

AQUÍ estamos

REVISTA DE EXBECARIOS INDÍGENAS DEL IFP-MÉXICO

**FURTHERING NEW SOCIAL LEADERSHIPS IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE.
SUPPORT AND FOLLOW UP PROGRAMS FOR ALUMNI IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**



Year 8, Number 15, July-December 2011



15

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FOREWORD

The IFP Global Partners Meeting was held in New York, U.S., in September 2010. One of the key objectives of the meeting was to collectively discuss and exchange views on the main results and achievements of the IFP after a decade of operation. The meeting also offered an opportunity for the program directors from the 22 participating countries to discuss and define, with the IFP Secretariat, the general outline of a strategic action plan towards the closing of the program in 2013.

One of the predominant topics addressed during the meeting was the effort to follow up on alumni and the importance of this task to accomplish the priority goals of the program. The participants agreed on the relevance of measures taken since 2005 to document and keep track of social and professional re-entry experiences of IFP alumni. They also agreed on the relevance of the support and assistance provided by the IFP in order to facilitate collective processes, particularly the creation of national alumni networks and associations. The general consensus is that the articulated combination of individual skills, knowledge and experiences from the IFP alumni, all of them belonging to disadvantaged social groups, undoubtedly has an enormous potential to foster development and social change. Consequently, the performance and results of the post-fellowship phase that is now part of the IFP general design and its implementation have become increasingly interesting and relevant to future developments.

It was in this context that I proposed to the New York meeting the editing of a collective publication as an additional effort to register and document the roads traveled, the fruits reaped and the lessons learned in internationally assisting the IFP alumni. Two of the objectives behind this proposal were to enhance the process of building the general record of an important and innovative fellowships program that will soon come to an end, and to disseminate, beyond the IFP community, the information and ideas that may foster the design and implementation of programs and actions aimed at supporting and encouraging the preparation of new and socially committed leaders. This issue of *Aquí Estamos* is the realization of that initiative, but more importantly, of the warm and enthusiastic way in which it was welcomed and supported.

It would be impossible for a single issue of this journal to cover the numerous and diverse experiences

derived from the IFP post-fellowship phase. Moreover, each of the 22 countries where the program operates would deserve a unique and extensive approach. Aware of these limitations, this issue aims at presenting an illustrative and summarized review of milestones from 2004 to 2011 in four countries from four different continents: India, Mexico, Uganda and Vietnam. The perspectives and the essays of IFP directors in these countries convey the starting points, the evolution and the current situation of activities designed to support the alumni. Reading across their contributions also reveals both the common ground and the differences in the strategies planned and implemented in each country, and allows for the appreciation of relevant similarities among the four countries (similarities may apply to the other 18 that were not included in this issue). Such common elements become evident, *inter alia*, in the wishes, concerns and certainties expressed by Indian, Mexican, Ugandan and Vietnamese alumni when discussing social justice issues and ways to address them. In this regard, it should be noted that these conceptual and aspirational coincidences are indeed the drivers for a graduate fellowships program like the IFP to successfully transcend the historical, cultural and political diversity found in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Russia.

Such is the spirit of the essay that opens the thematic section in this issue, where Joan Dassin, the IFP Executive Director, reviews and points out the key design and operative components of the post-fellowship phase, stressing its flexible and decentralized strategy. Thus, the author explains, the IFP has been able to respond to the specific needs of the communities of alumni from each country. We would like to add that this decentralized model—following the objectives and lines of action established by the IFP—has also been crucial to successfully benefit from the institutional capacities of the international partners and their first-hand knowledge of the national conditions that influence the post-fellowships activities and determine their actual scope.

The “Alumni News” section is intended to enhance and widen the contents of the thematic part of this issue, and it includes news from alumni in India, Mexico, Uganda and Vietnam. The other sections keep their traditional “Mexican touch” and present some of

the post-fellowship activities organized by the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico in the second half of 2011, as well as information on our alumni. With this bilingual (Spanish & English) edition we hope to bring our alumni closer to their peers around the world and look forward to expanding the continual and insightful dialogue and exchange of experiences that has taken place since 2001 between the operative teams of the program in Latin America and the rest of the world.

We thank Joan Dassin for her wholehearted support to this editorial project. We also thank her and the other authors of the essays — Minh Kaufman (Vietnam), Vivek Mansukhani (India) and Stephen Kaheru

and Andrew Omara (Uganda) — for having accepted the invitation to contribute to this issue of *Aquí Estamos*. Their writings and other materials (photographs and alumni news) add to our common objective: to continue building the IFP collective record. In sharing the lessons learned and reflections, they open a channel to communicate with readers beyond the IFP that are also interested in working towards a more just, equitable and inclusive world, readers that may find in the IFP a source of knowledge, analysis, food for thought and even inspiration

David Navarrete

AROUND THE WORLD WITH IFP ALUMNI

Joan Dassin



Thanks to David Navarrete's inspired idea, this issue of *Aquí Estamos* includes contributions about IFP alumni activities in India, Uganda, and Vietnam, as well as Mexico. Many thanks also to the International Partners (IPs) who wrote about their experiences with alumni in their countries. Now, not only the IFP Secretariat, based in New York and charged with global policymaking and centralized administration, but also readers in the four continents can share a glimpse of the diverse international experiences that together comprise the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP).

At its start in 2001, IFP established a lofty goal: to provide higher education opportunities directly to members of marginalized and excluded populations in developing countries. The countries were ones with other Ford Foundation activities. Fellows would be selected on the basis of their social commitment and leadership potential, in addition to academic achievement. They would pursue advanced study not for private gain but to serve the public good. Through fellowships for post-graduate study, the program would help proven social justice leaders to acquire new skills and knowledge. Their advanced education would enable these leaders to tackle deeply-entrenched problems—from environmental distress to inadequate health care and educational systems—that disproportionately affect poor communities around the world.

A decade after its inception, IFP has fulfilled its original mandate. Working with approximately two dozen local and regional organizations based in Russia and 21 other countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America, IFP has selected over 4,300 fellows.

More than 3,000 alumni have concluded their fellowships after studying at over 600 universities in 45 countries. They have earned masters and doctoral degrees in environment, health, education, law, governance and human rights, and economics and development studies, as well as in linguistics, arts and the humanities. IFP's global reach conclusively demonstrates that knowledge that advances social justice across national, cultural and intellectual borders.

Among the alumni, 91% have earned their graduate or post-graduate degrees, a percentage that increases to 98% for fellows selected between 2001 and 2005. Assuaging fears of "brain drain," a 2010-2011 survey showed that 82% of alumni were residing in their home country, while 90% of those living abroad are pursuing continuing academic study or professional training. Remaining true to their ideals, more than 90% of alumni report that they are drawing on their social commitment for their paid professional work.¹ Observation and qualitative information gathered by the IPs confirm that IFP alumni—serving now in government posts, universities, local and international NGOs—are working in myriad ways to bring positive social change to their countries and communities. In case after case, the alumni report that the IFP fel-

¹ Enders, Jurgen and Andrea Kottmann. Alumni of the International Fellowships Program. Unpublished report. Center for Higher Education Policies (CHEPS), University of Twente, Netherlands: August 2011. This study was commissioned by IFP as part of ongoing survey research conducted by CHEPS beginning in 2004. CHEPS will conduct a final study of IFP alumni in 2012.

lowship not only enabled them to earn an advanced degree but also opened new and often unanticipated opportunities.

Just one example is illustrative. Staff from the IFP Secretariat in New York recently joined their IPs from the Africa/Middle East region on a visit to the town of Kajiado, in the heart of Kenya's Maasai country. It is there that one of IFP's first fellows from Kenya, Sakuda Ole Nkitoria, has created a women's income generation project —stylish leather bags made by local women are sold in fancy shops in Nairobi and via an international website— as well as a school and shelter for Maasai girls fleeing from forced early marriages. Sakuda himself is an articulate spokesperson for the benefits of educating and empowering women as the key to community-based development. He is also a stunning example of how the IFP fellowship can make a difference.

Sakuda studied in Kenya, at the United States International University. He reports that his masters' degree program in international relations opened his eyes to the global system, making him a better "diplomat and negotiator." Taking advantage of IFP's "sandwich" option, which allows fellows studying in their home countries and regions to spend up to one year at a university abroad, Sakuda spent a semester at the State University of New York-Cortlandt (SUNY-Cortlandt), located in a small town in rural New York state. At SUNY, Sakuda met a number of West Africans whom he said strongly influenced his ideas about development. He also conducted research in a Native American community. This experience, he reported, gave him a new perspective on land use issues in his own country, among the Maasai. Next year, Sakuda will stand for office as governor of his provincial area, a vast expanse of arid and scrub-filled grazing lands. He is optimistic that he will win; he says that the community elders encouraged him to run.

Sakuda's achievements demonstrate his amazing individual talent and determination. But it was not by chance that Sakuda became an IFP fellow. As one of the few Maasai with a university degree, Sakuda is clearly from a marginalized background, yet he had also demonstrated academic capacity in his undergraduate studies. As a dedicated and successful community activist, Sakuda's social commitment and leadership potential were evident to the independent IFP selection panel in Kenya. Sakuda's selection as an IFP fellow was

therefore perfectly consistent with the program's global selection criteria, which stress learning, leadership and social engagement. IFP has supported thousands of "Sakudas" around the world.

Impressive as they are as individuals, the IFP alumni could have even more impact if they engage in "collective action," sharing experiences and finding ways to work together. As Vivek Mansukhani writes in his case study of the IFP India alumni, "if this was the power that one person could achieve, would it not be wonderful to bring all such individuals together under one umbrella?" Indeed, this was IFP's rationale for supporting IFP alumni networks and associations. As early as 2004, when the first significant groups of alumni completed the program, IFP began devoting financial resources and staff time to post-fellowship activities. Since that time, mobilizing alumni associations and networks in the fellows' home countries has been an integral part of the overall fellowship program. The logic of "collective action" would greatly enhance the impact of individual IFP graduates.

That was the theory. In practice —as these case studies show— the challenges of building and sustaining the IFP alumni associations have been formidable. Even though the vast majority of fellows studying abroad return home after their fellowships, they are spread throughout their (often very large) home countries. Many who are based in small towns and villages in remote areas live beyond the reach of reliable electronic communications. After concluding their studies, the alumni are focused on the immediate demands of work and family. Survey data show that more than 80% of alumni are employed; however, interviews reveal that securing full-time employment may be difficult at first, especially for fellows from the NGO sector who relinquished their positions to accept the fellowship.

Plus, they are busy. IFP data show that two-thirds of alumni continue volunteer activities after completing their fellowships. Most successful alumni are engaged in multiple activities, including further study, social and political activism, and public policy roles, not to mention paid employment and family obligations.

Other challenges stem from the heterogeneous nature of the alumni groupings. IFP fellows study a broad array of topics and have many diverse interests. There is no political litmus test for IFP fellows; on the contrary, they hold widely divergent views about the root causes and solutions for social injustices in their

countries. How, then, would they be able to devise a common framework for collective social action? Moreover, what would be the nature of the continuing relationship between the program and the alumni? In contrast to the contractual relationship between the program and its fellows, IFP's relationship with its alumni is still evolving. How would the program guide the alumni toward greater autonomy, so that they would be able to identify their shared priorities and eventually sustain their own activities?

The first step was for the New York-based IFP Secretariat to define its goals in supporting alumni activities. These were developed with systematic input by the IPs, creating a consensus throughout the IFP system that the program should invest in post-fellowship activities for two principal reasons: one, to increase alumni capacity to contribute to social justice, as locally defined; and two, to increase the visibility of the IFP model, itself conceived as a social justice intervention. As with recruitment, selection, and pre-academic training, among other aspects of the fellowship program, in developing alumni activities IFP would be flexible and encourage experimentation. Above all, the program would rely on the IPs to adapt the global guidelines for alumni activities to conditions on the ground.

Minh Kaufmann's essay about Vietnam shows the value of this approach. In 2006, a core group of seven alumni took part in a three-week training exercise in a development methodology known as Asset

Based Community-driven Development (ABCD). Since then, the ABCD training has been offered to most returning alumni in Vietnam, as well as to other Asia alumni. As Kaufmann writes, this "glues the members to a common mindset." The ABCD framework, in turn, enabled the alumni to form effective thematic networks and to engage in collective activities, including organizing and making personal donations to an Alumni Scholarships Support Fund.

As in the Vietnam case, the essays about Uganda, India and Mexico highlight the importance of the IPs in shaping alumni activities. In all four countries, alumni activities began in 2005 or 2006, when just a handful of fellows had returned or completed their programs. By definition, the Partners had to assume a central coordinating role for the alumni groups to gain traction as associations or networks. In fact, the IPs still provide logistical support for nearly all alumni activities around the world. Similarly, all IFP financial assistance to the alumni groups, even to the registered alumni associations, is channeled through the partner organizations. Nonetheless, some alumni groups have begun to take charge of setting their own agenda, developing autonomous activities and conducting independent fundraising.

However, for some alumni groups, forming a self-sustaining association or network is still an elusive goal, despite logistical and moral assistance from the IPs and financial support from IFP. The story of the IFP Indian Alumni Association (IFPIAN) is cautionary in this



Joan Dassin with IFP Kenya staff, Nairobi, Kenya, May 2011.

regard. Registration formalities consumed a lot of time and energy; it took more than two years to complete the registration process. The first officers and governing boards had to establish legitimacy among new alumni who joined as they returned home; at times the new members contested directions taken by the founding group. Despite regular meetings, the IFPIAN Governing Board had difficulty in getting its members to participate consistently. As Mansukhani reports, the IFPIAN e-newsletter did not progress past a second issue; the blog and website were not fully developed; online discussions among thematic groups “fizzled out due to lack of demonstrated interest”.

The India case may be exceptional. Certainly India’s vast territory, cultural diversity and large number of fellows (nearly 325) posed major challenges to the nascent alumni association. Yet alumni groups throughout the IFP system have faced similar issues, most of which boil down to effective leadership and consistent participation. In our experience, whether or not the alumni networks become formal organizations is not the central issue. In fact, fulfilling legal regulations may become a “cumbersome and bureaucratic” distraction. The Vietnamese alumni recognized this risk, as Kaufmann notes, and opted against obtaining NGO status in Vietnam.

The central issue, in fact, is how to create incentives for alumni to develop ongoing contacts with one another, even after IFP concludes in 2013. Aside from their intrinsic value, such contacts may lead to collaborative projects that multiply the social justice impacts of individual alumni, thereby increasing their effectiveness and the impact of the program overall. However, it is not realistic to expect 100% participation in group activities; as Navarrete notes, IFP in Mexico maintains constant communication with approximately 40% of alumni, which reduces the potential size of the active alumni group. Nonetheless, many individual alumni have participated in outreach and recruitment or in re-entry activities for newly returned fellows. Partner organizations are increasingly involving IFP alumni in public events or in other program activities. Throughout the IFP system, there are benefits for alumni who remain in contact with the program and with one another, even if they do not participate actively in alumni organizations or networks.

This bodes well for the future. We are optimistic that some of the associations and networks will remain active after IFP formally concludes, although some will inevitably lose steam without the partners’ watchful eye and without a steady stream of IFP funding. Even without formal group activities, however, we believe



Joan Dassin with Brazilian Alumni, October 2010.

that the organic relationships now forming among alumni—often in unexpected ways—will multiply and strengthen over time. To lay the foundation for this potentially dense set of relationships, we are devoting considerable time and resources to an IFP “legacy” website. To be managed by the Institute of International Education (IIE) after IFP concludes, the website will provide an electronic platform for continuing communication among the alumni.

For now, though, looking back over the past decade, we can see that various activities supported by IFP have already strengthened relationships among alumni. They have provided the alumni with new skills and professional experience—essential assets for their work as social justice leaders. For example, the alumni groups have assisted new alumni to cope with re-entry challenges. As Stephen Kaheru and Andrew Omara note in their Uganda study, these challenges include “finding employment, reintegrating with... families, unrealistic expectations and ‘reverse cultural shock’ after spending time abroad.” In many countries, alumni who have experienced these re-entry challenges have helped others to face them. The IPs play a key role in organizing events that enable alumni to network with other professionals, share re-entry tips and re-familiarize themselves with the local context if they have been out of the country. This type of activity paves the way for alumni to make the transition to a post-fellowship professional life.

