



Ford Foundation records, International Division, Middle East and Africa, Tunis, Tunisia Field Office Files

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Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Scope and Contents	9
Arrangement	10
Administrative Information	10
Related Materials	11
Collection Inventory	11
Agriculture	11
Development Planning	13
Education	15
Education -- ELT Project	18
General Reports	19
General -- Subject Files	19
General Correspondence	20
Population	21
Public Administration	26

Summary Information

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[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment One: International Activities of the Ford Foundation: An Overview

The Foundation's aspiration to become a national and international philanthropy for the advancement of human welfare was first formally expressed in the seminal 1949 report of the Gaither Study Committee, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program* (RAC Library, call letters 361.7 GAI), which was commissioned by the Board of Trustees to chart the Foundation's future. Foundation Trustees launched Ford's international grantmaking activities in 1950 when they approved the committee's report and its embrace of peace, democracy, and freedom. Since then, the Foundation has tackled these goals using a variety of strategies and responding to changing contexts, from the Cold War to the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and beyond.

Toward the Foundation's aspirational goal, "the establishment of peace", its international activities have comprised a wide range of conceptual approaches and focus areas. These include international affairs, international studies, international understanding, arms control and disarmament, international law, international economic concerns, and overseas development in nearly every region of the world. Three distinct periods emerge for the international grantmaking defined by external contextual changes and

internal changes in Foundation leadership and structures: the expansion era of 1950-1965; the transition and restructuring years of 1966-1988; and the post-1989 shift away from Cold War dichotomies. During each of the distinct historical periods the consistent objectives were: 1) to ensure freedom and democracy in developed countries; 2) to foster education and international understanding in all countries; and 3) to contribute to the social, economic, and political development of less developed countries.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 2. Period Sketch - The Expansion Era 1950-1965

The Ford Foundation's expansion era (1950-1965) began when the Gaither Study Committee Report placed "peace" as the area of top priority for the Foundation and set the Ford Foundation on a global course. Board Chair Henry Ford II writing in the 1951 Annual Report of the Foundation, identified "the danger of war" as the "the prime threat to human welfare today." Under the leadership of the three Ford Foundation presidents in this period-- Paul Hoffman, H. Rowan Gaither and Henry Heald--and several key trustees, notably the two seriatim chairs, John J. McCloy and Julius A. Stratton, the Foundation programs were largely informed by the post-World War II desire to avoid nuclear war and promote greater understanding among the world's peoples, strengthening of the United Nations, and enhancing both private and public American participation in world affairs. The strong board presence of university presidents and former leaders of postwar reconstruction efforts in Europe also helped to inform Ford's approach to building the field of peace and international security in the United States and encouraged extensive overseas activities.

For example, the first three presidents of the expanded Foundation ranged from government and business leadership experience to academic and nonprofit: Paul Hoffman (at Ford, 1950-1953) ran the Marshall Plan in Europe; H. Rowan Gaither Staffer (1948-1953), President (1953-1956) and Trustee (1956-1958) had MIT and Rand experience; Henry Heald, former president, Illinois Institute of Technology and New York University, President (1956-1966). The trustees also ran the leadership gamut from government and nonprofits to academic: Trustee John J. McCloy (from 1953; chair, 1959-1965) was assistant Secretary of War during World War II and chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations; and Trustee Julius A. Stratton (Trustee from 1955; chair, 1966-1970) was president of MIT.

When Ford became an international foundation in 1950, it had a small staff and operated through separate funds. The expansive period in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in a large number of field offices, which increased Ford's global footprint. Support focused on a mix of US university-based programs for research and training; think-tanks for policy-oriented meetings and policy research; and action projects specifically in less developed countries. The Foundation's focus on peace, freedom, and democracy played out against the Cold War backdrop for scientific and military competition between the United States, the Soviet Union and China.

