



**Ford  
Foundation  
International  
Fellowships Program**

# INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM, PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE.

**F**ord Foundation – International Fellowships Program, Promoting Social Justice. IFP is a fellowship program uniquely designed to promote social justice, community development, and access to higher

education. It is the single largest program ever supported by the Ford Foundation - \$ 365 million over ten years. The program, launched in 2001, supports talented individuals from marginalized social groups, and encourages them to use their

leadership skills and knowledge to promote positive social change in their communities. The program offers fellowships for post-graduate study to leaders from underserved communities in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Russia. Fellows can

study in any part of the world. A survey of more than 2,000 alumni showed that 82% are currently residing in their home countries. To date, IFP Kenya has selected 109 fellows. "As the selections come to a close this year, IFP is confident that

it will leave a rich legacy through its alumni who are effective, knowledgeable, highly skilled and well meaning social justice leaders" Evelyn Anyal, IFP Kenya Program Coordinator.

## SOME OF THE IFP BENEFICIARIES

### **ALEX MAINA, MASTERS IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AND POLICY, University of Cape Town, South Africa.**

ALEX MAINA was born of a single mother and grew up in the slums of Mathare. With support from well wishers, Alex and his three sisters went through the Primary and Secondary Schooling. His upbringing in the slums gave him an early drive to make a change in his community. At Egerton University, he initiated Mathare University Students Association (MUSA) through which they volunteered to improve the slum environment, find support for boys and girls to go to school, advocate against social vices like drugs and child prostitution and provide support system to one another.

During his Masters studies, Alex took advantage of professional development program to attend an exchange program in Brussels- Belgium and Zurich-Switzerland. This exposure empowered and encouraged him. He is a strong advocate for better technologies for water and sanitation management within the informal settlements. Alex promotes effective, environmentally friendly and profitable community-based solid waste management programs. Through this, he has sensitized grassroots communities on the value of clean environment and the potential benefits of solid waste management. Mr. Maina is also involved in some key networks in the Environmental and Water and Environmental sanitation sector i.e the Kenya Water and Sanitation CSO's Network.

### **MS. CAROLINE KATHOMI MBUBA, MPH, University of Alabama at Birmingham, USA**

IFP has enabled me to grow from strength to strength by transforming my dream into reality. IFP gave me international exposure as well as quality education. It also enabled me to network with other fellows and organizations. Upon graduating, I came back to Kenya to give back to society what society had given me.

Currently, I am a research officer at the KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Program in Kilifi. Specifically, I have investigated why people with epilepsy (PWE) don't seek treatment and adhere to anti-epileptic drugs.

This has led to development of Kilifi Epilepsy Education Program (KEEP): An education intervention designed to create awareness about epilepsy among PWE and their caregivers as well as the general community.

My work involves working with underserved communities in promoting health and social justice hence the trickle down of IFP effect to the community. In addition, the solid foundation laid by IFP has enabled me to further my studies. Presently, I am pursuing PhD at Basel University, Switzerland.

### **MS. DENNITAH GHATI, MSC, Social Work and International Affairs. Columbia University, USA. Current Chair - IFP Alumni - Africa and the Middle East. Immediate former Chair of the IFP Alumni- Kenya Chapter.**

Currently, I work with the Population Council, Program Officer – Poverty, Gender and Youth program. A feminist activist, my areas of expertise include lobbying and advocacy, women's human rights, youth reproductive health, Media, development communication, and women's economic empowerment. I have worked with several women's rights organizations in Kenya and have worked in Somalia enabling the youth to access reproductive health information. I believe my groundbreaking work at the Council and in Somalia is a result of the international exposure that IFP accorded me. I learnt to think and act globally and prepared to work for social justice wherever it is needed. Through IFP, I have evolved into a responsible leader. The IFP experience has taught me one lesson: We live in a world of inequality and social injustices and unless we wake up and take responsibility for our actions, we will remain persistent beggars."

Dennitah is full of praises about the IFP program: "IFP is unique in that it finds you, invests in you, and brings out the best in you. It generally turns your life around! It focuses on marginalized and poor communities, who would otherwise not have afforded the opportunity for higher education. This is what is called real investment!"

### **FRANCIS OLE SAKUDA, MASTERS OF ARTS; International Relations; USIU-Africa**

Although I had an opportunity to study anywhere in the world, I chose to study at home to avoid detaching myself from my community whom I wanted to continue serving. Currently, I am the Director of Simba Maasai Outreach Organization SIMOO which aims at improving the living standards of poor community members among the Maasai. My Masters Degree in International Relations coupled with internship in the USA immensely strengthened my knowledge and skills in fundraising, advocacy, communications, networking and leadership which has enable me to achieve a lot in my community. I recognize IFP as the only program that is giving a chance to the marginalized upcoming leaders who will use that opportunity for the good of their society.

I travel to raise funds for community projects from different donors especially in the USA. I have been involved in many conflict resolution activities, given motivational talks in various local intuitions of learning as well as talks on indigenous people at universities in the USA. I also give consultation advice to Maasai NGOs

in Tanzania. I serve in several School PTA committees. With my community members, we have worked to improve food security, water provision, pasture for cattle, discourage FGM and early marriages, and encourage economic empowerment within our community. Please visit [www.simookkenya.org](http://www.simookkenya.org) to learn more.

### **HELEN OBANDE, MA - Women and Gender studies, San Francisco State University, USA. Currently, Chief Executive Officer of the United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK).**

Although winning the IFP scholarship was based on the recognition of social justice work I was already engaged in, the knowledge and skills gained through this scholarship makes social justice a way of life. No longer is promoting social justice a job, but a philosophy. The scholarship provides a huge opportunity of exposure and gaining knowledge and skills in best practice. I learnt that political commitment can transform legislation into action in achieving human rights.