Skills training offered to groups of alumni further builds their professional capacity. In all IFP regions, external experts have offered workshops and courses in areas such as proposal writing and fundraising, media advocacy, financial management, project evaluation, conflict resolution and gender issues. Some of these courses (as in Chile) are now web-based, and are used for other groups of students. In some cases, alumni are relying on one another for skills training, eliminating the need for outside experts and substantially reducing the cost of the courses. In South Africa, for example, the Alumni Association has run internal training exercises for members in areas such as project management, policy formation and human resources development.

IFP has also supported alumni-led community-based projects. The India case study relates that IFPIAN launched a Social Justice Grant Competition. The aim was “to recognize pioneers from among IFP alumni

working on issues of social justice and equity.” Similar “seed grant” programs were launched in China, South Africa and, most recently, in Uganda. The idea behind the grants is that they will allow the alumni to gain hands-on experience in project implementation and financial management, in addition to providing tangible benefits for the host communities. In the process, the alumni will develop a track record that will strengthen their ability to administer and raise funds for future projects.

Other alumni activities have helped them to disseminate their work and increase their professional visibility. Marginalization, as Navarrete observes, affects not only educational pathways but also has a negative impact on young professionals from marginalized groups. In Mexico, IFP support enables alumni to participate in specialized conferences and public events related to the expansion of education opportunities for the country’s indigenous people. The magazine *Aquí Estamos*, now in its eighth year, has also provided the Mexico alumni with an outlet for their scholarly and policy-oriented writing. As Navarrete concludes, *Aquí Estamos* is the “only academic outreach publication in the country based on essays written by indigenous professionals.” In Brazil, a set of eight edited volumes has enabled African Brazilian and indigenous alumni to present their academic work to interested academic and policy communities throughout the country.

IFP is unique in many ways. Substantial support for a robust array of alumni activities is one of its distinguishing features. Only a few years after the program began, we had recognized that the alumni would become its living legacy. Yet creating that living legacy is a complex task, made even more complicated by IFP’s scheduled closure in 2013. Surely it will be difficult to maintain loyalty and connections with a program or organization that no longer exists. However, as these studies attest, the IFP alumni—regardless of how united they remain with one another—are likely to make a positive difference in their societies. Indeed, many already have. By supporting alumni associations and networks while also providing resources for additional skills training and professional activities, IFP has helped the alumni to advance further along the path to becoming highly effective social justice leaders. The next step is theirs to take.

THE NET WORTH OF A NETWORK. A CASE STUDY OF IFP INDIA ALUMNI

Vivek Mansukhani



Since 2001 the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP) in India has selected and supported 330 fellows from marginalized backgrounds, mainly from ten of the twenty-six states in India with fewer opportunities for quality higher education. Many of them have faced socio-economic deprivation, have been first generation literates, completed their schooling in the vernacular medium in Indian languages and learned English at a later stage. Our selection committees believed that despite this handicap they have the potential to succeed in challenging academic environments that could offer them new opportunities to study. They believed that these journeys would add value to the fellows' practical grassroots experience, strengthen their social commitment and increase their desire to work for and improve their societies and communities.

Among the nine cohorts of fellows selected from India the majority chose to study at international universities, with the United Kingdom and the United States attracting the largest share of fellows. Some went to universities in other European countries, a few to South East Asian countries, and three stayed in India. As previously stated, the India program selected a total of 330 fellows; 260 are now alumni and have completed their study programs, while the remaining 70 will become alumni over the next couple of years.

Alumni personify the spirit of any fellowships program, and the India alumni are not the exception. As program administrators we knew at the very outset that IFP would be a decade long intervention and that at the end of this period the program would have

supported 330 individuals to enhance their skills and increase their contributions to society. We knew that in a country with the second largest population in the world this would be a mere trickle in terms of human capital investment. However, we were convinced that these fellows had the potential to not only improve their own lives, but to also impact the lives of many others and would become torch bearers who could inspire others to also strive to improve their lot, to equip and empower themselves through higher education options, and simultaneously increase their social justice leadership potential. It was our understanding that this significant investment in 330 fellows would have a ripple effect, both conspicuous and inconspicuous, individually and collectively.

This essay attempts to capture the story of the IFP India alumni in the post-fellowship stage, i.e., as they came together to yield a new identity as collective actors for social justice and created a network that recognized and celebrated a program focused on access, equity and quality, and which gave them an opportunity to be the legacy of the program as well as carry forward its mandate as best as they could. It examines why and how the alumni decided to set up a structured and formal network, stresses their achievements and limitations over these last few years, and sets forth some perspectives and possible scenarios of what the future might hold once the IFP itself comes to an end.

Around 2004 and 2005, as the first few alumni began returning to India after completing their fellowships they identified the possibility of benefiting from

each other's diverse experiences and newly acquired knowledge as internationally qualified scholars. They realized that their common agenda is the desire to bring positive change to the lives of their communities and the wish to be able to exert greater positive influence at the local level and, eventually, in India. They began to appreciate their potential to make significant contributions as long as they joined efforts and stayed connected.

In the last ten years an estimated eighty per cent of IFP alumni have returned to the country. While many have re-engaged in grassroots struggles with marginalized communities, others have set up new civil society organizations or are playing active roles in social change organizations and movements in India. Those who decided to continue their education at international universities after the completion of their IFP fellowships, remain engaged in development research and are further enhancing their academic expertise.

According to different surveys conducted and individual feedback received, for all alumni the IFP experience has been a catalyst for significant personal and professional transformation. In addition to technical competencies, they have returned from their universities with fresh perspectives on their identities and roles as social justice leaders. Most of them, who were heading civil society organizations before applying to the IFP, reported that they used part of their time in an international university setting to re-think and re-direct their social justice models. Many of them are today

regarded as role models in their communities. Their achievements have vetted the aspirations of several others to explore the possibilities of higher education as a route for growth in social justice leadership.

The acquired knowledge and skills, and the development of new identities have transformed fellows into more effective and collaborative agents of social justice. As streams of alumni return to their communities they accelerate development at the grassroots levels as social entrepreneurs, strategic activists or scholars anchored in grassroots communities, or even as artists committed to the politics of the subaltern.

With these competencies, the alumni realize and appreciate their enhanced capacities to dialogue and negotiate with power structures with a newfound voice; understand and use theoretical knowledge and tools to support their passion for social change; bring organization and discipline to their social justice work, and enhance their disposition to tolerate "the other."

If this is the potential that a single person can materialize, would not it be wonderful to bring all such individuals together under a common umbrella? This was the spirit behind the alumni decision to set up a collaborative framework of social justice action, one that would enable them to step out of their responsibilities within their existing organizations and come together to contribute as a cohesive force of social change practitioners. The trigger for this forum was not just to secure the continuity of relationships. It was



IFP India Alumni meeting, Anand, Gujarat, India, August 2008.

envisioned more as a platform for alumni to experience group entrepreneurship and co-create programs of social change. These programs could be small, but they would be significant. Importantly, they would enable the alumni to coalesce ideas in the shared spirit of the IFP. For example, facilitating leadership training workshops for young social justice leaders in rural areas; developing a cross-disciplinarian think tank on disability issues; conducting academic workshops on theories and conceptual frameworks of social justice action for students in district colleges.

The International Fellowships Program India Alumni Network (IFPIAN) began its journey with enthused brainstorming meetings in 2005 and 2006. Alumni discussed the creation of a network that would continue to work for social justice issues beyond the life of the IFP. The alumni were encouraged to actively think through how they could, as a collective, remain connected with the larger IFP mission, and with the IFP global family spread over 22 countries and its international alumni associations; how they could build a network of talented, committed social justice practitioners and leaders, propelled by new ideas and visible action.

Taking these thoughts further, the alumni felt that there was definitely a need for:

- An active association where they would work together, network and co-ordinate activities
- A brainstorm station for IFP alumni to develop new social justice initiatives
- A setting to develop solidarity, trust and resources; a place where they would find mutual support
- An association to carry forward the values of social justice
- A platform to launch development initiatives internally driven by local communities
- A collective organizational structure and affirmative culture that would remain in the years to come
- A monitoring body to follow-up on alumni activities that would share and review the work that alumni are doing with subordinated groups across the country

The alumni decided to explore ways in which they could become mutual resources, how they might tap into the exponential power of networking, how they could assist in mentoring newly-returned fellows with re-entry issues, how they might position themselves as

a resourceful collective rich in knowledge and ideas in the view of funding organizations instead of seeing these as a resource base, how they could deepen the spirit and ethos of active volunteerism and spur motivation levels.

During the first major India alumni meeting held in New Delhi in December 2006 they prepared a clear list of objectives:

- To determine the vision, mission, objectives, structure and functioning of IFPIAN (IFP India Alumni Network)
- To establish communication and networking protocols and systems
- To identify office bearers
- To draw up a framework of activities to be undertaken
- To identify the core principles and values that would drive communication, network building and fundraising

The spirit of the meeting was participatory, open and consensus-driven. The majority of sessions were led and moderated by the alumni in partnership with the IFP India team. Participants also engaged in training and exchange sessions with leading social justice activists and representatives from the most progressive donor agencies. This was strategic to introducing leaders from the external civil society sector to IFPIAN.

After three days of intensive brainstorming, strategy development and election of a governing council, the alumni inaugurated the IFP India Alumni Network. Participants had laid down the broad objectives, the ethos and accountability structures for an alumni association. IFPIAN activities would:

- Strengthen the IFP outreach and mentor new Fellows
- Develop the capacities of local civil society organizations
- Undertake human rights initiatives in backward areas
- Build a new generation of grassroots social justice leaders
- Create thematic academic groups to promote the exchange of information and ideas
- Ensure continuous learning and skill building among IFPIAN members

The vision of the network would be to reduce inequity and ensure social justice through collective action. Its mission would be to remove inequities in society and strive against discrimination, against caste, gender, disability and class in order to empower marginalized communities; to function as a collective advocacy platform and support other organizations working for the emancipation of the disadvantaged and the marginalized.

The objective of IFPIAN would be to design and execute activities of common interest to its members, broadly within the purview of social justice related issues. It would aim at becoming a vibrant and self sustaining network or NGO, creating a platform for the alumni to work together on social justice issues of regional or national importance, eventually being able to support other communities that might require assistance. Its purpose would be achieved by leveraging assets within the alumni that were given the opportunity of receiving high quality international education, exposure and experience through the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program.

The alumni deliberated whether the network should remain a loose network or function as a formal, registered and legally recognized organization. Eventually it was decided to register it as a legal body that would be more lasting and also able to attract funds for activities beyond the scope of the IFP. Registration formalities were completed eventually in early 2009.

The structure of the organization was created as required by the rules and regulations applicable to a registered body. A governing board was created with elected members taking on the responsibilities of office-bearers: President, Secretary, Treasurer, and so on. Another level of management was to be shouldered by the State Coordinators, one from each of the states in India where alumni are based. There would also be special Working Groups of alumni members depending on the activities being designed and implemented.

Among the various achievements of IFPIAN in these past few years, it would be noteworthy to mention the three Annual General Meetings organized in New Delhi, Anand and Jaipur. These meetings gave the alumni an opportunity to get together and share their fellowship experiences, discuss issues of social and local relevance, and to foster inter-personal networks and relationships for mutual benefit. Alumni representatives from other countries in the Asia-Russia region (China, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand and Russia) also participated in some of these meetings and were able to take back impressions, lessons and observations to their own alumni networks.

In addition to the large meetings, the Governing Board of IFPIAN has met every few months, at least three times a year on average. During these meetings the board members have discussed different strategies to strengthen the network, create synergies and a sense of identity and participation among all members.



IFP Alumni meeting, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India, February 2010.

They were able to formulate a policy to invite subscriptions from India alumni for a life IFPIAN membership. Additionally, they created a next level of state representatives who would be responsible for coordinating alumni in their states and convening periodic meetings. They dealt with the complicated and cumbersome legal issues of running a society, such as keeping and operating a bank account, having annual accounts audited and maintaining statutory records and documentation.

In response to specific suggestions the IFPIAN board launched an e-newsletter, but it did not continue after the second number was issued. The blog created for members to contribute was also abandoned. The website was not developed in full. Thematic groups based on subject interest areas were created to facilitate on-line discussions and sharing, but fizzled out due to lack of demonstrated interest.

This led the Governing Board to reflect and examine why it was so difficult to get alumni to actively participate and contribute to the activities and plans. They concluded that the alumni are all busy professionals; while they are happy to sign up and become part of this network given their association with IFP, they were not able to take on responsibilities or correspond frequently. Hence the network lacked a significant committed team force that would execute plans and activities.

It was observed that often busy alumni do not have time to share and network. There are significant barriers of personal egos that make it difficult to spur active networking among alumni. IFPIAN looked at ways to strengthen the bonds among IFP alumni through joint or collaborative initiatives for social justice. It launched a Social Justice Grant Competition in 2009 to recognize the pioneer work of IFP alumni in the spheres of social justice and equity. It was also meant to showcase and support pilot projects that would lead to the establishment of an innovative practice in the area of social justice development. The competition was designed as an opportunity where two or more alumni could come together to work towards this aim. It was also envisaged that this competition would recognize innovation in the area of social change.

Three grants were awarded to the most deserving proposals, which were completed within their respective twelve-month timeframes. One project looked at the impact of custom made low-cost mobility assistive equipment on the functional capability and

quality of life of people with disabilities living in underserved environments. The second project was designed to impart knowledge and skills in legal matters and processes of the law to representatives of marginalized communities to enhance their capacities in asserting their rights in a strategic way, and also to improve their communication, community mobilization and leadership skills. The third project created a support mechanism for talented students who, in the absence of financial and social support, are compelled to discontinue their education after high school.

These projects were possible thanks to IFP. In 2009 the Governing Board had put together a proposal and applied for startup funds from the International Fellowships Fund (IFF) in New York (before, as it hoped it would, looking for fundraising from other sources). IFF granted funds for activities of the alumni network that would be monitored by the IFP office in New Delhi. This was very useful as it meant that over the next two years IFPIAN could convene larger and smaller meetings, have resources for communications and brand building, offer innovative platforms for alumni members to engage in social justice interventions, and explore other ways of strengthening their network.

At meetings, both at the state and the national level, alumni reiterated that IFPIAN was indeed a unique organization. Its strengths could be attributed to the shared experience of having belonged to disadvantaged and excluded groups despite their diverse backgrounds, and the shared commitment to social justice issues. It is a network that emerged on the double strength of academic performance and grassroots experience, a network of organic intellectuals from diverse fields and international experiences.

However one of the challenges identified is that the network has become somewhat of a “virtual” or “internet-based” organization. Physical meetings are not frequently possible, so most members have not actually met in person. Membership comprises alumni from different cohorts that not necessarily know each another, nor are particularly motivated to interact unless there is some mutual interest in terms of subject area or expertise. The percentage of alumni actively contributing to the network’s activities is narrowed down when you exclude over 20% of IFP India alumni that have not returned after their fellowships. It is further reduced when most members choose not to respond to email enquiries or confirm their participation

in activities. It then boils down to Governing Board members and State Coordinators who have been allocated certain responsibilities and are accountable, and are the only active members!

There were also several challenges to the network's effective functioning that members were able to identify, including the substantive diversity amongst the pool of alumni, their geographical dispersion and, most importantly, a smorgasbord of divergent personalities. Let us examine these and other challenges in more detail.

- Alumni are spread across the geographic length and breadth of a very large country. This becomes a barrier to regional meetings and deliberations as well as to meeting at a national level frequently. Many members live in remote areas with insufficient access to communication systems (such as e-mail) and this slows down virtual, web-based communication.
- The experience of alumni in terms of employment opportunities and their reinsertion into their local environments in India has been a mixed bag. While some returned to their own communities and home towns, others made a quantum shift to work in bigger cities like Delhi and Bangalore. Some needed several months to readjust and secure new jobs despite their international degrees and experience. Most alumni are salaried professionals with commitments to their jobs and families. Some alumni shared "We need to build our financial bases too. We cannot only worry about social justice issues." This may have led to insufficient time and engagement in the network.
- Since activities are alumni driven, there is a wide array of priorities and ideas, and it becomes difficult and time consuming to finalize realistic goals and doable plans. It is not always easy to get everyone on the same page; people prefer to persist with their own ideas, rather than being collaborative. The diversity of thematic areas within the network results in a diffused focus of activities.
- Governing Board members who are all busy professionals find it extremely tough to commit their (voluntary) time and energies. They need to be available for periodic meetings and to oversee certain tasks and action points. Some of them were unable to deliver as committed. The alumni

felt that the fellowship had helped put their lives on the fast track, and that they were now so busy that they found it extremely challenging to make time for activities not pertaining directly to their daily professional routines.