Under President Hoffman, the Foundation's work was organized by the areas identified in the Gaither Committee Report: Area One, the Establishment of Peace; Area Two, The Strengthening of Democracy;

Area Three, The Strengthening of the Economy; Area Four, Education in a Democratic Society; and Area Five, Individual Behavior and Human Relations.

Program differentiation began in the Gaither era. When he began in 1953, he introduced the following programs, with international work under nearly all of them: International Programs, Public Affairs Programs, Program in Economic Development and Administration (mainly U.S. based), Education Program, The TV-Radio Workshop, and Behavioral Sciences Program. In 1954, the Foundation gave prominence to the international work explicitly through changing the program names and separating international affairs and overseas development. The 1954 program names were: The Advancement of Education, Education for Democracy, Increasing Knowledge of Foreign Areas, Economic Development and Administration, the Behavioral Sciences, and Overseas Development. In 1955, Increasing Knowledge of Foreign Areas became Increasing International Understanding. In 1956, the last year of the Gaither presidency, the program roster read: Education in the United States, The Behavioral Sciences, Public Affairs, Hospital Aid (only in the U.S.), Economic Development and Administration, International Understanding, and Overseas Development. Names changed but the program focus often remained the same.

President Heald maintained the areas of international interest of Hoffman and Gaither. The International Affairs program housed the programs based in the United States, Europe and Japan, with a few activities linking American and developing countries institutions. The Overseas Training and Research Program took over the efforts to increase American understanding of international issues. From 1957-1959, an International Legal Studies program, run from New York, helped build law programs in developing countries. Starting in 1959, the Overseas Development program comprised all the regional and country offices. In fiscal year 1964, Heald convinced the trustees to add a new focus on population, with grants both in the United States and overseas.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 2. Period Summary - The Expansion Era 1950-1965

With the ever-increasing budget and trustee willingness to invade capital, presidents Hoffman, Gaither and Heald oversaw vast growth in the Foundation's international activities in the United States, other developed countries and developing countries. Activities crossed disciplines, institutions, and national boundaries, although few crossed intra-foundation boundaries. Under the three presidents, Foundation staff in various domestic and international offices from New York interacted with the regional and country offices headed by representatives. Usually in this period, however, these offices in fact worked more closely with local governments than with New York staff, reinforcing the commitment to locally led social and economic development in less-developed countries.

The shared values of this early period reflected as much the continuing competition between the Communist and capitalist worlds as the concerns about maintaining peace. The Cold War provided the contextual continuity for grantmaking on the core themes of increasing American understanding of the

rest of the world, building and strengthening connections not only with European and Asian democracies but also with Eastern European countries, the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 3. Period Sketch - Transition and Restructuring 1966-1988

In the 1960s, the Ford Foundation Trustees began to rethink the role of the Foundation in the context of the era's dramatic political and cultural changes. For instance, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act created a domestic policy context in which the Foundation could more deeply engage with issues of rights and social justice. Events overseas starting in the late 1960s would extend the rights agenda to international affairs and development operations at the Foundation -- all advanced by the leadership of McGeorge Bundy (president, 1966-1979).

McGeorge Bundy was appointed president in 1966, following a significant career in national security and academic administration. During World War II, he worked with the Army's intelligence division, and in the early post-war years was a political analyst at the Council on Foreign Relations. Even without a postgraduate degree, at the age of thirty-four he became dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at Harvard University. In 1961, President Kennedy appointed Bundy to be Special Assistant to the President for National Security - a position he held for five years under both Kennedy and Johnson. Those significant years saw the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the beginnings of the Vietnam War.

When Bundy arrived at the Foundation, he initiated a restructuring that modeled government departments rather than the academic ones President Henry Heald had established in the 1950s. At the same time, he had to contend with serious financial constraints due to Ford's overspending in the prior periods and to economic downturns in the global economy. The Board of Trustees mandated an annual spending of over \$100 million.

