



Ford Foundation records, Developing Countries Program, Office Files of Peter F. Geithner

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator - aut:	Geithner, Peter F.
Creator:	Ford Foundation
Title:	Ford Foundation records, Developing Countries Program, Office Files of Peter F. Geithner
ID:	FA1532
Date [inclusive]:	1970-1987, bulk 1981-1987
Physical Description:	1.52 Cubic Feet 4 LTR size Hollinger boxes
Language of the Material:	English

Preferred Citation

Information regarding the Rockefeller Archive Center's preferred elements and forms of citation can be found at <https://rockarch.org/collections/access-and-request-materials/#citations>

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Biographical / Historical

The Ford Foundation was chartered by Henry and Edsel Ford in 1936 "to receive and administer funds for scientific, educational and charitable purposes, all for the public welfare", and initially served the Ford family's charitable interests in the Detroit area. Following the deaths of Edsel Ford (1943) and Henry Ford (1947), the Foundation was propelled to the forefront of philanthropy as the largest American foundation in terms of both endowment and yearly expenditures, and with an international scope to its major program areas. During the Foundation's first twenty years its major programs were in international economic development, primary and higher education, educational and public broadcasting, behavioral sciences, civil liberties, urban development, fine arts and the humanities. The Ford Foundation also partnered with the Rockefeller Foundation in supporting agricultural development in South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. Since the 1970s, the Foundation has also pioneered programs in women's rights, energy policy, micro-financing in under-developed countries, establishing human rights groups, and improving international HIV/AIDS education.

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Biographical / Historical

Peter Franz Geithner (1932-2016) worked in the field of international philanthropy for more than 40 years. Between 1968 and 1996, he provided leadership for the Ford Foundation's program activities in Asia, becoming Ford's Regional Director of Asia Programs in 1990. After serving at Ford for almost three decades, he retired from the foundation in 1996, but remained active in philanthropic organizations and research institutions for many years after that through advisory positions, consultancy appointments, and memberships on various boards and committees. Geithner was married to Deborah Moore, and together, they had four children: Timothy, Sarah, Jonathan, and David.

Raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Geithner attended Northeast High School. He graduated in 1950 and then pursued his undergraduate education at Dartmouth College. Between 1954 and 1958, he served in the U.S. Navy as a naval aviator, and he earned his master's degree from the John Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in 1959. Prior to his work at the Ford Foundation, Geithner had jobs at Columbia Carbon International in New York City between 1959 and 1962 and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Washington D.C. between 1962 and 1968.

Geithner began his career at Ford in 1968 as Assistant/Deputy Director for India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The Geithner family moved to New Delhi, India in order for him to take up the post. He held this position until 1973 when he and his family relocated to New York where he became Deputy Head, Office of Asia and Pacific. In 1976, he returned to Asia in order to serve as Ford's Representative for Southeast Asia at the Bangkok, Thailand Office. This position preceded a move back to New York in 1981 when he worked as Program Officer in Charge, Developing Countries Program. He became Ford's first representative for China in 1988 and was stationed at the foundation's new Beijing Office. He finished his career at Ford in New York as Regional Director of Asia Programs.

Following his retirement from the Ford Foundation in 1996, Geithner became Advisor to the Asia Center at Harvard University. He also worked as an advisor for the Japan Center for Global Partnership (CGP) and had a succession of consulting appointments with the Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium (APPC), Ford, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), and the China Medical Board (CMB). In addition, he served on boards and committees for organizations like the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations (NCUSCR), the Institute of Current World Affairs (ICWA), the University of Pennsylvania Center for the Advanced Study of India (CASI), and the Harvard-Yenching Institute (HYI).

Geithner continued to focus on philanthropy and research related to Asia in his post-Ford career. However, he also participated in some philanthropic work related to Africa such as when he assisted the Rockefeller Foundation's Nairobi, Kenya Office.

Geithner's work in philanthropy, international relations, and development intersected with and influenced many important historical events and movements affecting the Asia-Pacific Region such as the strengthening of diplomatic ties between the United States and countries like China and Vietnam,

the international response to China following the June Fourth Incident at Tiananmen Square, China's economic development and growing place in world politics, the transfer of Hong Kong back to China, the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, and the impact of terrorism and the War on Terror on philanthropy and international cooperation.

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Scope and Contents

Collection contains the staff subject files of Peter F. Geithner that Geithner created during the time he served as Program Officer in Charge of the Ford Foundation's Developing Countries Program (DCP) between 1981 and 1987. The collection so far consists only of Geithner's meeting and trip files. Meeting files contain correspondence, memos, drafts, notes, papers, agendas, active grants lists, invitation lists, brochures, publications, guides, and summaries that document the work that Geithner, other Ford Foundation staff members such as the different Country Representatives, and external individuals and organizations completed for organizing, participating in, and reporting on various Ford Foundation program meetings and other types of events and conferences. Trip files contain the same type of materials found in the meeting files as well as itineraries and travel information memos and documents. Geithner created these files to document his visits to various countries and Ford Foundation field offices as well as the visits he helped organize for individuals like Foundation Board of Trustees Members. There are also a few photographs within the collection.