- Ordinary members do not actively contribute, but put the onus on Governing Board members to deliver. Hence a trust deficiency gets created: while board members feel burdened, other ordinary members feel shortchanged.
- Unless ideas and suggestions are quickly implemented and executed, the network can become inert and ineffective. Often the same ideas would surface at every meeting, but because there would be no volunteers to take on the responsibility, ideas would remain on paper.
- Since most communication takes place via e-mail, it is very difficult to elicit prompt responses from members. Many take long to respond, many do not respond at all. Then it becomes very difficult to get a sense of the pulse of the entire group, and board members are forced to make assumptions about what the majority of the network might prefer.
- In the absence of alumni members taking on full responsibility, IFP office team members got involved in having to manage a large part of the network affairs and handhold, which is not sustainable as the IFP team will be winding down its operations in the near future.
- Even though it is a registered network, IFPIAN is not recognized in the public domain. Very little brand building has been done to establish its credentials, except within the alumni group itself. Although the IFP office has helped in giving the network due publicity amongst its stakeholders, a lot more can be done to create awareness and build its own identity.
- Even though registration has been secured, the official approach makes the operations cumbersome and bureaucratic. It may be simpler to have an informal network without hierarchies and designations. But who would be accountable?

As Dr. Ganesh Devy, an adviser to the IFP in India, commented, "IFPIAN will always have to deal with the dilemma of solitary vs solidarity, i.e., the constant struggle of connection with one's inner self and balancing it with the calling of an outer world. Alumni

members will have to map their journeys from Solitaire to Solidaire actualizing their commitments to the 'self' while engaging actively with larger issues national, political, ecological, social issues. The first step in doing so would mean resolving all conflicts in the mind; dealing with all temptation of outer, superficial success and making an impregnable commitment to staying rooted to the ground and contributing to local issues in every possible way."

Members of IFPIAN are the network. Networks do not have an agenda by themselves, but are rather shaped by the agenda, values and spirit of the members. The network will be sustained by the conviction and the personality of all members. It will fail if members make it larger than themselves or see it as a chip on their shoulder.

IFPIAN should evolve as a fearless, independent initiative. Members should be able to tell funding organizations that the network will decide its issues and stances, as it is not seeking for money; it welcomes advice or ideas, links, analytical tools, critiques and mentoring, but no money. This fearlessness will enable the network to remain undeterred by pushes and pulls from outside. Often issues are determined by the funding available. However, if IFPIAN identifies issues for which no funding is available members can be assured that those are 'real issues' and most worthy of immediate intervention.

A critical problem for IFPIAN will be developing a common vision. How will the network reconcile disagreements and conflicts between different thematic groups? There will be a truth held by every thematic group. How will IFPIAN determine the 'superior truth'? IFPIAN will first have to develop a common understanding of social justice and define the stances, values and beliefs it shall promote (based on an understanding of how social justice issues play out in local contexts). IFPIAN will also have to develop a culture and ethos of coexisting with different ideas of social justice. Such coexistence, however, should not disturb mutual trust. The network will die if trust among members dies.

IFPIAN members should take their time in identifying and understanding the problems that they want to tackle. Often problems, in the long term, morph into solutions. Therefore the time invested in problem identification would be critical to the actual impact of IFPIAN in the social justice field. Decision-making within IFPIAN need not always be driven by numerical purity, it would be best for members to listen to every-

one, never marginalize any thought or idea, but take decisions based on the network's own collective philosophy of social justice.

In fact, as a resource person who advised the Governing Board and State Coordinators suggested, IFPIAN should let its complexity remain; there is no need to oversimplify. It should consider its pool of members to be akin to "a thousand blooming flowers." IFPIAN's need to put conformity on diversity might perhaps be a weakness. IFPIAN should accept and be prepared to have more conflict than collaboration. Disagreements, debates, arguments within the network will only enrich it, but this will happen only if the debates are on issue clarification and perspectives of social justice. The flexibility within the network to change, adapt and continuously learn will make it stronger.

Finally, the network will only move forward if members are driven to action, to plunging in and actively experimenting with solutions. Members should own the network and be equally accountable to it. They should have the courage to call their peers to action and lead selflessly.

While the body has yet to kick off on larger concrete social change projects, all alumni believe that this forum will enable them to truly give back to IFP and to India. The future of IFPIAN greatly depends on the leadership that will evolve within the alumni network. It is not necessary for all alumni to take an active role in running the organization. And it is not necessary to continue as a formal body, an informal network may also flourish and make a difference.

Over the next two years the IFP team in New Delhi hopes to work closely with the network to raise the profile of IFP in India and to showcase the outcomes of this innovative model of higher education and social justice. In the final analysis, even if there are a handful of active alumni who are truly passionate and committed about carrying on the mandate of social justice, and are united in their determination to work together in this arena, the legacy of the IFP program will live on through their efforts and accomplishments.

The alumni are all survivors. That is why they were selected as fellows in the first place. Will their network survive? Only time will tell. Their journey will certainly have been well worth it.

SUPPORT AND FOLLOW-UP PROGRAMS FOR ALUMNI, WHY AND FOR WHAT? AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROADS TRAVELED BY THE IFP IN MEXICO

David Navarrete



In 2011 the post-fellowship initiative in Mexico completed its sixth year. The inclusion of activities directed at alumni was an important addition to the original operation and design of the program, which began in Mexico in 2001. It is noteworthy that despite the long-range objectives and innovative nature of the International Fellowship Program (IFP) intervention model in the granting of higher education scholarships, nearly four years passed before a follow-up program for alumni was incorporated into the program's general structure.

In large part this can be explained by the fact that during the first three years of the program, all available attention and resources were directed toward the process of promoting the program and recruiting fellowship candidates, selecting fellows, strengthening their academic skills, and placing them at universities as well as monitoring their performance. This was also an important period in terms of resolving the communication and coordination mechanisms between headquarters in New York and the national partners in Latin America, Asia/Russia, and Africa.

When the first cohorts of fellows completed their graduate studies and returned home, this encouraged the program's operators in New York and the 22 participating countries to revisit a subject that had been listed on the common agenda but not yet discussed in depth. Since one of the central purposes of the IFP was to encourage the formation of new leaders for social justice, was it necessary to extend the program's relations with its fellows after they had completed their fellowship contracts? What specific work would this entail?

What would be its scope and limitations? Given the amount of human and financial resources as well as time available, could a new and demanding project such as this be adequately attended to?

These were the kinds of questions and topics that the IFP General Secretariat began to incorporate in its program work meetings at the international, regional and national level, starting in 2004. Just as with the other operative components of the program, the post-fellowship phase was designed as a decentralized strategy that freed partner institutions such as CIESAS in Mexico to design their work programs in accordance with their institutional capacities as well as the specific social, cultural and political situations in each country.

This paper offers a descriptive and analytical overview of the follow-up initiative for IFP alumni in Mexico; its launch objectives, its design, operation and principal results. It proves that far from limiting itself to an administrative follow-up of alumni, the task involves a more complex and ambitious effort to assist those alumni in applying their social justice skills and knowledge to the most pressing social justice issues in their communities and in Mexico as a whole.

Documenting the operation and benefits of the post-fellowship phase in Mexico is a worthy task in itself. Furthermore, this paper argues that this experience offers elements that may be useful in the design and operation for models of higher level educative attention directed at disadvantaged social groups. In particular, it provides information on the scope and limits of a strategy designed in the context of an interna-

tional cooperation program (IFP) to follow up on indigenous alumni in Mexico, and to continue assisting their participation in high-impact social work beyond the life of a program that will end in 2013.

The Launch of the Initiative

In May of 2005, CIESAS began the first phase of its post-fellowship initiative in Mexico. In accordance with the guiding principles established by the IFP Secretariat during 2004 and the agreements reached at the Latin American regional meeting held in Santiago de Chile (October, 2004),¹ the initiative was designed to:

- 1 Offer training and information as necessary to assist alumni with reentry issues.
- 2 Foster alumni visibility and connections to other key actors and organizations, thereby promoting their professional and leadership development.
- 3 Promote group integration.
- 4 Promote discussion among alumni about the advantages of belonging to an alumni network and, subsequently, to set up a formal IFP alumni association in Mexico.
- 5 Follow up on alumni, keeping an updated body of information on their work and professional development.

Through the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico, CIESAS took responsibility for promoting, organizing and following up on initial training and cohort-building activities. The pilot stage was jointly financed by the IFP and the Ford Foundation Office in Mexico. Subsequent stages from 2005 to 2011 have been financed solely by the IFP.

It is important to note that, just as with the initial stage of the effort to select and attend to fellows, the post-fellowship phase included a strong experimental and pragmatic component. At the end of 2005 only 16 fellows had completed their studies, most of them just

a few months earlier. This circumstance, along with the variety of personal experiences and professional positions to which they were returning to, caused the support offered to be focused on the basic rubrics implied by the objectives already contained in the pilot project, which were agreed to by consensus at the international level during the 2004-2006 period.

The inclusion of additional activities matching particular needs of the Mexican alumni came about gradually, as the number of graduates increased and their re-entry experiences, both individual and collective, made more precise diagnoses possible. The IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico was also refining its objectives and work strategies based on lessons learned during each of the activities performed. The theme “learning by doing” used by the IFP to refer to one of its work methods associated with quick and innovative operation, especially during its first years, is also applicable to the post-fellowship stage.

Alumni participation in the design and implementation of certain activities has been another valuable element, which from the beginning of the post-fellowship initiative has allowed for the leveraging of their theoretical and practical skills as well as reaffirming the pertinence and relevance of the issues addressed. This recognition of alumni as essential actors who should help drive and attend to strategic aspects of the alumni follow-up initiative were fundamental to the work of the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico which directed the formation of the Mexican Alumni Association in 2006.

Another key element in the conception and execution of the post-fellowship initiative has been the change introduced in the relationship of former fellows with the program, moving from a mostly contractual connection of a predominantly academic nature to another connection based on voluntary association. This modification is an attempt to have alumni conceive of themselves as program associates engaged in the common task of providing continuity and strengthening the efforts toward social justice that were the basis of each fellow’s selection. In other words, it is an attempt for them to see themselves not as individual beneficiaries of resources and support to which they are “entitled” but as part of a group with access to resources which help maintain their active participation in activities with social benefits that are of interest to them as well as the program.

¹ This work meeting was convened by the IFP General Secretariat to discuss and analyze, with the program directors in Latin America, the objectives and general work plan for the post-fellowship initiative in the region. Similar meetings were held with the program’s partners in Asia/Russia and Africa. The Santiago meeting was also attended by an alumni representative from each Latin American country where the IFP operates (Brazil, Guatemala, Chile, Mexico and Peru), and representatives of the three Ford Foundation offices in the subcontinent.

The road traveled

The total number of women and men who have received IFP fellowships in Mexico is 226; at year-end, 160 of them had completed their scholarships. This universe is made up of professionals from distinct ethnic groups and states within Mexico who have trained at various universities in a variety of disciplines. The group includes fellows from 30 of the 62 ethnic groups and 20 of the 31 states in Mexico. 59% studied in universities in Mexico and other Latin American countries, 38% in Europe (most in Spain), and 3% in the United States. In terms of fields of study, social sciences and humanities are dominant, especially education, rural development, law, anthropology, linguistics, psychology, health science, and economics.

Their fields of development and professional employment after completing their study programs are also diverse. This heterogeneity has been a significant challenge in the effort to precisely identify common requirements for support and assistance. Toward this end, periodic surveys and tests have been performed which have also served to determine the very specific needs and interests of the alumni so that they might be addressed.

The concerns reported relate principally to two major areas: 1) job market pressures; and 2) obstacles to networking and further professional development, at the re-entry level and beyond. The interrelated issues are practical knowledge, skills, networking and survival strategies needed in the non-profit culture. Some alumni have stressed the need for continued foreign language training, especially in English, and additional reinforcement of their academic skills and production. Lack of foreign languages is a barrier that impedes access to other opportunities in order to advance their studies at the international level,²

² For example, several alumni that obtained a master's degree through the IFP are interested in pursuing a doctorate program. Mexico has a long tradition of scholarships for the completion of post-graduate programs in the United States, and one of the eligibility requirements is English language proficiency. Despite the significant support provided by the IFP for Mexican fellows to take English courses before and during their fellowships, very few can be considered proficient. In 2009, CIESAS and the IFP signed an agreement with the US-Mexico Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchanges (COMEXUS) for indigenous students to complete 6-month pre-doctoral coursework in the United States. In addition to becoming familiar with the American academic context, a central component of the fellowship (funded solely by COMEXUS) was the objective of helping the fellows

as well as networking with alumni from other regions outside of Latin America, and even with the Portuguese speakers in the region (i.e., the Brazilians).

With regard to employment, even though the majority of alumni obtain jobs upon their return or a few months later, some face greater difficulties.³ Unemployment has resulted due to reasons as diverse as the alumni themselves. Some lack access to pertinent job information, while others are overqualified for the available jobs. Many alumni are faced with the choice of migrating to bigger cities to obtain jobs commensurate to their education, while remaining active in social justice issues in their regions and communities of origin. Despite their advanced degrees, the alumni still lack contacts within the broader development community, especially if they return to isolated rural areas.⁴

To counteract these and other difficulties that have been identified, a number of activities were performed within the framework of the post-fellowship initiative between 2005 and 2011. As previously mentioned, during this period various changes and adjustments were made to the original design. There is not adequate space here to address the process in detail. However, it is important to understand the actual structure of the post-fellowship initiative in order to appreciate the complexity it has achieved and reflect on the results obtained.

The activities performed can be categorized in five main areas:

1) *Capacity building.* Different workshops and courses (an average of two annually) have been organized to

improve their command of English so that they would be prepared, upon their return to Mexico, to apply to the COMEXUS doctorate fellowships program and other programs of this kind. Five Mexican IFP alumni were given this support in the framework of an agreement that ended in 2011.

³ Another group includes fellows that successfully requested a leave of absence at work and were able to immediately return to their job as soon as they completed their study program. This is often the case for professors and teachers.

⁴ As previously stated, the diversity in re-entry experiences is reflected in the periodical diagnoses performed by the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico. It is also documented in the exploratory study completed in 2010 on the employment histories of Mexican alumni titled Professional Training of Indigenous Youth in Mexico: International Fellowships Program (IFP) Case Study, commissioned to Regina Martínez, a researcher at CIESAS.

foster knowledge and practical skills for social action. They deal with topics and problems directly related to professional interests of the alumni, for example, gender and leadership issues, media training, conflict resolution, fundraising strategies and financial self-management. These trainings have also served to promote group integration as well as generate collaborative networks between alumni from various cohorts who may have common professional interests, but may not have been previously acquainted with one another.

2) *Visibility and dissemination.* This category combines support activities for alumni in disseminating their professional profiles (both individually and collectively), as well as advancing their contact with relevant actors and organizations who advocate for social justice in Mexico. A work strategy has been implemented in order to expand the participation and visibility of the alumni in specific fora focused on issues related to indigenous peoples' access to undergraduate and graduate programs, and on the new higher education options targeted to this sector of Mexican society.

As part of this strategy to gain greater visibility, the journal *Aquí Estamos* was created in 2004, where articles written by alumni are published, focusing on the subjects and problems currently facing Mexico's indigenous peoples. The journal also distributes relevant information on alumni activities and achievements. As of the current date, it has published 15 issues. This journal continues to be the only academic outreach publication in the country based on essays written by indigenous professionals. It is one way that the post-fellowship initiative combats the marginalization that young indigenous intellectuals face in Mexican scientific media, and seeks to contribute to positioning them as anthropologists, linguists, attorneys, historians, engineers, etc., whose voice should be heard in the academic world as well as in the Mexican society.