These economic constraints meant that Foundation programs had to be more selective across the range of its programs. Nonetheless, international activities remained prominent with the new president and trustees. President Bundy and key trustees such as Eugene Black (1960-1968, former head of the World Bank) and Robert S. McNamara (1968-1986, former U.S. Secretary of Defense and then head of the World Bank, 1968-1981) reflected a commitment to the international activities. Bundy also added to the board in 1972 the first trustee from a developing country, the Indonesian activist and scholar, Dr. Soedjakmoto, the former Ambassador to the United States from his country and then Special Adviser on Social and Cultural Affairs to the Chairman of Indonesia's National Development Planning Agency.

To create economies of scale, Bundy unified US-based international and overseas activities under one division: the International Division (using the name for the first time). That division comprised Resources for Development (area studies, languages, and exchanges), Population, International Relations, Planning and Evaluation, and the country programs. David Bell, an economist and the first

administrator of the US Agency for International Development (1962-1966), was named vice president and served in that capacity until the end of Bundy presidency.

In 1966, Bundy terminated the long-standing internationally oriented but domestically based International Training and Research Program. Several large domestic programs -- including support of centers of international studies - were phased out in the 1970s. Instead, Ford launched under its international affairs efforts a focused but robust program in security and arms control. Over Bundy's tenure, the overseas offices were reduced from twenty in 1966 to twelve in 1979, when he retired.

The Foundation increasingly turned its attention to different set of international issues including human rights and working in repressive societies, such as South Africa. The military coups in Latin America during the late 1960s and early 1970s led the Foundation to initiate in 1976 a human rights program housed in Vice President Bell's office.

In 1979, Franklin Thomas was named president of the Ford Foundation (1979-1996). In contrast to Bundy's international and defense policy background, Franklin Thomas brought to the Ford Foundation his experience in law, housing, and community development. Prior to joining the Foundation, Thomas, a lawyer, was a Foundation trustee. He chaired the Rockefeller Foundation-funded Study Commission on U.S. Policy towards South Africa and led the Ford-funded Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation in New York from its beginning in 1966 until he left in 1979. Earlier, he had been deputy police commissioner of NYC.

In the first decade of Thomas' tenure, the international work was still framed using the post-war East-West dichotomy. Several trustees brought to the board active engagement in international issues: Donald F. McHenry (trustee over the period 1981-1993) had served as ambassador to the U.N. and was active in the anti-apartheid movement; and General Olusegun Obasanjo (trustee over the period 1987-1999) had been Nigerian head of state from 1976-1979, and was then president of the African leadership Forum. Along with McNamara and Soedjakmoto, Rodrigo Botero, an internationally renowned economist from Colombia and former Colombian Minister of Finance and Credit from 1974 to 1976, remained on the board over the period 1978-1989.

During the early years of the Thomas presidency, the scope and strategies of the Foundation's activities were also influenced by economic and global pressures, leading to reduced assets and further financial stringencies. Thomas' board-mandated reductions resulted, for example, the firing of twenty senior staff at the same time. To achieve more effective and efficient programs, Thomas had a vision of Ford as one foundation, linking the domestic and overseas activities under new program themes: Urban Poverty, Rural Poverty and Resources, Human Rights and Social Justice, Governance and Public Policy, Education and Culture, and International Affairs.

The restructured Foundation comprised two programmatic divisions led by vice presidents: U.S. and International Affairs Programs (USIAP) headed by Susan Berresford; and Developing Countries Program (DCP), headed by William Carmichael. Berresford had been at the Foundation since 1970, coming from the U.S. Manpower Career Development Agency. She served in the National Affairs area, first as program assistant and then program officer (1972-1980), becoming head of women's programs in 1980. The main international efforts under USIAP were housed in Rural Poverty and Resources, Human Rights and Governance, and International Affairs. The other programs - Urban Poverty, Education and Culture,

and Program-Related Investments - also addressed a scattering of international issues related to their main themes.

