 2009 “Prof. C.N.R. Rao Prize for Scientific Research”. She was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of California at Davis (USA) in 2005.

She holds an Agricultural Engineer degree from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Agronomie de Toulouse, France, a Doctor-Engineer degree from the Institut National Polytechnique de Toulouse, France, and a Ph.D. in Water Resources Engineering from Lund University, Sweden.

Professor Akissa Bahri is the winner of the [2018 IWA Women in Water Award](#).