Another relevant activity in terms of visibility has been the organization of a series of seminars open to the general public on the social contribution of indigenous Mexicans who hold graduate degrees. In 2010-2011 four events of this kind took place in different states with considerable indige-



David Navarrete with Mexican Alumni attending the Forum for the Promotion of Cultural Diversity, Education and Linguistics, Mexico City, May 2011.

nous population. Guest speakers included alumni from each state and an expert in indigenous issues.

As a way of strengthening and widening the visibility strategy, in 2011 a project was implemented to produce brief (8-min.) audiovisual spots to disseminate the opinions of alumni on current events and issues of general interest in Mexico. The first spot will be available through the Internet in early 2012.⁵ This type of massive and easy access materials are also intended to combat racist stereotypes deeply grounded in Mexican society, where indigenous people are considered to be passive individuals and groups that lack informed opinions and solid proposals to address the acute problems that affect the country. Our alumni undoubtedly prove that such beliefs are erroneous.

Within this rubric it is also worth mentioning the establishment in 2011 of the "Visibility Support Fund," through which complementary financial support is granted to alumni in order to defray the expenses involved for them to attend specific events and courses. This is a response to specific individual needs in terms of visibility and honing of skills that were not addressed in collective activities organized for alumni throughout 2005-2010. In 2011, 13 alumni requested support through this Fund; nine of them were guest speakers at relevant fora where they presented the results of their graduate theses (all addressing important social issues) and their most recent professional endeavours; the other four took courses to increase their knowledge and skills directly related to their current jobs.⁶

- 3) *Group integration.* A number of activities have been organized with the purpose of providing an opportunity for alumni from different cohorts to get to know each other and exchange professional experiences. To date, two seminars have been held where alumni speak and debate amongst themselves and with non-indigenous specialists about

their diagnoses, proposals and concrete actions to address the problems that affect indigenous peoples as well as other disadvantaged social groups. Both events were designed around relevant and current issues that were discussed through expert alumni presentations. The first seminar took place in November 2007 and was titled "Gender, Education and Communication among Indigenous Peoples in Mexico: Old Problems, New Perspectives." The second meeting, "Actions and Commitments towards Sustainable Development," was held in December 2010. By choosing these thematic foci, it was possible to gather alumni who studied and currently work in the fields, thus increasing the potential of joint projects.⁷

- 4) *Alumni Association.* Promoting and supporting the operations of the alumni association is another strategic line of action of the post-fellowship phase. Founding an association was the task that received the most attention and resources throughout 2005-2006. In that period, the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico organized different work meetings with alumni that had already completed their graduate studies. Those that responded took on the important mission of drafting the objectives, structure and lines of action that would lead the IFP alumni association in Mexico. In August 2006 the group was formally registered as a non-profit organization under the name Red Interdisciplinaria de Investigadores de los Pueblos Indios de México, A.C. (Interdisciplinary Network of Researchers in Mexican Indigenous Peoples, Red IINPIM).⁸ Their main goal is to promote the individual and collective contribution of alumni to social justice and to the development of indigenous peoples and the enforcement of their rights in Mexico.

⁵ For more information on the contents of the spot, see the corresponding note on the "IFP Mexico Newsflash" section in this issue. The plan is to produce five spots between 2011 and 2013.

⁶ For more information on the activities supported by this Fund and their outcome in 2011 see the "IFP Mexico Newsflash" section in this issue. Also see: Aquí Estamos, no. 14, p. 41 at <http://ford.ciesas.edu.mx/Revistas.htm>.

⁷ The agendas for these meetings and the papers presented are available at http://ford.ciesas.edu.mx/1er_encuentro.htm and http://ford.ciesas.edu.mx/2do_encuentro.htm

⁸ The event was held at CIESAS in Mexico City. 19 alumni participated and were sworn in as members. Honorary witnesses included Virginia García Acosta, CIESAS General Director; Joan Dassin, IFP Executive Director; Christopher Martin, Advisor to the Education Program at the Ford Foundation Office in Mexico, and David Navarrete, IFP Director in México. For more information please see Aquí Estamos, no. 5, p. 53 at <http://ford.ciesas.edu.mx/Revistas.htm>

Thereafter, besides financing and co-organizing different association assemblies, funding has been provided for different work meetings and other activities of the network. Support was provided for the organization of the annual assemblies of the Alumni Association, including that of 2009, where a new Board was elected. In 2010-2011 support was provided for the organization of the working sessions of the new Board. The purpose of these meetings was to design, coordinate and implement activities relevant to the association. In 2010 a draft version of the general work plan of the Board was discussed and agreed on, including the financial support that would be granted to organize four working sessions with the Board and network members in different states of the country.

Another key area in the strengthening of the Alumni Association is fundraising and funds self-management. With a view to developing and strengthening this ability, grants have been offered to cover the costs of fundraising and project development workshops delivered by top Mexican organizations and attended by different Red IINPIM members.

An example of the increasing visibility and self-management and dialogue capacity of the association is the organization, in the last quarter of 2010, of the First Latin American Assembly Voices of the Peoples. "An Alternative Bicentennial Celebration: The Indigenous Outlook on the Future," held in Mexico City, on October 27-29. The alumni association Board organized this event with the main purpose of "contributing to the construction of an inclusive society in Mexico". A preparatory meeting was held with the Board as early as February 2010 to prepare recommendations and ensure a successful conference within the scope of the financial and organizational capacities of the network. Support was provided to assist with the organization of the event and cover the transportation of 10 alumni who would act as guest speakers. Red IINPIM also managed the support provided by other organizations, such as the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and the Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico (CDI).

- 5) *Alumni database*. The alumni database, which covers the qualifications, professional back-

ground, and contact information for alumni, was created during the pilot phase of the post-fellowship initiative. During the second phase, efforts were focused on the collection of alumni data. In 2009-2011, the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico began to update the database on an ongoing basis. It is expected that when the database is fully completed, more accurate and complete statistic analyses may be performed and used for internal diagnoses and institutional activities targeted at making the program more visible.

Results Obtained

The main results achieved in six years can be summarized as follows:

- The categorization of alumni needs in terms of group integration, visibility and capacity building. The information and experience gathered allow for the organization of activities that are both interesting and relevant for alumni, as well as conducting initiatives and collaborative efforts matched to the possibilities and resources (knowledge, abilities) of participants, both at an individual as well as a collective level.

- Although much remains to be done, the role of alumni has been widely publicized among diverse audiences, thus also publicizing the contribution of the IFP in the training of new, socially committed indigenous professionals. The organization of thematic seminars, for example, has publicly demonstrated the impact of IFP fellowships, the extension of the program's goals, and the specific benefits—beyond individual grants—to the country in general and the fellows' states of origin and residence. Having the alumni discuss their objectives and contribution to the development of their groups and to the social development of their states of origin has translated into stressing the importance of actions that support indigenous individuals who want to pursue graduate degrees at top-level universities.

- Creation and publication of the alumni journal *Aquí Estamos*. In addition to being a pillar of the strategy to gain better visibility for the program and its graduates, the journal is currently performing other important functions that were not foreseen in 2004. Ever since the ninth edition of the journal—published in 2008—the editing process has involved the organization of working seminars in Mexico City with the authors (all of whom are alumni) and an expert invited to jointly coordinate the relevant thematic section. The

seminars have proved effective in improving the quality of essays and thus the general quality of the journal as a dissemination tool for the discussion of issues that affect indigenous people in Mexico. Additionally, the seminars have helped alumni strengthen their skills in working closely with experts in areas of common interest. The seminars also facilitate the interaction among alumni from different cohorts with similar professional concerns, which may lead to future jointly organized projects. Last but not least, emphasis should be placed on the fact that some alumni lack experience in outreach essay writing, a skill they practice while working on their papers for *Aquí Estamos*.

In summary, five years after the publication of the first issue, *Aquí Estamos* has become a key element in the documentation and visibility strategy for the IFP in Mexico. The journal continuously registers and disseminates up-to-date alumni points of view, achievements, and individual and collective profiles. Moreover, the different sections of the journal cover the most relevant actions and outputs of the IFP Mexico during the post-fellowship phase.

-The creation and legal incorporation of the alumni association as the Red IINPIM, A. C. The advice and support provided to the network in subsequent years paved the road for the association to move toward autonomous and self-managed operations that ensure its existence beyond the closure of the IFP in 2013. Red IINPIM has inherited some of the objectives and key messages that the IFP wants to convey to the Mexican society and are part of the concept of inclusion and social equity. The network will not leave behind this central mission, but it will naturally adjust its specific objectives, composition and operations to fit the needs of its members and the social and political changes that take place in the country, particularly with regard to the situation of the indigenous peoples and the most vulnerable social groups.

-Design and organization of the alumni database. As mentioned before, the database includes information covering the alumni qualifications, career development and contact information. This allows for information to be managed more easily and rapidly. Additionally, it allows for more accurate and complete statistic analyses that improve internal diagnoses on the IFP impact, and institutional activities targeted at gaining greater visibility for the alumni and the program.

Looking into the Future: the Challenges

The implementation of the post-fellowship initiative has faced challenges and obstacles that have influenced its achievements in important ways. Without undertaking a detailed inventory in this respect, we shall highlight three of those here.

The first was the additional investment of time and resources required of the IFP/CIESAS operational team, which had to simultaneously continue performing a variety of duties related to selecting and attending to fellows. What we wish to emphasize here is that for the fullest realization of the central goals of the IFP in Mexico, the post-fellowship initiative might (perhaps should) widen its scope and objectives, but this will only be possible with a greater investment of resources. Each of the main rubrics within the current work plan—capacity building, visibility and dissemination, group integration, alumni database—may well be projected to extend beyond the established capabilities of the program as well as its lifespan.

Beyond that, documenting the experiences of the alumni as they re-insert themselves in the workplace and offering support so that they may continue their work on behalf of the neediest groups in our society are aspects that clearly extend beyond the framework of a scholarship program and are enormously important for Mexico. Therefore, the possibility that this initiative might expand and become a support and feedback program for the IFP itself, or become a program with similar characteristics when the IFP concludes, ought to be considered.

A second challenge that has been faced and which we highlight here is the numerically limited number of active alumni. Out of the total number of fellows who have completed the program to date, constant communication is maintained with approximately 40% of them. As a consequence, this makes it difficult to collect useful information in order to evaluate the impact of the program in a comprehensive manner. It also reduces the potential size of a group of alumni integrated in networking and participating in their own association of former fellows. Without attempting to reach 100% coverage, it would still be a good idea to increase the percentage of those who remain in contact with the program, thereby increasing the potential collaboration between alumni. On the other hand, the group of alumni with whom the initiative has been working, and who participate systematically in organized

activities and respond to the periodic reporting requirements, is one of the pillars that have made it possible for the initiative to move forward in significant ways toward achieving the general proposals and goals for the post-fellowship phase.

The third challenge relates to the future sustainability of Red IINPIM. As with the Indian and Ugandan experiences included in this issue of *Aquí Estamos*, the Mexican alumni association needs to strengthen its membership and self-management capacities. It is necessary to increase both the number of alumni that belong to the network and their level of active participation. The role of the IFP Coordinator in Mexico as the main activating agent of the network between 2005 and 2009 was only part of the initial effort needed to make it a viable project.

The reappointment of the Board in 2009 translated into a new momentum and brought along new ideas and projects, as well as a substantive widening of the association's links and networks beyond the IFP. Therefore, the IFP Coordinating Office at CIESAS is currently working in the context of a collaborative and support-driven relationship with the Board, in line with the principle of respecting the network's autonomy. It

is up to their current leaders and active members to widen the channels for internal communication and dialogue and thus overcome the differences that surface and are common to any association of this kind. The Board should also strengthen the strategy designed to recruit the alumni who complete their study programs month after month and return to work with new knowledge, talent, ideas and energy.

In addition to its great potential as a means to promote the individual and collective professional profiles of members, the consolidation of red IINPIM can greatly benefit Mexico. As demonstrated in the different activities of visibility that have been organized by the IFP/CIESAS Coordinating Office and also during the event organized by Red IINPIM in 2010, the articulate voice of alumni is a catalyst for Mexican society to become aware of the work that still needs to be done in order to become an inclusive and participative society. It also revealed the different and valuable contributions of indigenous women and men that have had access to the highest education standards and remain committed to applying their knowledge and skills to the task of building a more equitable and fair world.



Group of Alumni and other participants attending the Participative Planning Social Projects Workshop, Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico, December 2011.

HIGHER EDUCATION AS A POWERFUL INGREDIENT TO REDRESS SOCIAL INJUSTICE: EXPERIENCES OF IFP ALUMNI IN UGANDA

Stephen Kaheru and Andrew Omara



Introduction

Although the contribution of higher education as opposed to basic education is a subject of intense debate, the Millennium Development Goals, most of which focus on education and health, represent consensus on human capital development. In Uganda, in line with developing human potential, many nationals have attained high level skills through various scholarship schemes to enhance their professional capacity, enabling them to use education to advance national development. These scholarship programs are administered differently to serve different objectives and interests. Several programs are managed by the Ministry of Education and Sports in Uganda, including the Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme and a number of government to government scholarships which are specific to particular disciplines. There are those that specifically aim to develop capacity for public service, such as the Belgian, Irish and Dutch scholarships, and are managed by the respective missions of the donor countries. A slight variation of the embassy-administered scholarship schemes is the Fulbright program, which does not have restrictions on fields of study, even though it is managed exclusively by the US mission. A few others like the famous Chevening scholarships are managed by partner agencies of the donor country, like the British Council. There are also the Norwegian, Danish and German scholarships which are managed centrally from the capitals of the respective donors.

Over the years, the alumni of all these scholarship programs in Uganda have grown to constitute an enor-

mous pool of expertise and are applying themselves to different national challenges within their respective professions. For most of these scholarship schemes there are no clear goals articulated for their post-fellowship phases. However, in some cases, including Fulbright and Chevening, the alumni have constituted themselves into loose groupings intended to propagate the ideals of the scholarship programs. On the other hand, the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP) has set itself apart from others due to its deliberate thrust on supporting individuals who will use education to impact those around them.

The International Fellowships Program (IFP), generously funded with a grant from the Ford Foundation, was launched in 2001 in Uganda as part of the global program for excluded populations. Managed by the Association for the Advancement of Higher Education and Development (AHEAD) to enhance relevance to local context, IFP was conceived as a program that would open doors for disenfranchised communities in Uganda to access higher education opportunities. AHEAD, the IFP partner institution in Uganda, is a non-government organization established in 2004 to “foster excellence in higher education.” It strives to promote access to quality education for the socially marginalized as an essential element of meaningful development. Its mandate is fulfilled through research and capacity building for leadership required to move ahead with a far reaching transformative spirit with a focus on the youth and marginalized populations in society.

To serve the goal of social commitment, IFP was designed as a graduate scholarship scheme for individuals

from excluded communities with demonstrable leadership potential. In designing it so, it was the conviction of the program's architects that the scholarship award-ees would pursue graduate studies not for private gain but on behalf of their respective communities. The fellowships were therefore primarily intended for individuals who would draw on their graduate training to confront the challenges facing society as agents of transformation.

Through AHEAD, IFP has built on this energy over the past seven years to identify and select the most deserving committed agents of transformation for higher education opportunities. Through its approach, IFP has assisted in identifying that pool of individuals who with graduate education can bring special energy and ability to the development efforts of Uganda. By targeting communities that have lacked systematic access to opportunities for higher education, IFP has extended access to needy populations from far flung and underrepresented areas of Karamoja, Bundibugyo, Rakai and West Nile, among others, to build their capacity. As the case of Uganda shows, given the characteristics of the pool of individuals who have been selected for IFP support, it seems unlikely that these men and women would have been able to benefit from any higher education opportunity without financial support. The program has also expanded the pool of social capital that can be relied upon to spur meaningful social advancement. With emphasis on social commitment, IFP's strategy has identified with national goals through fostering a strong sense of obligation to social causes. Thus, through its selection process, IFP has marshalled the much needed commitment to address critical development challenges facing Uganda. The uniqueness of IFP as an approach to provide access to the higher education of society's marginalized continues to be the strength and depth of the program in Uganda.