Carmichael had joined the Foundation in 1968 as Representative in Brazil. In July 1971, he was named Head of the Office of Latin America and the Caribbean, and in September of 1977, he became Head of the Middle East and Africa Office. The DCP program was responsible for all the Field Offices: Andean and the Southern Cone, Brazil, Mexico and Central America, Bangladesh, India, Southeast Asia, West Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Middle East and North Africa.

When the Foundation initiated a Human Rights and Governance program (HR&G) in 1981, it was the first instance of a Ford program explicitly entitled "human rights," despite the fact that human rights grantmaking that had started officially in 1976. International Affairs remained separate from HR&G. In 1987, however, the Board conceptually linked three programs, creating a Trustee committee called Human Rights, Governance, and International Affairs, which existed until 1992. Operationally, however, the programs relating to these fields did not often work together.

International governance remained a commitment under Thomas. The Foundation, for example, had a long-established relationship with the United Nations: from 1951 until 1988, the United Nations received ninety grants from the Foundation (it received another 198 over the period 1989-2009).

In these early years of the Thomas presidency, dramatic changes were occurring in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Under President Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership since 1985, the USSR was opening up to the international community, the rule of law in society was taking prominence there, and press freedoms were spreading. The foundation developed new programs in the region, drawing on the \$60 million already spent to promote human rights and free expression and increase Western understanding of developments there.

Given the continuing economic constraints facing the Foundation and rising debt in developing countries, the Foundation shifted support under DCP to smaller scale community-based initiatives in the field offices. Thomas was also charged by the Board to increase the diversity of grantees, especially to favor populations "most affected" by the problems of concern to the Ford Foundation. The Foundation built on earlier efforts and sharpened its focus on women's issues throughout the world, including shifting the focus of the population program to women's reproductive health and child survival.

In the 1980s, Carmichael and others, with strong support from Thomas and the board, continued the 1970s' support of South African grantees for training large numbers of black lawyers and litigating sensitive cases in the South African legal system. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of discrimination in South Africa, the Foundation not only advanced the rule of law, but also strengthened civic organizations, women's groups, and educational institutions. Further, it supported a number of activist organizations in the United States that were energetically advocating US governmental sanctions against South Africa and for private disinvestment. The Foundation also played a role in shaping US policy on apartheid through the role Thomas played from 1985 to 1987 chairing the US Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on South Africa.

The Foundation's overseas staff also sought to improve the economic situation in poor, marginalized communities through targeted loan programs particularly to women head of households, beginning with the innovative work in Bangladesh of Professor Mohammed Yunus, the founder of the Grameen Bank. The results led the way to establish the field of microfinance with the aim of empowering women living

in poverty conditions, such as through a microfinance network in Latin America starting 1980 and a global lending program for women starting in 1987.

Thomas encouraged staff to share results at worldwide meetings. During those meetings, Ford staff in the country offices and in New York tried to follow the mandate to work as "one foundation." The persistent challenge toward meeting that goal, however, was that initiatives emerging from the New York-based programs, or indeed any program developed in one country, were not always adaptable, relevant or acceptable in other countries or regions. It remained a challenge to develop a unified program, despite the commitment at the highest level of foundation leadership.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

Segment 3. Period Summary - Transition and Restructuring 1966-1988

During this era, the Foundation's earlier interest in business and the economy evolved into a commitment to improving conditions for people living on the margins of society. The Ford Foundation promoted advancements in women's rights around the globe and introduced micro-lending into grantmaking. At the same time, the economic issues that were shaping program strategies also affected the Foundation's assets. Severe cuts resulted in a significant restructuring of country programs and reduced budgets across all programs.

Even with the cuts in country offices, in the 1970s Ford grantees in developing countries received approximately 80% of the International Division budget. The remaining fifth went to Population, Development Studies, and International Affairs. Although representing a much smaller piece, the International Security and Arms Control program from 1973 was the Foundation's most concerted effort to make meaningful inroads in disarmament and nuclear issues - those challenges most directly linked to the Foundation's historic concern for peace. By 1979, the Ford Foundation was the biggest funder of arms control as a field, both in the U.S. and overseas.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

Contains records related to agriculture, development planning, education, population and public administration, as well as field office correspondence and reports.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

Arranged in 8 series primarily by subject.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Processing Information

Level 1 Minimal Processing has been conducted to establish basic intellectual and physical control of the material and assess immediate preservation and conservation needs. Material remains as received, in original folders and storage boxes.

