



# 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. As the single largest program ever supported by the Ford Foundation – \$ 365 million over ten years, IFP advances the Foundation's mission around the world. The program, launched in 2001, supports talented individuals from marginalized social groups, and encourages them to use their leadership skills and knowledge to work toward positive social change in their home communities and countries. The program offers fellowships for post-graduate study to leaders from underserved communities in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Russia. Fellowship recipients are exceptional individuals with demonstrated leadership qualities/potential, social commitment and academic achievement. Typically, they are men and women who have overcome obstacles such as poverty and

discrimination to gain access to higher education, and they aspire to work for social justice in their home communities upon completion of their studies.

IFP Fellows are from some of the most marginalized communities. Half are women. Over two thirds come from rural areas or small cities or towns. Over 80% are first-generation university students. They have experienced marginalization due to poverty, rural origins, gender, disability, culture amongst other factors. About 1/3 of Fellows study in the U.S. and Canada, about 1/3 in the U.K. and Europe, and about 1/3 in their home countries and regions.

One of IFP's most innovative features is its decentralized model, which balances global goals and policies with local implementation. IFP works thorough partnerships with local organizations who analyze local and regional inequalities and develop innovative recruitment and selection procedures to reach the most talented candidates from disadvantaged communities. In Kenya, IFP works through Forum for African Women Education-

alists (FAWE). The partners manage local systems for, selecting, advising, mentoring, placing, and monitoring Fellows. The IFP Secretariat, based at the International Fellowships Fund (IFF) in New York administers program resources, manages global operations, and ensures consistent application of program policies. IFP offers Fellows pre-academic training including Computer training, language testing, leadership skills building, and short-term internship as well as opportunities for networking and professional development. IFP Fellows have the opportunity to study in any part of the world. Placement assistance to competitive institutions is offered to all fellows. This "portable fellowship" is designed to promote educational mobility and the exchange of knowledge worldwide.

A big question at the outset of IFP was whether the program would inadvertently increase "brain drain". The answer is now clear: IFP fellows are committed to their home countries and communities. A survey of more than 2,000 alumni showed that 82% are currently residing in their home

countries. Says Mohammed Shally, a Kenyan IFP Alumni "part of (my) commitment is to show my community that people can go abroad, study and come back the same way they were. Because we feel whenever people go out there they get spoiled. But I just showed them that I went, I saw and I am back with enough knowledge to help them"

In addition to supporting the development of new generation of leaders, IFP is a demonstration project with the goal of changing educational policy worldwide to make advanced education more available to marginalized and disadvantaged groups. Results have shown that, 98% of IFP scholars have completed their fellowships in good academic standing.

IFP alumni worldwide are forming networks and organizations through which they strengthen their connections with one another and with their home countries and communities. Their individual projects are enriched by the group's knowledge and resources — diverse expertise, familiarity with local languages and cultures, and extended social and professional net-

works. IFP's results demonstrate that with robust academic and personal support networks, students from the world's poorest regions can perform competitively with their more privileged peers.

IFP Fellows' academic success shows that greater inclusiveness can be achieved in higher education without a loss of quality among students or for the institutions.

## IFP IN KENYA

To date, IFP Kenya has selected 109 fellows to pursue Masters and PhD degrees in various fields. 61 out of these have successfully completed their studies. Over 71% of the alumni, a few of them featured here work and reside in Kenya. Others work in other countries and a few have moved on to further their education. "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



**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 a PhD student at Basel University, Switzerland and I believe the knowledge gained will go a long way in promoting IFP goals of strengthening democratic values, reducing poverty and injustice.

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. To this I thank IFP. I recognize IFP as the only program that is giving a chance to the marginalized upcoming leaders. The program should continue be-

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 study abroad to acquire knowledge and expertise to enable me 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.

I am convinced 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 underde-



**Francis ole Sakuda, Masters of Arts; International Relations; USIU-Africa**

cause its impact goes beyond the beneficiary and reaches an entire community

Through SIMOO and on my own behalf, I travel to the USA to

raised funds from different donors in the USA. I have been involved in many conflict resolution meetings within my community.

I have given talks in various intuitions of Learning including to Maasai students at Day Star University and talks on indigenous people at Clark University in the USA amongst many. I also give consultation advice to Maasai NGOs in Tanzania who see SIMOO as the best role model for development approach. I serve in several School PTA committees on different capacities. Since I took over SIMOO I have worked with my community to address different challenges that face them.

These include food security, water provision, Agriculture, pasture, FGM, early marriages, eco-

their country but, deeply saddened by how many Africans wanted to remain in the US.

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.

At the same time I began the process of restructuring and developing 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.

For the inspiration and strength, I am grateful for my wife Lilian Apondi and my two children Karol Joan and Michalean-gelo Ogalo



**Paul Onyango Ogalo, MA - Coexistence and Conflict, Brandeis University USA  
Founder Chairman of CREATA:  
www.creato.or.ke**

velopment. I Saw the working systems, the rule of law, the resilient and commitment of Americans in building and defending



**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- working on projects that empower vulnerable adolescent girls in Kenya's urban slums. 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 also worked with several women's rights organizations in Kenya and have worked in Somalia enabling Somali 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!"