The post-fellowship phase of IFP in Uganda was viewed as an effort that would build a dedicated team of alumni in the country and provide structure to their collective efforts to drive social transformation. However, as of 2012 when IFP enters its learning phase, AHEAD will look to the post-fellowship phase as an opportunity to integrate alumni as a think tank to discuss post-IFP project ideas.

This article describes the post-fellowship phase of a socially conscious scholarship program in Uganda

that is deliberately rooted in the commitment to social goals. It articulates the objectives of the post-fellowship phase of IFP in Uganda and examines the activities that characterize it as strategies adopted to meet the set goals.

The IFP alumni world wide

To date over 1,300 of the 4,337 who have been awarded fellowships globally have completed their fellowships, and the majority have returned home as alumni to continue their mission of advancing social justice. IFP alumni are actively involved with social justice on a number of fronts.

Dassin, Volkman and Zurbuchen¹ note that IFP fellows are chosen in part on the basis of their engagement with social justice. They argue that while it is not possible to argue that their fellowships provided the decisive impetus for their continuing engagement with those issues, alumni themselves overwhelmingly report that their experiences as fellows provided them with vital new skills, knowledge, networks, and confidence in their capacity to effect change.

The IFP alumni in Uganda

As part of its mandate as the international partner of the program, AHEAD reaches out to, identifies and selects individuals from different background of exclusion for funded graduate study. Since 2004, AHEAD has received over 10,000 applications and has supported 126 individuals for sponsored graduate study, selected on the basis of their demonstrable leadership and strong involvement with the advancement of their communities, among other aspects. Of these alumni, 61 are female while 65 are male representing 48% and 52% respectively.

Since the program began, 88% of the fellows from Uganda who have been supported to study abroad have graduated and returned home. The alumni in Uganda constitute a pool of compelling life histories that manifest different faces of marginalization and desolate conditions. The alumni fraternity in Uganda comprises men and women from across different parts of the country who relentlessly contribute to transforming their communities through advocating fairness for the downtrodden or reaching out to those who are deprived or envisaging an innovative way to extend

¹ Dassin, *et al.* 2009.

services like education and health or micro-finance to the underprivileged. What is also peculiar with the alumni in Uganda is the caring, the conscience and the conviction with which they act and it is such people that IFP continues to count on as its ambassadors for social justice.

The return of IFP fellows who had finished graduate study in 2006 marked the start of the post-fellowship phase for Uganda. The post-fellowship phase in Uganda lent itself to the following goals:

- a) To keep the spirit of social justice alive. As the IFP alumni continue to express a deep commitment to addressing social injustice, the post-fellowship activities put them in good stead as committed agents of social justice in different parts of Uganda.
- b) To institute a framework to professionally support returning alumni especially those that had resigned their jobs for the fellowship. The plans later evolved into building the capacity of fellows who had returned to the country.
- c) To motivate the collective pursuit of activities that would spur change in communities. As the alumni return, they feel obliged to utilize the education they have acquired as a tool to effectively address the needs of their communities.

Following a series of consultations AHEAD was awarded a two year grant to coordinate the East Africa Alumni Support Project with financial support from IFP secretariat and Ford Foundation (Eastern Africa) office. Thus, in December 2006, as part of this project, Uganda hosted the first ever convening of alumni from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and this marked the start of the formal alumni activities in these countries. The three day meeting was convened as a platform to formally launch a regional IFP alumni undertaking. The regional nature of this forum was motivated by the geographical proximity of the 3 countries, continuing the tradition of jointly conducted IFP activities among the 3 countries. With alumni identity as its theme, the gathering provided a forum for the alumni from the three countries to agree on a vision as alumni and shape plans for implementing the vision for their respective countries. Being the first of its kind, the following objectives steered this meeting:

- a) To re-affirm the values of the program and their personal commitment to them

- b) To enable the alumni familiarize themselves with their peers in the region
 - c) To develop a better understanding of the aspirations of one another and how each one plans to make their social commitment to these goals a reality
 - d) To crystallize the specific plans and activities of the associations
 - e) To assess the approaches of the alumni associations to their respective grant activities
- Thus, among other aspects, the workshops and group sessions at the meeting dwelt on:
- I) Inventory of alumni skills and expertise to be shared within the IFP fraternity.
 - II) Discussion of regional issues/challenges and solutions
 - III) Fundraising trends and techniques
 - IV) Networking and establishing linkages for practical partnerships
 - V) Re-entry dilemmas and ways to resolve them
 - VI) Agreement regarding a group manifesto for the regional EA Alumni Association

During the regional meeting, the alumni working groups reviewed proposals, concretized their work plans and agreed on memoranda of understanding including financial accountability guidelines. The country-specific activities highlighted the need to address employment and capacity-related gaps that were critical to social justice endeavors in each country. Most of the activities, including national meetings as well as country specific community-based projects, were planned to run from January 2006 to December 2008. At the end of the three day discussions, the alumni had deliberated on issues that were fundamental to the working and evolution of the alumni fraternity as a movement for social justice in East Africa. That way, the convening set the stage for the formation of country-specific alumni associations and provided the backdrop for the initiation of formal alumni activities. The meeting was also a spring board to chart a clear course for alumni engagement with their communities.

Out of this meeting, two major areas of concern among the alumni clearly emerged:

The identity of the alumni: A fruitful outcome was that this meeting provided the glue to enable the alumni from across East Africa to gel and to reinforce their identity as custodians of the mantle to advance social justice.

The sustainability of alumni associations: The meeting also provided a nexus of thoughts on how the alumni associations could remain relevant to foster the continuation of the ideals of IFP.

With the stage set for the emerging alumni associations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, the activities of the alumni in Uganda commenced in earnest. In particular, three principal objectives provided the stimulus for the implementation of an alumni program in Uganda:

- To galvanize collective effort for advancing a common agenda
- To address the challenges of re-entry which alumni faced

Nurturing the formation of the Alumni Association as a self-governing body has been the thrust of the post-fellowship phase in Uganda. The efforts of the alumni in Uganda during this phase have been devoted to activities on the following fronts:

Institutional identity

Initially, the alumni in Uganda were pre-occupied with forging institutional identity as IFP alumni to promote independent efforts across the country. The need for an organizational platform for the alumni's sustained engagement was identified as a priority. This saw the alumni constitute the alumni association as a recognized network through which to advance a formidable social justice agenda across the country. As the numbers grew, the alumni resolved to register an association with clear governing structures, the IFP Uganda Alumni Association (IFP-UAA). The association draws together all awardees of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships program who have completed their studies. The initial activities started with consultations on a constitution. By then, the need had been identified for re-entry support for returning alumni, especially those that had resigned their previous jobs and this provided impetus for an association. Subsequently, a draft constitution was put together, extensively discussed, adopted and registered with the Registration Bureau and the association recognized as a legal entity with the status of a company limited by guarantee. The IFP-UAA was formally registered under the laws of Uganda in 2007, with a mission to promote access to social justice in Uganda through research, advocacy, capacity building and good governance, based on moral and ethical values. With an elected executive

committee, the alumni association provides an institutional channel through which the alumni direct their strong commitment of social justice towards issues that affect different communities in Uganda. The logistical support which AHEAD has provided in terms of office space helped to serve as a coordination point.

With the high IFP return rate of over 80%, the membership of the alumni association has grown from less than 20 in 2006 to over 80 members in 2011. A total of 19 fellows who began their graduate programs in 2011 will augment the membership of the association upon completion of their studies by June 2013.

Strategic direction

With identity established, the alumni devoted considerable effort to charting a course of action as they crystallized their role in fostering social justice in Uganda. To this end, a five year USD 3.5 million strategic plan was developed with focus on tackling the underlying social injustices at community and national level. The strategic plan, which the alumni are still sourcing funding for, identifies five core areas with which alumni can engage in pursuit of social justice. The key strategic considerations of the plan include: a) Access to Social Justice b) Good Governance c) Education d) Health and Health Care and e) Agriculture. These considerations were informed by a needs assessment which highlighted injustices in specific regions of the country and a regional approach was envisaged to implement the strategic plan.

- In Northern Uganda where armed rebellion has ravaged human settlement and social services, the strategic plan focuses on improving literacy levels for children at primary and secondary levels. Improving the general performance in science subjects at secondary schools is the other goal of the strategic plan. To accomplish these goals, the plan conceived the following strategies:
 - In collaboration with district education offices, sponsoring reading and writing contests in primary schools to impact literacy levels.
 - Facilitating refresher training for teachers of science subjects in the region as well as equipping selected schools with teaching and learning aids for science subjects.
 - Funding selected female students, particularly the survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence in the region, to enroll for vocational studies over a

period of four years as a way of imparting skills that enable them to lead more productive lives.

In the western part of Uganda, the association concerns itself with shaping attitudes towards good governance practices. An examination of the effectiveness of service delivery in a decentralized system will be the focus of the association's engagement. The fight against mismanagement of public resources is the association's intervention for central Uganda with focus on Kampala and Mukono districts. The association plans to extend access to justice and community participation in delivering justice in Eastern Uganda. In pursuit of this goal, the following strategies have been considered:

- Documentation of local dispute resolution mechanisms and training of community resource persons
- Establishing a community justice centre to serve as a resource centre on human rights and a community one-stop-referral to resolve disputes

Reducing HIV/AIDS infections, promoting better nutrition, enhancing water and sanitation interventions is the association's plan for specific communities across the country.

Empowerment

The IFP alumni in Uganda have also been involved in various capacity building endeavors that resonate with individual needs and build on individual expertise of alumni. The inclination towards capacity building was impelled by the realization that for the alumni to remain relevant to the cause of communities, they had to summon particular skills. The association identified generic skills which were deemed critical for alumni to develop as individuals. It had been envisaged that the training would impart skills in areas such as CV writing, report writing, proposal writing, presentation and negotiation. In particular, training was conducted for alumni in the area of resource mobilization. The goal of the training was to empower the alumni with specific skills that they can deploy in pursuit of financial support for social justice initiatives. The association conducted training in 2 other core areas: advocacy; project planning and implementation. These sessions drew over 50 alumni together to bolster individual capacity. Today, the alumni are drawing on these skills in different ways to advance social justice on various fronts.

Re-entry support

The post-fellowship stage has also been characterized by activities specifically designed to support the alumni



Alumni from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania attending the East Africa Alumni Meeting at Jinja, Uganda 2006.

to smoothly re-adjust professionally upon returning home from graduate school overseas. When many alumni returned, they faced re-entry challenges that included finding employment, reintegrating with their families, unrealistic expectations and 'reverse cultural shock' after spending time abroad. Thus, through the association, the alumni designed a re-entry program to help the incoming alumni absorb the re-entry shocks. The re-entry program was anchored on empowering the association to act as "soft landing" for the returning IFP alumni. The program thus evolved as an intervention to assist alumni with the challenges they face upon their return. As part of the program, the alumni association was formed to cushion re-entry rigors and to provide a platform for sharing resources. Through the association, the re-entry program which went on for about two years entailed:

- a) Providing an assortment of resources such as job advertisements, links to web sites for various opportunities, calls for proposals
- b) Assisting the alumni to refocus their initial aspirations through collective meetings
- c) Training sessions to develop practical skills that would aid the job hunt

Though short-lived, the re-entry program provided resources that bolstered chances of the alumni to compete favorably for opportunities to apply themselves in a gainful manner. Two cohorts comprising 17 alumni that benefited from the program were cushioned from the rigors associated with their professional re-entry back home. As numbers grew, geographic dispersion of the alumni across the country and their varying dates of return made it logistically challenging to conduct the re-entry program in a manner that would be productive for all alumni.

Alumni directory

The other front on which the alumni concentrated was the production of the Uganda Alumni Directory. Upon realizing that the documentation of individual testimonies would serve as inestimable motivation for younger generations of Ugandans, the alumni focused on producing a directory of alumni in Uganda. The alumni interviewed one another to document their life histories as well as their trajectories as leaders of social justice in their respective spheres of influence. "The publication, –as the President of the alumni

association explained in her foreword– revolves around the theme of hope. Collectively, we offer ourselves in this book as the very epitome of hope for young people who, like us, have had to endure all kinds of challenges individually and collectively, at home, at school and in their communities. Our message of hope is that there is light at the end of every tunnel for those who are determined to rise beyond their past, who will not let their past hinder their future." The alumni directory was launched on April 3, 2009 by Dr. Damtew Teferra, IFP Director for Africa and the Middle East at that moment, at an event that attracted nearly 80 guests including alumni, social activists, fellows elect and a cross section of the program's resource persons in Uganda. However, regional events throughout the country were also organized to launch the publication in the western, eastern, central, northern and west Nile regions of the country in what turned out to be public acclamation of the work of IFP alumni at the grassroots. The publication, which will be updated with profiles of the subsequent cohorts of alumni, promises to serve as a formidable tool to challenge the prejudices about the ability of the less privileged and marginalized Ugandans to succeed academically. For the younger generations, it demonstrates the role of higher education as a powerful ingredient of social transformation in Uganda. As Uganda embarks on the learning phase of the IFP, the alumni directory is already serving as an appealing "calling card" which showcases the achievements of IFP in Uganda to potential post-IFP partners.

Secretariat

Following the regional alumni meeting in 2006, the alumni association in Uganda moved to establish a base for coordinating its activities. Arrangements were thus concluded to have office space secured at AHEAD. The members of the association agreed to have this office space serve as the secretariat of the association with different alumni volunteering to manage the running of the office on a rotational basis. A cost-sharing arrangement was negotiated with AHEAD to defray the costs of utilities for the office operations. The office space also served as a resource centre and thus besides the meeting space and computers, it included a modest collection of reference material that was deemed relevant to the professional interests of alumni.

Electronic presence

The alumni in Uganda were also involved in efforts to promote interactions that facilitate collaboration beyond national borders. The association, with the help of an outsourced web designer, developed a web portal to register the association's electronic presence. The web link, which was unveiled alongside the launch of 2010 IFP application cycle on www.ifpaauganda.org, showcases profiles of alumni, association events and updates. The website was viewed as a platform to connect with the "global" world, exchange experiences, and stimulate new thinking while also conveying the vitality of the IFP alumni in Uganda. The site portrays the life of IFPAAU as a fraternity of men and women with varying goals which find congruence in advancing social justice. It also covers the affairs of the Alumni Association including professional accomplishments, updates and publications feature on a dedicated page hosted on AHEAD's web site.

Community-based initiatives

The members of the association have also been involved in small scale initiatives that contribute to improving the livelihoods of the community to promote social justice. In Lira district in northern Uganda, the alumni started a bee-keeping project to promote positive entrepreneurial attitudes towards poverty allevia-

tion in the area. This engagement provided an opportunity for the alumni to collectively lend themselves to the reality of disadvantage in an area emerging from the vicissitudes of war. Despite the differences in culture and language, this intervention reinforced the borderless reality of advancing social justice. The challenge of promoting initiatives at the grassroots in the service of select groups over broader community needs is one that the alumni will continue to address.

Challenges

Despite this progress, the Alumni Association has met some drawbacks.

The alumni have not managed to be actively engaged in causes of a national nature such as the fight against corruption, environmental degradation and other forms of injustices. While it was not their intention to lead such efforts, it was anticipated that the alumni would be seen to be part of these efforts, but this has not yet happened. Much of their involvement has been in debating national injustices and suggesting practical solutions or policy options. The international and Uganda listserves have provided a platform to openly debate social justice issues in the public interest. However, little effort has been made to collectively extend the frontiers of the debates into the public arena. Nonetheless, some alumni have drawn on



Alumni from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania at the Jinja meeting, Uganda, 2006.

the insights from these fora and have pursued them at an individual level either with their organizations or through their own initiatives at the grassroots.