Conditions Governing Use note

Completion of a use agreement is required prior to providing scholarly access. See RAC Head of Reference (or applicable designee) for details. Ford Foundation holds title, copyright and literary rights in the collection, in so far as it holds them. The Rockefeller Archive Center has authority to grant permission to cite and publish material from the collection for scholarly purposes. Permission to publish extensive excerpts, or material in its entirety, will be referred to the Ford Foundation.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

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

Conditions Governing Access

Records more than 10 years old are open for research with select materials restricted as noted. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC. Researchers interested in accessing

digital media (floppy disks, CDs, DVDs, etc.) or audiovisual material (audio cassettes, VHS, etc.) in this collection must use an access surrogate. The original items may not be accessed because of preservation concerns. To request an access surrogate be made, or if you are unsure if there is an access surrogate, please contact an archivist.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Materials

Separated Materials

Appendix A: Reports – Unpublished reports written by Ford Foundation staff and consultants were removed from their original folders, scanned and transferred to the Archives' collection of staff and consultant reports. See Appendix A for a list of these reports and their specific assigned number. The reports are listed in alphabetical order by author. The assigned number may be used to access reports in the online catalog.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Agriculture, 1962-1965, 1970-1975	
Title/Description	Instances
Agriculture -- Algeria -- Correspondence, 1962-1966	box 1
Agriculture -- Conferences and Seminars -- International Centers' Week (July 31-Aug 4, 1972) -- Memo Re: International Agricultural Research and Training, Aug 21, 1972	box 1
Agriculture -- Conferences and Seminars -- Seminaire International sur le Pastoralisme (Algier, April 22-28, 1974), Apr 22-28, 1974	box 1
Agriculture -- Conferences and Seminars -- Joint MEA-OLAC Agricultural Program Workshop (April 29-May 3, 1974), Apr 29-May 3, 1974	box 1
Agriculture -- Conferences and Seminars -- Regional Wheat Meeting (Turkey, May 1974), May 1974	box 1
Agriculture -- Conferences and Seminars -- Second International Seminar on Change in Agriculture (Reading, September 9-19, 1974), Sep 9-19, 1974	box 1

Agriculture -- Conferences and Seminars -- XIX International Dairy Congress (New Delhi, December (1974), Dec 1974	box 1
Agriculture -- Consultancy Visit by Drs. Edwards and Conklin, University of Oregon (to Tunisia and Algeria), Jul 1973	box 1
Agriculture -- General Information (correspondence with Lowell Hardin, proposed international centers), 1969-1974	box 1
Agriculture -- General Information -- Lowell Hardin Correspondence, 1973-1975	box 1
Agriculture -- General, 1969-1972	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- CIMMYT -- Conference (Athens, February 16-17, 1974), Feb 16-17, 1974	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Correspondence -- Algeria, 1968-1972	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Correspondence -- Morocco, 1969-1972	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Correspondence -- Tunisia, 1968-1972	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Fertilizer Situation, 1974	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- (World) Food Situation, 1973-1975	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Other Agencies, 1968-1970	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Other Agencies, 1970-1972	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Other Agencies -- OLC -- Development from Below Field Trip/Workshop (Ethiopia, October 1973), 1973-1974	box 1
Agriculture -- General -- Program Strategy Review, 1973-1974	box 1
Agriculture -- Institut de Technologie Agricole -- Mostaganem, 1971-1976	box 1
Agriculture -- Morocco -- Bureau Pédagogique -- Rabat Reports, 1969-1970	box 2
Agriculture -- Morocco -- Bureau Pédagogique -- Rabat Reports (1/2), 1970-1971	box 2
Agriculture -- Morocco -- Bureau Pédagogique -- Rabat Reports (2/2), 1970-1971	box 2
Agriculture -- Morocco -- Bureau Pédagogique -- Rabat, Aug 1970-Dec 1972	box 2
Agriculture -- Project Evaluations -- Handwritten Notes, n.d.	box 2
Agriculture -- Project Proposals -- Association of Faculties of Agriculture in Africa (AFAA), 1973-1974	box 2
Agriculture -- Project Proposals -- Rice -- Algeria, Morocco, and North Africa (other countries), 1973-1974	box 2
Agriculture -- Project Proposals -- Training of Tunisian Mexican Wheat Extension Workers, 1971-1974	box 2