Geithner's files provide insight into the Developing Countries Program's interest in and support of initiatives concerning economic development, agricultural development, child survival, and reproductive health in countries throughout Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East during the 1980s.

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Arrangement

Collection is comprised of one series.

Original order was maintained as much as possible.

The collection arrangement is as follows:

Series 1. Meeting and trip files, 1970-1987, bulk 1981-1987

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Ford Foundation archive was deposited at the RAC in 2011. Ford Foundation records, correspondence, reports, program files, and officers' papers were transferred to and accessioned by the RAC beginning in 2011. Accessions continue as necessary.

This material was transferred to the RAC in 2019 and was ingested by the RAC as Accessions 2019:050.

Processing Information

Processing Level 3: Standard Processing

Processed by Darren Young, June 2019

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Controlled Access Headings

- Ford Foundation

- Agricultural development projects
- Africa
- Asia
- Economic development
- Latin America
- Middle East
- Reproductive health

Other Finding Aids

Finding aids concerning Peter F. Geithner's office files when he served as Ford Foundation Regional Director of Asia Programs:

[FA505 Ford Foundation records, Asia Programs, Regional Director, Office Files of Peter F. Geithner](#)

[FA506 Ford Foundation records, Asia Programs, Subject Files of Peter F. Geithner](#)

Finding Aids concerning Peter F. Geithner's personal papers:

[FA1408 Peter F. Geithner papers](#)

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Collection Inventory

Meeting and trip files, 1970-1987, bulk 1981-1987

Physical Description: 1.52 Cubic Feet About 4 LTR size Hollinger boxes

Scope and Contents

Series contains the meeting and trip files that Peter F. Geithner created during his time as Program Officer in Charge of the Ford Foundation's Developing Countries Program (DCP). Meeting files generally concern the review of the Foundation's actions regarding issues such as employment and income generation, child survival, and reproductive health in developing countries throughout Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East as well as the planning and organization of additional action to support the study and tackling of these issues. The series also includes meeting files that document other types of events such as a meeting the Ford Foundation organized between different foundations and Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, to discuss economic development and grant clearance procedures in India. Trip files concern the different visits Geithner organized for himself and other individuals like members of the Ford Foundation Board of Trustees to various countries and Foundation field offices. Some of the travel advisory memos within the trip files provide insight into the political situations and trends of these countries such as the opposition to President Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines and the violence of Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) in Peru.

Although most of the series' files were created during Geithner's tenure as Program Officer in Charge of the DCP, there does appear to be some material that was created just before Geithner moved from his previous position as Representative for Southeast Asia in the Bangkok, Thailand Regional Office.

Title/Description	Instances	
Education and Culture Meeting, Bali, Indonesia, 1985	box 1	folder 1
Employment and Income Generation (EIG) Meeting, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1983-1984	box 1	folder 2-4
Fiscal Year 1986 Developing Countries Program (DCP) Program Reviews, 1984-1985	box 1	folder 5
Rural Poverty and Resources Program (RPR) Common Property Resources (CPR) Meeting, Indonesia, 1986	box 1	folder 6
Rural Poverty and Resources Program (RPR) Meeting, Cairo, Egypt, 1982-1983	box 1	folder 7
Child Survival/Population Meeting, Kathmandu, Nepal, 1985-1986	box 1	folder 8
India Festival - Metropolitan Museum of Art Reception, 1985	box 2	folder 9-10

Scope and Contents

File includes 3 photographs of the Ford Foundation New Delhi, India Regional Office staff in 1985 captioned "With Fond Remembrance, Ford Foundation New Delhi Staff, September 1985".

Child Survival/Fair Start Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, 1982-1983	box 2	folder 11
India Annual Program Visit, 1982-1985	box 2	folder 12
Bangladesh trips, 1972-1987	box 2	folder 13-14
Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi Meeting with Private Philanthropies and Related Organizations, 1970-1982	box 3	folder 15-17
Human Rights and International Affairs Programs Meetings, Geneva, Switzerland, 1982-1983	box 3	folder 18
Lima, Peru and Bogota and Cali, Colombia trip, 1980-1984	box 3	folder 19
Rodrigo Botero, Ford Foundation Trustee - East and Southeast Asia trip, 1984-1985	box 3	folder 20

Scope and Contents

File contains a group of photographs taken during Ford Foundation Board of Trustees' Member Rodrigo Botero's visit to countries in East and Southeast Asia in 1985. Individuals captured in the photographs include Botero, his wife Louise, and Han Sung-joo, Director of the Asiatic Research Center and professor of international relations at Korea University and the Boteros' host in Korea.

Photographs were originally contained in a small album
from Bangkok, Thailand.

North Africa and Middle East trips, 1981-1983	box 4	folder 21
Southeast Asia trip, 1984-1985	box 4	folder 22
Thailand trip, 1983	box 4	folder 23
New York City, New York trip, 1980-1981	box 4	folder 24
East Africa trip, 1986	box 4	folder 25
Tom Wyman, Ford Foundation Trustee - India trip, 1983	box 4	folder 26

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