Despite their involvement in collective activities, geographic dispersion across the country and the tension between the alumni association and pursuing professional careers remain formidable challenges. Indeed, one of the most significant challenges, according to the coordinator of alumni activities at AHEAD has been “how to make each individual alumnus a part of the group activities and how to make this of more practical benefit to them.” Convening regularly to keep the alumni connected with issues of social justices and map out modalities for intervention has been logistically challenging. The location of alumni in different parts of the country makes their availability for joint activities difficult in the capital city or even other parts of the country. In addition, advances have not yet been networking with other alumni associations in the East African region and worldwide. They also have not yet built synergies with likeminded organizations in East Africa as anticipated. An effective mechanism that allows all alumni, including those based in the countryside, to meaningfully contribute to the collective cause has yet to be devised.

The IFP office at AHEAD has always provided administrative and programmatic support to the alumni and their association. Through support from the IFP secretariat and the Ford Foundation office in Nairobi, seed funding was provided to enable the alumni asso-

ciations in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania conduct start-up activities. The challenge now lies with the alumni to take up the roles that have been played by AHEAD after IFP comes to an end in June 2013.

Conclusion

The IFP post-fellowship phase in Uganda has helped to build the visibility of IFP as a unique model of supporting higher education for the marginalized. It seems clear that the majority of the alumni are still committed to the post-fellowship phase as a platform to collectively confront social injustice in Uganda. Although administrative challenges remain, the association provides a splendid opportunity for the alumni to advance social justice. The common history of deprivation and marginalization that binds them together with the wealth of their professional expertise are the real assets that the alumni have at their disposal to tackle social injustice in Uganda. As Uganda struggles to reach the 2015 targets of the Millennium Development Goals, the alumni represent voices of determination to stand up for the less privileged. Even when IFP closes in 2013, the extent of marginalization in Uganda remains the space that the alumni ought to seize to continue advocating social justice for Ugandans. The alumni fraternity in Uganda promises a powerful platform for alumni to pool the skills critically needed to redress the growing economic gaps, poverty, burden of disease, rural-urban divide for a better Uganda.

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A COLLECTIVE ACTOR

Minh Kauffman



Between 2001- 2011 the International Fellowships Program (IFP) Vietnam selected 270 individuals from marginalized groups to pursue higher education abroad. The program achieved its aim: to provide support to members from the designated disadvantaged groups. For example, 80% of the 270 fellows come from very small towns and rural areas; 61% are women; 27% belong to 26 ethnic minority groups of the 53 which make up 15% of Vietnam's population. These fellows were selected to study in disciplines relevant to the development needs in Vietnam: 31% earned graduate degrees in community and rural development; 25% in education; 20% in economics, environment or public policy, and 16% in health sciences. Fellows were selected for their leadership records and commitment to their communities, as well as their academic achievements. 60% attended graduate programs in the United States; another 25% did so in the Asia Pacific region (Thailand, The Philippines, Malaysia, Australia), and 15% at universities in the United Kingdom or The Netherlands.

The 10-year IFP program provided this group of socially committed fellows with the opportunity to gain more self confidence and academic knowledge and skills to work with others in different sectors in order to improve the livelihoods of people in their local communities. Nearly 200 are now alumni that returned to their home country and remain active in building the bridges that will lead to new opportunities for others like them.

IFP alumni share a common identity as individuals who come from marginalized communities, are socially committed, want to contribute to the materialization of

social change in their communities and have been empowered by the IFP experience to do so. The relationship and bonds among the Vietnamese alumni were deepened during their journeys as IFP fellows. Therefore, it was natural for them to stay in touch, meet and create a network as a collective actor after completing their programs and returning to Vietnam. The Vietnam alumni network has an active website: <http://www.ifpvnalumni.org/>.

How it all started

In January 2005, with the support of the IFF in the post-fellowship phase, the IFP Vietnam International Partner, Center for Educational Exchange with Vietnam, (CEEVN) hosted a first meeting of the 13 alumni from the first Vietnam cohort. The purpose was for them to reconnect, discuss re-entry issues with each other, meet with mentors and discuss the purpose of the future network. The most significant benefit of the first alumni meeting was the advice they received from their mentors, all of whom had served on the IFP advisory/selection panel. These mentors were people who did graduate studies abroad, have been actively engaged in the local civil society sector, and were doing social and economic development work. Given the fields of study chosen by the fellows, these mentors were in the best position to offer valuable advice to newly returned IFP alumni.

Fellows returned to the country as agents for social change, thus the mentors advised them to be clear on their goals, but also to be humble and truthful, patient, cautious, perseverant and to turn challenges

into opportunities. They encouraged teamwork, not an I-can-do-it-all-by-myself attitude. Comparing the alumni's communities to a glass of water filled to the top, a mentor advised them not to jump back in by imposing their new ideas abruptly and expecting the community to make swift changes. This would be like throwing chunks of ice into the glass full of water, causing chaos and water to spill all over. Nor should alumni re-enter the community with exciting new ideas and attempt to test them immediately without understanding how the community changed while they were abroad and without building a network. The community may not respond well, and they could be disappointed and give up. This would be similar to a piece of chalk going into the water glass: it can cause some initial excitement and fizz in bubbles, but once the bubbles are gone the chalk becomes inactive and sinks passively to the bottom. The mentor urged the alumni to re-enter their communities as a drop of dye that quietly and very slowly dissolves itself into the water, and gradually tints the water. Then they can be true agents of social change.

The first group of 13 alumni also brainstormed on their mission statement. To do so, they asked questions such as:

- What are the most important things in life to us?
- For whose voice do we struggle and fight?
- What life values do we practice and teach our children?
- What legacy do we want to leave behind?

On 19 January 2005 the mission statement drafted by the first group of alumni read:

The IFP Vietnam alumni are committed to apply our knowledge and skills to increase access to economic and educational opportunities for people in marginalized and disadvantaged communities, and to help them mobilize local and external resources to improve their living conditions. Our work will embrace the values of accountability, philanthropy, integrity, democracy, respect for fundamental rights, networking and mutual support. We will strive to promote these values and nurture the next generation of socially committed leaders.

The Mission Statement was revised in 2009 as more alumni returned to the country. A shorter version

with more emphasis on using existing/internal assets resulted from the fact that almost all alumni attended the Assets Based Community-driven Development (ABCD) training organized every year by CEEVN. This training helped alumni understand the importance of identifying local and existing assets among themselves and the communities they are serving in order to work towards sustainable development.

The revised mission statement 2009 reads as follows: "To mobilize internal assets to create opportunities for the advancement of members of disadvantaged communities and to promote sustainable community development."

A common mindset in development work

After the first group of alumni returned to their place of work, they soon realized that to work with local communities they required specific skills in addition to a master's or doctorate degree earned through an IFP fellowship. The ABCD approach was introduced and in 2006 a core group of 7 alumni took part in a three-week training to acquire the skills and tools to implement this approach. By 2007, all alumni who had returned to Vietnam were entitled to attend this ABCD training in country. Since then, the ABCD training has become a common activity attended by most alumni, and it provides the "glue" of a common mindset. The ABCD training emphasizes two key principles when working with both individuals and communities: 1) Appreciating and mobilizing individual and community talents, skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs) and 2) Focusing on community-driven development rather than development driven by external agencies. As a result, alumni that have completed the training program are implementing this approach and are actually conducting similar workshops for local partners engaged in development work.

The ABCD mindset enabled the creation of thematic networks among IFP alumni

The ABCD approach made an impact on alumni's mindset as it urged them to constantly identify their assets in order to mobilize the expertise of group members toward common goals. Every time they meet, alumni identify both individual and collective assets. This practice helped alumni from different cohorts to become aware of the existing assets within the group and led them to create eight thematic networks: a)

environmental protection; b) applying information technology to learning and teaching approaches in education; c) community health; d) disabilities and policy issues; community development; e) art and culture; f) information & technology; and g) professional consulting.

The members of the thematic networks meet at every annual alumni meeting and prepare action plans for the year to come. Activities vary, but always involve: 1) at least three alumni members who work together to plan the activity and volunteer their time; 2) showing clearly who would benefit from the activities; 3) working with a local partner organization or local community group that sponsors the event and helps defray local costs, such as meeting facilities, lodging for participants; and 4) the support from IFF for the post-fellowship phase as only a small contribution to help pay for the participants' travel expenses.

For example, alumni of the environment network worked with the Department of Science, Technology and the Environment in Thua Thien Hue province to conduct a workshop for local community development workers to raise local awareness of the possible impact of climate change in the area. The province sponsored the event, invited relevant speakers, pro-

vided the meeting facilities and equipment, while the alumni were responsible for selecting participants, organizing the meetings, making their own presentations, and also taking care of logistics. Another example: three alumni of the education group gave training on the use of information technology for teaching and learning purposes to high-school teachers at community colleges in three provincial locations. The local colleges provided venues, materials, equipment required for the training as well as accommodation for the alumni and participants. The post-fellowship fund was used to cover the participants' travel expenses. Members of thematic networks also take the initiative to meet on their own or call on each other for expertise without having to involve the larger alumni group.

Where does motivation come from?

The motivation of the Vietnam alumni to continue serving their communities does not stem from being grateful to the program or feeling obligated to pay back. Their inspiration stems rather from a strong conviction of "paying forward." They believe that others built the bridges for them to reach their dreams and now they can build bridges for others in marginalized communities and help them reach their own goals in life.



Professor and mentor Vo Tong Xuan discussing with Alumni from the first cohort at Giang University, Vietnam, January 2005.

From the moment they applied for a fellowship and were called for interviews and orientation workshops, IFP fellows clearly understood that the IFP program is not about fellows themselves. They knew IFP was not looking for superstars, but for members of marginalized communities who were committed and had the potential to act as social change agents capable of bringing social justice to their communities. Alumni also often feel inspired and re-energized when they get together, put their collective expertise into practice and carry out community projects.

As a collective actor with a common identity and goals, the alumni have contributed money to various joint efforts: to a scholarships support fund for members of disadvantaged groups; to disaster recovery activities in the country; to a fund that covers the expenses of welcoming newly-returned alumni; and to celebrations of weddings, birth of children, or expressions of sympathy in difficult times for alumni and their families.

The Vietnam alumni at one point did consider establishing themselves as an independent non-governmental organization to increase their visibility and eligibility as a group of professionals able to offer collective expertise to local communities. NGO status, however, would require them to have a physical office, a director and staff, a bank account with funding, an

accountant, and the obligation to submit activity reports to the government twice a year; so they decided not to pursue this option. They opted to organize themselves in thematic networks and each network appointed a leader; they appointed a contact person for each of the three regions in the country; and one person to manage the alumni website. When there is an upcoming event, they appoint the members of an event-specific task force to work on the organization.

Legacy building

The Vietnamese alumni realize that IFP is coming to an end, but they see themselves as continuing a living legacy. One can assess the impact of IFP only through the work that alumni are and will be doing in the years to come to bring social change to their communities. For the time being, they have decided to work on two projects to keep the IFP legacy alive:

1. Continue to write alumni stories around the theme of *Origins, Journeys and Returns*. These stories portray individuals as members of marginalized groups who have overcome obstacles in their lives and seen social injustice at work in their communities. They consider IFP as a milestone and a program that empowered them with more



IFP Vietnam Alumni Meeting, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, November 2010.

knowledge and skills, and further structured their social engagement. They have returned to continue serving their communities, now better equipped to struggle and advocate for the cause of disadvantaged groups in today's Vietnam. These stories allow the public to envision alternative role models of leadership for social justice, in contrast to the traditional and often not so positive political leadership model seen in the country. These stories are not conceived to publicize the "success" of the alumni, but to communicate the hope and aspirations of each one of them, the milestones that shaped their professional decisions, the people and causes they advocate, and the message they want the readers to embrace so that they too become inspired and join in the continuing efforts.

2. In keeping with the "paying forward" motto and the mission to build bridges and opportunities for other members of marginalized communities, the alumni believe that with the many international scholarship programs available in Vietnam today, they can support members of marginalized communities (the IFP target population) to acquire the necessary English language skills and meet the requirements to compete in these programs. Alumni knew that English language proficiency was the biggest obstacle preventing them from competing for any scholarship, including IFP, and

pursuing their dreams of achieving higher education. In June 2010, the alumni and IFP Selection Committee members contributed money to a seed fund aimed at the establishment of the IFP Vietnam Alumni Scholarships Support Fund (IVASF). They created a committee to make the program operative. In September 2011, IVASF provided 25 scholarship awards to individuals of marginalized groups to take intensive English lessons for five months. While studying English, these 25 individuals will receive guidance and mentoring from the alumni on how to apply to available international scholarship programs targeted to marginalized groups.

Vietnamese alumni do not have problems finding a job when they return. While some of them go back to government jobs, others join international and local NGOs, or even create their own organizations. As for their efforts to sustain the alumni network, each member is asked to contribute US\$15 per year. With this fund and a committee with annual rotation membership, the alumni remain self-sufficient.

IFP gave them international education and experience and a network of professional colleagues around the country and the world. With these assets and their own convictions and dreams, the Vietnam alumni seem to be able to make social change happen wherever they go, both as individuals and as a collective actor, both in the public and the private sector.

IFP MEXICO NEWSFLASH

ALUMNI TAKE A COURSE ON PARTICIPATIVE METHODOLOGY

IFP Mexican alumni Carmen Osorio, Cleotilde Hernández, Salvador Castillo and Elías Pérez took a course on *Participative Methodology* conducted by SARAR Transformación S. C. (www.sarar-t.org) on 8-12 August. The objective of the course was to provide participants with tools and knowledge to make diagnoses and design participative planning social projects. The SARAR methodology promotes a dynamic and interactive learning process, and encourages a proactive and creative spirit, as well as the development of awareness of the existing skills and knowledge within a given community. The costs related to the alumni participation were defrayed through the funding available at the post-fellowship IFP subprogram in Mexico.

COMMUNITY RADIO WORKSHOP

Last September a *Workshop on Community Radio* was organized by the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico and conducted by delegates of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters in Mexico (AMARC, <http://www.amarcMexico.org>). The list of participants included alumni Carlos Castro, Zaira Hipólito, Miriam Uitz, Apolinar González, Rafael Cardoso and Abel Bruno, fellow Víctor Sabino Martínez and colleagues from the Audio-visual and Linguistics Labs at CIESAS. The workshop covered background theory and practical tools to understand how community radio broadcasters operate in Mexico. It was held at CIESAS facilities in Mexico City and was divided in two 18-hour modules. At the end of the workshop, the IFP Coordinating Office in Mexico proposed the participants—all active in community radio



Mexican Alumni at the Community Radio Workshop, Mexico City, Mexico, October 2011.



activities in different states of the country— an initiative to design and jointly implement a broadcasting project to disseminate the alumni diagnoses and suggested actions to address the social issues affecting their communities of origin, issues they have recently researched in the context of their graduate study programs. The group agreed to meet again in early 2012 to follow up on this initiative.

SPOTS TO DISSEMINATE THE OPINIONS OF ALUMNI ON CURRENT SOCIAL ISSUES

The first audiovisual spot produced by the IFP in Mexico to disseminate the opinions of alumni on current events and issues of general interest in Mexico is available on the Internet see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rj3JVjlpEF0> It addresses the topic of labor rights and the potential effects of a bill to amend the Federal Labor Law, currently under discussion at the House of Representatives. For this spot an interview was held with Margarita López Basilio, alumna from cohort 2001 and a Zapotec distinguished lawyer devoted to human rights promotion and advocacy, particularly in the Tehuantepec Isthmus area in Oaxaca. The production of the spot was possible by the support efforts of the CIESAS Audiovisual Lab team, led by Ricardo Pérez Monfort. Two additional spots will be produced in 2012, but the topics are yet to be defined.

Producing these audiovisual materials for the Internet is part of the strategy to promote the IFP in Mexico with a view to strengthen the visibility and social standing of alumni. It also aims at combating racist stereotypes deeply grounded in Mexican society, where indigenous people, including those with a degree under their belt, are hardly seen as social actors with informed opinions and useful analyses to address the problems that affect the country.

SUPPORT GRANTED THROUGH FAC

The Complementary Support Fund for IFP Mexican Alumni Visibility and Training (FAC) was established in early 2011. FAC provides financial support to alumni interested in attending relevant fora where they may present the findings of their research and professional projects. It also supports their participation in courses, workshops or diploma courses to hone their knowledge and skills directly related to their professional performance.