Since – IFP scholarship is promised on Leadership and commitment, the skills and knowledge I gained has enhanced my leadership skills and made leadership easy to practice. I am currently leading two constituencies; the disability constituency and building the skills of my community constituency in Keumbu, Kisii where we have developed community plans for addressing socio-economic challenges.

### **MRS JACINTA ALUOCH ODHIAMBO OGOLLA; MA, Sustainable International Development - Brandeis University USA. Served in the International Board of Soroptmist International as the President of the Brandeis University African Forum (BUAF)**

I am sincerely indebted to Ford Foundation for giving me an opportunity to study abroad. This was an eye opener that gave me a new perspective on poverty as a challenge in the sub-Saharan Africa. I have learnt that change can be achieved through positive influence and contributions. After coming back, I went back to Booker Academy where I continue working with the girl-child and the endangered boy-child. I also work with my community in Matungu District where I volunteer my skills and knowledge on different Community development activities. I use Mobile Education for Life International (MELI), an organization I founded as the vehicle to be the change I want see in the world'.

I am invited to speak in forums on development matters. With hard work, commitment and the political will, I believe that Kenyans can break the poverty cycle. I reach-out to teachers and students on the essence of commitment to studies and embracing the spirit of volunteerism. MELI

is currently collaborating with Masinde Muliro University of Science and technology (MMUST) to achieve its mission aimed at translating theory into practice for sustainable development to address endemic poverty.

### **JANE WANJIRU MATU, MA; Sustainable Development, Program in Intercultural Service, Leadership and Management at SIT Graduate School in Vermont, USA**

As a person with disability, I consider myself blessed and privileged to have been awarded the prestigious Ford Foundation - IFP Scholarship. After coming back, I continued with teaching and also educating others on the rights of People with Disability (PWD). I have become a consultant on disability issues within my community. The problem of disability lies with the community and not necessarily with PWDs.

Society must accept disability as a normal human experience not a challenge that requires medical attention and charity to fix.

I volunteer with a local organization, St. Martin Catholic Social Apostolate in reaching PWDs in Laikipia West and parts of Nyandarua North. I am involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation of program activities. These are some of the skills I acquired from my studies.

We have seen more children with disabilities going to school, those over 18 years start small scale businesses, parents of PWDs seeking advice and networking between various stakeholders. I would encourage my fellow Persons with Disabilities, "we just need to be patient but not silent".

### **MR. EDDYSON NYALE; KILIFI DISTRICT, MA, Sustainable International Development; Brandeis University, Massachusetts, USA**

I am currently the District Commissioner, Matete District, Western Province. In my administrative career, I have served in areas with wide range of challenges including early marriages, land disputes, cattle rustling, and resource conflicts.

I have been involved in peace building and conflict resolutions as well as harnessing the available Human Capital and Social Capital to complement the Financial Capital to fight against the social injustice and resource scarcity/inequality.

The IFP Scholarship has enabled me to further my cause and passion of promoting social justice.

I acquired knowledge and skills that has enabled me to manage the scarce resources we have, education that enriches my life and welfare and still remain deeply concerned about the welfare of others.

In this decision making position, I influence policy formulation to promote social justice, sustainable development and reduce inequality in the country.

### **PAUL ONYANGO OGALO, MA - Coexistence and Conflict, Brandeis University USA**

Founder Chairman of CREATA: [www.creata.or.ke](http://www.creata.or.ke)

My heartfelt gratitude goes to Ford Foundation- IFP for granting me the scholarship to do Masters Degree. This has been a life time opportunity. It challenged me to make a meaningful contribution as a conflict transformation specialist. Since coming back, I have been engaged with other Kenyans in restoring good leadership and good governance. We can save our country from endless violence, corruption, impunity and dehumanizing poverty.

The Ford Foundation scholarship was not only an academic experience, but also an opportunity to leverage Kenya and other African countries, Africa and other continents while contemplating why Africa continues to be in endless conflicts and underdevelopment. During my academic field study in Mindanao, Philippines, I learnt how Filipinos have dealt with their land conflict dating five centuries.

I kept the promise to come back and rejoined Seeds of Peace Africa (SOPA) International as a Coordinator and also began to restructure and develop Center for Regeneration of Africa through Africa (CREATA) and use it as a means to give back to my country. CREATA is an NGO I founded in 2006 with a conviction that Africa can regenerate itself.

### **AGNES ZANI, PHD IN SOCIOLOGY - OXFORD UNIVERSITY, UK. Current Chair, IFP Kenya Alumni. Lecturer, University of Nairobi, Sociology Department.**

I thank IFP for giving me an opportunity as a woman from a marginalized community and to enable me strengthen my leadership skills, qualities and widen my knowledge. My area of great interest is women and education. I am now in the process of setting up an educational centre in Mombasa that will act as a focal point where key issues of impediment can be addressed.

I am working on a project that will focus on sensitization, awareness creation and encourage young girls within Coast province to aim to join the university.

The project will work towards identifying pilot schools, conduct talks and meetings with students, networking with other stakeholders, establishing an educational centre where relevant materials can be accessed and raising funds to support the education of the most vulnerable yet deserving cases.

This has been facilitated by a feasibility study and campaign efforts that I have undertaken in various schools at the Coast province to investigate lobby and mobilize head teachers, teachers and students to begin to systematically address these issues.