In the second half of 2011, eight alumni requested support through this fund. Six of them were guest speakers at expert fora: Celestino Sandoval presented the conclusions of his M.A. dissertation to the meeting *Indigenous Youth and the Environment* held in Michoacán (July); Albert Chan addressed several aspects of migrating agriculture in Kalakmul, Campeche, in the context of the *IV World Congress on Ecologic Restoration* in Merida (August); Leticia Aparicio attended the *International Congress on Social Work and Transdisciplinarity in the 21st Century* in Chihuahua (November), where she delivered a presentation based on her experience in dealing with social problems while putting together an international working team; María Félix Quezada presented the progress in her doctoral research on *Ethnicity, Race, Indigenous People, 2011* in San Diego, California (November), and Cleotilde Hernández presented a paper on the environmental history of the Mezquital Valley in Hidalgo during the *VI International Congress on Ecological Land Use* held in Ensenada, Baja California Norte (November).

Additionally, Genaro Lemus attended the course “How to Submit Successful Proposals” conducted by PROCURA in Mexico City on 26-28 July. José Cob used the complementary financial support of FAC to attend a course on “Laboratory Management” organized by ECOSUR in Chetumal, Quintana Roo on November 2011.



ALUMNI NEWS

INDIA



Meenu Bhambhani, alumna from the first cohort in 2001, completed an MA in Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois, Chicago, U.S. Meenu was one of the winners at the Eleventh Shell Helen Keller Award ceremony sponsored by India's National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People. She was recognised in the individual category as a Role Model for Persons with Disabilities, for her promotion of employment for disabled people. More recently Meenu won an Award from the President of India on December 3rd, 2010 (World Disability Day) in the category of Award for Best Individual and Institution working for the cause of Persons with Disabilities. She heads global corporate social responsibility and diversity at Mphasis in Bangalore.



Bharat Choudhary, alumnus from the seventh cohort in 2007, completed an MA in Photojournalism at Missouri University, Missouri, U.S. Bharat has been honoured by the Open Society Foundation (OSF) which has included his current project (Muslim Experience in the United States and Western

Europe) in its *Moving Walls 19* group exhibition. The images will be on exhibition for a period of 18 months; nine months in New York and another nine months in Washington D.C. He also received a travel grant to attend the exhibition opening on November 30, 2011, in New York. Participating photographers visit New York for a week. OSF is organizing meetings with photo-book publishers and editors from *TIME*, *News-*

week and *The New York Times*, to help the selected photographers to get more visibility and attention. See <http://www.soros.org/initiatives/photography/news/moving-walls-19-20110712>. Bharat also won 2010's Alexia Foundation for World Peace grant competition. This is a prestigious grant awarded each year to a professional photographer. He received \$15,000 to complete his project on young Muslims, *The Silence of 'Others'*. See <http://www.alexiafoundation.org/news/23/>.

MEXICO



Genoveva Santiago, alumna from the 2008 cohort. In 2010, she completed an MA in Intercultural Bilingual Education at the Universidad Mayor de San Simón, Bolivia. Her MA dissertation was recently published by the National Congress for Indigenous and Intercultural Education. The book titled

Tejiendo Jnom se tejen conocimientos. El conocimiento del tejido en la educación Ñomndaa: (Weaving Jnom, Weaving Knowledge. The Knowledge of Weaving in Ñomndaa Education), is an extended version of Genoveva's analysis of her community in relation to the learning process that takes place through the weaving of print clothing as a means to communicate intergenerational knowledge and create cultural bonds between mothers and daughters.

Since August 2011 Genoveva is the state officer for Ñomndaa language (Amuzgo) at the Department for Indigenous Education at the Ministry of Public Education in Guerrero, where she manages projects for the standardization of the grammar of this indigenous language into the education system at the state level, and designs teaching materials to promote the knowledge and dissemination of Amuzgo grammar. She is also a professor at the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional in Ometepec, where she teaches courses on culture and education.



Rodrigo Pérez, alumnus from the 2004 cohort. In 2007 he completed an MA in Eco-efficient Energy and Renewable Energies at the Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain. Last October he was recognized with the “Future Mind” award from *Mentes Quo* – Discovery Channel 2011, an annual honor to

recognize those whose ideas and creations contribute to positive transformation in Mexico.

Rodrigo translated the *Mozilla* web browser to the Zapotec variant from the south-central mountains in Oaxaca. The project was designed as a means to facilitate the use of digital tools among indigenous peoples and to highlight the importance of developing applications in indigenous languages and prove their liveliness and vitality. The next step will be the Zapotec translation of *Firefox* in cooperation with the Mozilla Foundation. Additionally, the graphic design of freeware for children will be adapted to the indigenous cultural context with community illustrations. Rodrigo currently works at the coordinating unit of the “Biodiversity in Certified Production and Markets Forests” project implemented by the National Forest Commission (Conafor) with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Rainforest Alliance.

UGANDA



Royce Androa, alumna from the fifth cohort in 2005, graduated in 2009 from the University of California, Davis, U.S. with a master’s degree in International Agricultural Development. Today she is helping to introduce groundbreaking technology to Ugandan farmers, especially women.

Royce was a contributing author to this year’s edition of the *State of the World 2011*. She co-authored a chap-

ter in the Worldwatch Institute’s widely-read annual publication. The 2011 edition of the book is called “Innovations that Nourish the Planet”, and the chapter she co-wrote, titled “Harnessing the Knowledge and Skills of Women Farmers”, focuses on innovations that improve gender equity. At the moment, she is constructing a store from local materials (using bricks, grass thatch, and chicken feathers as insulation) with solar energy (solar panels, inverter, air conditioner and deep cycle batteries) to cool the space to 15 degrees centigrade, so that the shelf life of local vegetables are prolonged by 5-7 days. This technology will save post-harvest losses and waste by 50 to 70 percent. Meanwhile, her network of friends from the Rotary Clubs in California have supported her activities by donating 10 treadle irrigation pumps that will benefit 10 women’s groups this year. The women will now be able to grow vegetables like tomatoes, cabbage, onions, eggplant and other local varieties during the dry season, something which has not been possible until now because of seasonal climate conditions. The irrigation pump is expected to help boost their vegetable production, family consumption, and income from sales.

James Kityo, alumnus from fourth cohort in 2004, is an experienced public health policy manager and consultant graduate in 2007 from the University of Leeds, U.K. Last year, the Philips Company invited individuals, community or non-governmental organizations, and businesses to submit proposals for “simple solutions” that improve people’s health and well being in a city. Kampala public health initiative, *Shade Stands*, was one of over 450 ideas submitted from 29 countries around the world. It was selected by the Philips Company as a finalist for the 2011 Philips Livable City Award, which the company describes as “a global initiative designed to generate practical, achievable ideas.” James Kityo’s project to create a network of shelters and educate people about health issues in Kampala won him an award of 25,000 Euros at the Philips Livable cities award ceremony in Amsterdam. James’ idea is to create 45 *Shade Stands* at key transit points in Kampala consisting of purposely built shade, to offer shade and greenery in the dusty streets. The shades would also



James Kityo (middle) receiving the Philip Livable City Award in Amsterdam, 2010.

provide critically needed venues for public health education to raise awareness of issues such as the benefits of breast feeding in addressing malnutrition and cervical cancer screening for young women. *Shade Stands* will offer vital protection, amenities and educational resources to improve the health and well-being of many commuters, but particularly for the elderly, vulnerable and mothers with babies.

VIETNAM

Tran Thanh, Trinh Bich y Le Quynh, alumni from 2004, 2006 and 2003 cohorts respectively, have been working on physical disability issues and policy, put great effort in promoting the use of White Canes¹ and calling on the public to yield right-of-way to persons who walk with *white canes*. On October 15, 2011, this alumni group collaborated with local media, donors, and 50 visually impaired persons to launch the first International White Canes Day event in Vietnam in the streets of Ho Chi Minh City. October 15 has been known internationally as White Canes Day. For Vietnam, it was the late low vision alumnus Le Dan Bach Viet (died of cancer in 2010) who adamantly promoted the White Canes movement after he had witnessed the tragic death of one of his blind students who walked without a cane and was hit by a truck. For this occasion, the Vietnam alumni group also designed a T-shirt with two specific

messages on front and back: 1) to people who are visually impaired: “White Canes = independence and safety” and 2) to the public: “Yield for a person with a white cane”. The first sale of these shirts brought in enough money for the group to purchase 100 white canes to distribute to visually impaired persons who cannot afford to buy them. The group also provides instructions on how to use the canes to those who need assistance.



T-shirt designed by vietnamesse alumni to promote the White Canes Day

¹ The White Cane identifies the blind and visually impaired and allows them to move autonomously.



First International White Cane Day in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, October 2011.

Alumni contributed funds to continue IFP legacy in Vietnam. At the October 2011 IFP annual meeting attended by 70 alumni, the group contributed about US\$7,800 for the IFP Vietnam Scholarship Support Fund (IVASF). The Fund will provide full scholarships to enable members of disadvantaged communities to study intensive Eng-

lish for 5 months to enhance their language competence and compete for international scholarships for graduate study. This Fund was established in June 2010 to continue the IFP legacy in Vietnam. To date, it has raised more than US\$18,000.



IFP logo mosaic using seven varieties of rice seeds made by disabled persons whom alumna Vu Thi Kim Huong works with, Vietnam 2011.

KNOWLEDGEABLE AND ACTIVE

THESIS AND DISSERTATIONS SUBMITTED BY MEXICAN ALUMNI WHOSE FELLOWSHIPS ENDED IN THE SECOND HALF OF 2011

Abad Santos, Ulices

Academic degree: Master's
University: Universidad Iberoamericana, León
Country: Mexico
Field of research: Constitutional Law and Amparo
Fellowship ended in: July 2011
Thesis title: *Iniciativa de decreto mediante la cual se reforman y adicionan diversos artículos de la Constitución Política del Estado Libre y Soberano de Michoacán de Ocampo, en materia de derechos y cultura indígena, presentada por el C. Gobernador Constitucional del estado de Michoacán, Mtro. Leonel Godoy Rangel, en febrero del 2010* (Bill to Amend and Add Certain Articles to the Political Constitution of the Free and Sovereign State of Michoacan de Ocampo on Indigenous Rights and Culture, Introduced by the Constitutional Governor of Michoacan, Leonel Godoy Rangel, M.A., in February 2010)

Aparicio Soriano, Leticia

Academic degree: Master's
University: University of Texas, Austin
Country: United States
Field of research: Latin American Studies
Fellowship ended in: August 2011
Thesis title: *Por el derecho al agua limpia en San Francisco Attepexi: la perspectiva de la "Sociedad de Aguas La Guadalupana"* (Advocating for the Right to Clean Water in San Francisco Attepexi: the Perspective of "Sociedad de Aguas La Guadalupana")

Castillo Cruz, Eduardo

Academic degree: Master's
University: Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City
Country: Mexico
Field of research: Human Rights
Fellowship ended in: August 2011
Thesis title: *La justicia comunitaria en la sierra Norte de Oaxaca* (Community Justice in the Northern Mountains in Oaxaca)

Trinidad León, Fidel

Academic degree: Master's
University: Universidad Iberoamericana, León
Country: Mexico
Field of research: Constitutional Law and Amparo
Fellowship ended in: July 2011
Thesis title: *El derecho a la autonomía y libre determinación en el sistema de justicia comunitaria en estado de Guerrero* (The Right to Autonomy and Self-Determination in the Community Justice System in Guerrero)

Palacios García, Misael

Academic degree: Master's
University: Universidad de Barcelona
Country: Spain
Field of research: Women's Studies, Gender and Citizenship
Fellowship ended in: October 2011
Thesis title: *Violencia machista contra las mujeres: aportaciones del feminismo* (Gender Violence against Women: Insights from Feminism)

Moreno Díaz, José Alfredo

Academic degree: Master's
University: Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente
Country: Mexico
Field of research: Global Marketing
Fellowship ended in: August 2011
Thesis title: *Cardamomo orgánico: una alternativa de producción y comercialización para una organización cafetalera de Chiapas* (Organic Cardamom: Alternative Production and Trade for a Coffee-Growing Organization in Chiapas)

Jiménez Méndez, Jaime César

Academic degree: Master's
University: Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City
Country: Mexico
Field of research: Human Rights
Fellowship ended in: August 2011

Thesis title: *Estándares internacionales del debido proceso en el sistema interamericano aplicados en las sentencias de la Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación en el caso Acteal* (International Standards for Due Process in the Inter-American System Applied to the National Supreme Court Sentences in the Acteal Case)

Gracida Martínez, Gloria

Academic degree: Master's

University: Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico City

Country: Mexico

Field of research: Research and Development in Education

Fellowship ended in: August 2011

Thesis title: *Relatos de vida, la resiliencia en las trayectorias escolares: voces de estudiantes indígenas* (Life Stories, Resilience and School Records: the Voices of Indigenous Students)

Felipe Carrasco, Aquiles

Academic degree: Master's

University: Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Penales

Country: Mexico

Field of research: Criminal Law

Fellowship ended in: August 2011

Degree obtained by grade point average option

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE OF *AQUÍ ESTAMOS*

Dassin, Joan is the Executive Director of the International Fellowships Fund, Inc., established in 2001 to implement and oversee the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP). Since that time, Dr. Dassin has led the IFP, which has supported more than 4,300 social justice leaders from Asia, Russia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America to obtain graduate and post-graduate degrees. In 2011, she received the Marita Houlihan Prize for Distinguished Contributions to the Field of International Education, awarded by NAFSA (Association of International Educators), the world's largest professional association dedicated to international education. Joan Dassin was Representative for the Ford Foundation Office in Brazil from 1989 to 1992 and served as the Foundation's Regional Director for Latin America from 1992 to 1996. She has also worked as an independent consultant on international education projects based in Washington, D.C., and served as Basic Education Adviser to the Latin American and Caribbean Bureau of USAID in Washington, D.C.

Kaheru, Stephen is the Director of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program at the Association for the Advancement of Higher Education and Development (AHEAD), Kampala, Uganda. A former program officer at Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), Uganda, he has been involved with implementing education and capacity building programs since 2000 in Uganda and Kenya. His involvement has extended from formulating project concepts, sourcing funding and providing strategic and on-going managerial support. With over 10 years experience in social development work, he has engaged extensively with development issues in East Africa having worked in the non-profit sector in Kenya and Tanzania. He is a Board member of VSO Jitolee, an international development organization that works through volunteers to fight poverty in developing countries.

Kauffman, Minh has been directing educational exchange programs for Vietnam since 1988. She established the Center for Educational Exchange with Vietnam (CEEVN) office in Bangkok, Thailand in 1988, and relocated it to Hanoi during 1994 prior to the ending of the United States economic embargo on Vietnam. From 1992 to 2000 the Center worked with the Harvard Institute of International Development (HIID) to introduce the competition by merit concept and conducted nation-wide open recruitment in Vietnam to select awardees for the Fulbright Exchange Program. From 1976 to 1985 she worked in the development field in Guatemala, India and Cambodia under the Mennonite Central Committee, a North American non-governmental organization. Since 2001, Minh Kauffman has directed the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program in Vietnam.

Mansukhani, Vivek is the Director of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program in New Delhi, India. In this capacity, he has managed a program of fellowships for socially and economically underprivileged candidates who have demonstrated social commitment, academic viability and social justice leadership skills. Vivek worked previously with the British Council in Calcutta and New Delhi, and one of his main responsibilities was the management of a large portfolio of both scholarships programs and alumni networks. In addition to two decades of work experience in the development and education management sector, he is keenly interested in the performing arts and heads an English language theatre company in New Delhi where he acts, writes and directs.

Navarrete, David is the Director of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program in Mexico since 2001. He is also a research professor at the Center for Research and Higher Education in Social Anthropology (CIESAS) and a member of the National Researchers

System. One of his current research projects studies the profile and educational pathways of indigenous graduates and postgraduates, and addresses the different actions and public policies that should be implemented in Mexico to effectively widen the access, continuity and successful completion of higher education programs for marginalized indigenous men and women. He is the editor of the journal *Aquí Estamos* (www.ciesas.edu.mx/ciesas-ford/Revistas.htm). He has participated in different national and international forums as a guest speaker and lecturer on higher education in Mexico and Latin America, and has organized numerous seminars and workshops on education and new indigenous leadership.

Omara, Andrew is an expert in program and scholarships management. He is the Program Manager for the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program at the Association for the Advancement of Higher Education and Development (AHEAD) in Uganda, where he is tasked with conceiving strategies for outreach and recruitment of fellows, selection, design and facilitation of pre-academic training workshops, educational advising, university placement and backstopping the alumni association. He is also involved in grant management and strategic planning. Prior to this, he worked at the Inter University Council for East Africa, a regional organization formed by the governments of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania to facilitate contact between Universities of East Africa, providing a forum on a range of academic and higher education issues and help maintain high and comparable academic standards.





FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

IFP-MEXICO ALUMNI DIRECTORY

**Alumni who finished studies between 2003
and the second semester of 2011**

NAME	COHORT	END OF STUDIES	ETHNIC GROUP	STATE OF BIRTH	DEGREE	FIELDS OF STUDY
Abad Santos Ulises	2009	2011	Purépecha	Michoacán	MA	Constitutional Law
Aguilar Benítez Gisela	2006	2010	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Botany
Aguilar López Javier	2001	2004	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Agrarian Economy
Alonso Sebastián Ma. de los Á.	2003	2006	Purépecha	Michoacán	MA	Human Rights
Andrés Antonio Graciela	2003	2006	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Telecommunications
Aparicio Soriano Leticia	2009	2011	Náhuatl	Puebla	MA	Latin American Studies
Ascencio Rojas Lidia	2005	2007	Náhuatl	Puebla	MA	Tropical Agroforestry
Avella Cruz Marcela	2002	2005	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Rural Development
Ballinas Méndez Ma. Elena	2005	2008	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Educational Sciences
Bautista Ara Sebastiana	2001	2004	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Development of Basic Education
Bautista García Armando Vicente	2006	2009	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Comparative Literature: Literary and Cultural Studies
Bautista Pérez Judith	2004	2007	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Sociology
Bernardo Santos Roselia	2008	2011	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Cultural Management
Bolom Pérez Magnolia	2005	2008	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Educational Research
Bolom Ton Fausto	2006	2011	Tsotsil	Chiapas	PhD	Education for Development and Conservation
Bruno Arriaga Abel	2004	2007	Tlapaneco	Guerrero	MA	Contemporary Political Process
Cardoso Jiménez Rafael	2005	2008	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Educational Research
Castillo Cruz Eduardo	2009	2011	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Human Rights
Castillo Zeno Salvador	2003	2006	Náhuatl	Oaxaca	MA	Natural Resource Management
Castro Villafañe Carlos	2005	2007	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Social Communication
Cathi Zongua Noé	2005	2007	Hñahñu	Hidalgo	MA	Oral Public Health
Ceballos Hernández Elena	2004	2007	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Mental Health and Psychotherapeutic Techniques
Ceja García Alejandro	2006	2009	Purépecha	Michoacán	MA	Neurosciences
Cetz Iuit Jorge	2003	2006	Maya	Yucatán	MA	Agricultural Economics
Chan Dzul Albert Maurilio	2006	2010	Maya	Yucatán	MA	Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity
Chávez Bardales Nayeli	2008	2011	Otomí	D.F.	MA	Community Psychology
Chi Canul Hilario	2008	2010	Maya	Quintana Roo	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Citlaha Apale Eleuterio	2003	2006	Náhuatl	Veracruz	MA	Strategies for Agricultural Development
Cob Uicab José Vidal	2005	2009	Maya	Yucatán	PhD	Forestry
Cruz Altamirano Lilia	2005	2009	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Geography
Cruz Santes Nancy Vanessa	2004	2006	Totonaco	Veracruz	MA	Business Administration
Cruz Velazquez Lucila Bettina	2002	2007	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Territorial Planning and Regional Development
De la Cruz Cortés Armando	2008	2011	Náhuatl	Oaxaca	MA	Policy, Management and Environmental Law
De Leon Santiago Yolanda	2003	2006	Hñahñu	Querétaro	MA	Development of Basic Education
Díaz Cervantes Rufino	2004	2008	Pame	San Luis Potosí	PhD	Migration and conflicts in global society
Dionisio Romualdo Rosa	2008	2010	Mazahua	Edo. de Méx	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Domínguez Medel Justiniano	2001	2005	Popoloca	Puebla	MA	Visual Arts
Ek Dzib José Virgilio	2001	2004	Maya	Yucatán	MA	Rural Development
Ek Flores Antonio	2004	2006	Maya	Campeche	MA	Business Administration
Felipe Carrasco Aquiles	2009	2011	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Criminal Law
Felipe Cruz Celerino	2001	2003	Purépecha	Michoacán	MA	Fundamental Rights
Fernández González Eloy	2005	2009	Triqui	Oaxaca	MA	Integrated Watershed Management
Francisco Illescas Xochilt	2005	2007	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Intensive Agriculture

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Gallardo Vázquez Serafina	2003	2005	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Local Economic Development
Gamboa Leon Miriam Rubí	2001	2005	Maya	Yucatán	PhD	Pharmacology
García Hernández Salomón	2005	2007	Mixteco	Morelos	MA	Public Policy
García Leyva Jaime	2006	2010	Mixteco	Guerrero	PhD	Social & Cultural Anthropology
García Nambo Benito	2003	2006	Totonaco	Michoacán	MA	Environmental Regional Studies
Garzón López Pedro	2002	2004	Chinanteco	Oaxaca	MA	Fundamental Rights
Girón López Antonio	2002	2005	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Didactics and Organization of Educational Institutions
Gómez Gómez Víctor Hugo	2004	2007	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Development of Basic Education
Gómez Gutiérrez Rosalba	2004	2007	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Constitutional Law
Gómez Lara Horacio	2002	2005	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Culture and Identity in Contemporary Societies
Gómez Moreno Lucía	2001	2004	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Development of Basic Education
Gómez Santiago Santos	2001	2005	Totonaco	Veracruz	MA	Project Development
Gómez Solano Mario	2003	2006	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Law
Gómez Velasco Anaximandro	2003	2007	Tzeltal	Chiapas	PhD	Molecular Biology
González Gómez Apolinar	2005	2008	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Enterprise Systems Engineering
González Juárez Melquisedec	2002	2006	Náhuatl	Oaxaca	PhD	Anthropology
González Zárate Mequeas	2006	2009	Chontal	Oaxaca	MA	Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity
Gracida Martínez Gloria	2009	2011	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Research and Development of Education
Gutiérrez Morales Salomé	2001	2005	Popoluca	Veracruz	PhD	Linguistics
Hernández Carreón Nadia	2005	2006	Náhuatl	Puebla	MA	Business Administration
Hernández Hernández José	2003	2006	Náhuatl	Veracruz	MA	Fundamental Rights
Hernández López Israel	2005	2008	Chinanteco	Oaxaca	MA	Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity
Hernández López Pedro	2005	2008	Chinanteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Linguistics
Hernández Martínez Floriana	2008	2011	Chinanteco	Oaxaca	MA	Integrated Watershed Management
Hernández Mendoza Fidel	2005	2008	Triqui	Oaxaca	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Hernández Robles Faustino	2008	2010	Huichol	Jalisco	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Hernández Sosa Melina	2005	2007	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Environmental Development
Hernández Suárez Cleotilde	2002	2006	Hñahñu	Hidalgo	PhD	Social Sciences
Hipólito López Zaira Alhelí	2006	2009	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Community Psychology
Jiménez Díaz Natalia	2008	2011	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Community Psychology
Jiménez Méndez Jaime César	2009	2011	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Human Rights
Jiménez Valenzuela Isidro	2002	2005	Mayo	Sinaloa	MA	Agricultural Sciences
Juan Carlos Irma	2002	2006	Chinanteco	Oaxaca	MA	Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity
Juárez García Martha	2004	2007	Zoque	Chiapas	MA	Child and Adolescent Psychopathology (clinical)
Juárez López Claudia Roxana	2005	2008	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Science in Sustainable Development
Juárez López Sergio Fernando	2008	2011	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Business Administration
Julián Santiago Flor	2003	2006	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Public Health
Lemus de Jesús Genaro	2004	2008	Náhuatl	Puebla	MA	Tropical Agroforestry
Lemus Jiménez Alicia	2003	2006	Purépecha	Michoacán	MA	History
Llanes Ortiz Genner	2001	2003	Maya	Yucatán	MA	Anthropology of Development
Loera Palma Marco Antonio	2001	2004	Tarahumara	Chihuahua	MA	Education Centers Management
López Bárcenas Francisco J.	2001	2004	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Rural Development
López Basilio Margarita	2001	2003	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Fundamental Rights

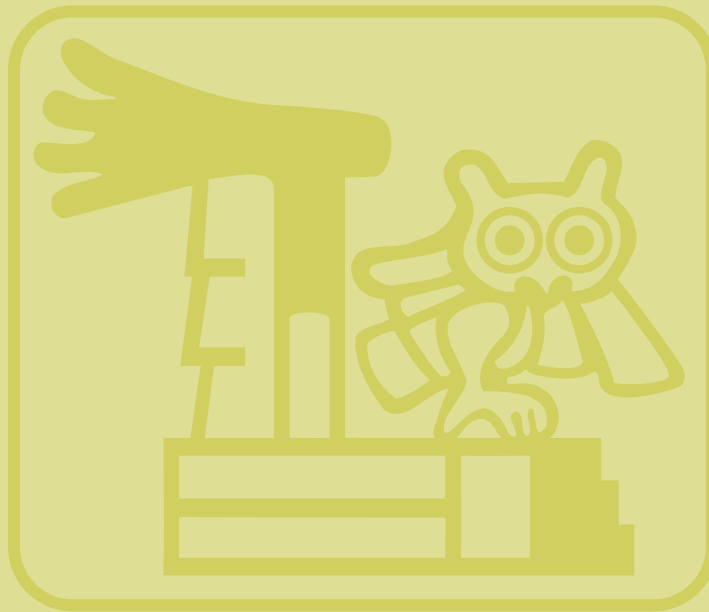
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López Cruz Josafat	2004	2007	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Sociology
López Encinos José Luis	2005	2008	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Clinical Neuropsychology
López Hernández Celsa	2005	2007	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Rural Development
López Jiménez Patricia	2008	2011	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Community Psychology
Manuel Rosas Irma	2001	2004	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Rural Development
Manzano Méndez Filemón	2004	2008	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Forestry
Martínez Bautista Isaías	2005	2008	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Science in Sustainable Development
Martínez Cruz Sixto	2004	2007	Náhuatl	Puebla	MA	Diversity and Change in Education: Policies and Practices
Martínez Jiménez Florinda	2006	2010	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Martínez Juárez Sabino	2008	2011	Popoloca	Puebla	MA	Urban Projects
Martínez Velázquez Xitlali	2005	2008	Purépecha	Michoacán	MA	Public Health
May Chable Cecilio	2001	2004	Maya	Yucatán	MA	Agricultural Sciences
Méndez Espinosa Oscar	2005	2009	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Linguistics
Méndez Ton Roberto Crisóforo	2006	2009	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Research and Development of Education
Méndez Torres Georgina	2001	2004	Chol	Chiapas	MA	Gender Studies
Mendieta Ramírez Araceli	2006	2010	Otomí	Morelos	PhD	Analysis and Evaluation of Social and Political Processes
Mendoza Díaz María Magdalena	2006	2009	Otomí	Hidalgo	MA	Integrated Watershed Management
Mendoza García Víctor Manuel	2005	2008	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Sociology of Rural Development
Miranda Ramos Saúl	2008	2011	Náhuatl	D.F.	MA	Community Psychology
Montejo López Bernabé	2001	2004	Chol	Chiapas	MA	Terminology and Lexicography
Morales Ramírez Ignacia	2002	2005	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Food Sciences
Moreno Cruz Rodolfo	2003	2006	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Fundamental Rights
Moreno Díaz José Alfredo	2009	2011	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Global marketing
Muñoz Antonio Ma. del Pilar	2003	2005	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Local Economic Development
Ortega González Zósimo	2002	2005	Triqui	Oaxaca	MA	Constitutional Law
Osorio Hernández Carmen	2004	2008	Mixteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Rural Development
Osorio Irineo Raquel	2002	2006	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Development of Basic Education
Palacios García Misaël	2009	2011	Mazateco	Oaxaca	MA	Women's, Gender and Citizenship Studies
Pech Puc Ma. Cristina	2002	2006	Maya	Yucatán	PhD	Women's and Gender Studies
Peralta Ramírez Valentín	2002	2006	Náhuatl	Edo. de Méx	PhD	Linguistics
Pérez Castro Tiburcio	2003	2007	Mixteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Program Evaluation
Pérez García Oscar	2005	2008	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Tropical Agroforestry
Pérez López Sady Leyvi	2006	2009	Mam	Chiapas	MA	Education
Pérez Pérez Elías	2001	2005	Tsotsil	Chiapas	PhD	Anthropology Latin American
Pérez Ramírez Rodrigo	2004	2007	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Eco-Efficiency and Renewable Energy
Quezada Ramírez Ma. Félix	2001	2004	Hñahñu	Hidalgo	MA	Demography
Ramírez Reyes Neptalí	2006	2009	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Ethnographic Research, Anthropological Theory and Intercultural Relations
Ramírez Sánchez Martha Areli	2005	2010	Otomí	Edo. de Méx	PhD	Social Anthropology
Ramírez Santiago Rosario	2002	2006	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity
Riaño Ramírez Noel	2005	2008	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Ecosystem Restoration
Ríos Méndez Orlando	2004	2008	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Migration and Intercultural Education
Rodríguez Ortiz Lauriano	2001	2003	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Development and International Aid
Ruíz Pérez Eliseo	2005	2008	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Public Policy

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Ruiz Ruiz Ma. Elena	2005	2008	Tzeltal	Tabasco	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Sánchez Franco Irene	2005	2009	Tzeltal	Chiapas	PhD	Cultures and Identities in Contemporary Societies
Sánchez Gómez Miqueas	2005	2008	Zoque	Chiapas	MA	Language and Literature Teaching
Sandoval García Celestino	2008	2011	Mixteco	Oaxaca	MA	Integrated Watershed Management
Santiago Encarnación Genoveva	2008	2010	Amuzgo	Guerrero	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Santiago Isidro Antonino	2003	2006	Totonaco	Veracruz	MA	Rural Development
Sántis Gómez Fernando	2006	2009	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Research and Development of Education
Sántiz Gómez Roberto	2002	2005	Tzeltal	Chiapas	MA	Linguistics
Santiz Hernández Mario	2004	2007	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Psychology Intervention
Sarmiento Santiago Ascensión	2004	2007	Totonaco	Veracruz	MA	Processes of Educational Innovation
Shilon Gómez Marcos	2005	2008	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Human Rights
Sihlón Gómez Francisco	2008	2010	Tsotsil	Chiapas	MA	Bilingual Intercultural Education
Sosa Pérez Gabriel	2004	2008	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Integrated Watershed Management
Teodocio Olivares Amador	2005	2009	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Linguistics
Toledo López Arcelia	2003	2007	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	PhD	Management Philosophy
Trinidad Leon Fidel	2009	2011	Mixteco	Guerrero	MA	Constitutional Law
Tuz Chi Lázaro	2003	2008	Maya	Yucatán	PhD	Latin American History
Uitz May Miriam	2004	2007	Maya	Yucatán	MA	Audiovisual communication
Varillas López Eustacia	2005	2008	Popoluca	Puebla	MA	Research and Development of Education
Vásquez García Sócrates	2003	2006	Mixe	Oaxaca	MA	Rural Development
Vázquez Álvarez Juan	2003	2007	Chol	Chiapas	PhD	Linguistics
Vázquez García Madain	2003	2006	Zoque	Chiapas	MA	Program Evaluation
Vázquez Pérez Luciano	2005	2008	Chol	Chiapas	MA	Educational Research
Vite Aranda Susana	2006	2009	Náhuatl	Edo. de Méx	MA	Marketing
Zarate Carmona Gregorio	2003	2006	Chatino	Oaxaca	MA	Rural Development
Zárate Toledo Ezequiel	2002	2006	Zapoteco	Oaxaca	MA	Studies of Latin American Societies

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