Agriculture -- Training of Tunisian Mexican Wheat Extension Workers (Borgo-a-Mozzano, June 17-July 13, 1974) -- Reports and Results, 1974-1975	box 2
Agriculture -- Tunisia -- Recyclage Center (#690-0505), 1970	box 2
Agriculture -- Visit to Australia (Summer 1973) -- Tunisian and Algerian Officials, 1973	box 2
Agriculture -- "Vocational Agricultural Education in Tunisia and the Training of Intermediate Agricultural Cadres" by B.G. Moussouros (French and English versions), May 1970	box 2
Agriculture -- "Vocational Agricultural Education in Tunisia and the Training of Intermediate Agricultural Cadres" by B.G. Moussouros and Notes Re: Agricultural Training Centers, 1970	box 2

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Development Planning, 1961-1977

Title/Description	Instances
Development Planning -- Center for Research on Economic Development, 1974	box 3
Development Planning -- Economic -- Tunisia -- Movement Jeunes Science Tunisie, Aug 1973	box 3
Development Planning -- Public Management Review, 1973	box 3
Development Planning and Administration -- General -- Information, 1969-1972	box 3
Development Planning and Administration-- General -- Correspondence, 1969-1972	box 3
Development Planning -- Report -- Notes on the Direction of Future Tunisian Planning and Possible Planning Assistance, Jul 1970	box 3
Development Planning -- Report -- An Approach to Manpower Planning, Jul 1970	box 3
Development Planning -- Social Science, 1974	box 3
Development Planning -- General -- Other Agencies, Jan-Jul 1973	box 3
Development Planning -- General -- Other Agencies -- L'Institut Atlantique/Instituto Affari Internazionali, 1972	box 3
Development Planning -- General -- Other Agencies -- Resesarch Project on the Migration and Return of Professionals ("Brain Drain"), 1971	box 3
Development Planning -- General -- Other Agencies -- Urban Studies Information, 1972-1973	box 3

Development Planning and Management -- General -- Other Agencies, 1973-1974	box 3
Development Planning and Management -- General Information (II), 1973	box 3
Development Planning -- Schools of Public Administration (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), 1966-1969	box 3
Development Planning and Administration -- General -- Reports, 1968-1972	box 4
CAFRAD -- African Training and Research Center in Administration for Development, 1964-1968	box 4
Development and Planning -- Public Administration -- General, 1961-1969	box 4
Population and Development Policy --Ford Foundation/Rockefeller Research Program, 1977	box 4
Development Planning and Management -- General -- Reports -- Simmons Report, May 20, 1968	box 4
Development Management and Planning -- Correspondence II, 1973-1974	box 5
Development Management and Planning -- Correspondence III, 1974-1976	box 5
Organisation Maghrebine de Gestion (OMG), 1975-1976	box 5
Development and Management -- Conferences -- First Maghrebian Conference on Training in Enterprises, 1975	box 5
Development Planning and Management -- Conferences and Seminars -- EFMD Conference/Turin, May 19-22, 1974	box 5
Development Planning and Management -- Conferences and Seminars -- Executive Seminar on Employment Strategies, Washington, Oct 24, 1974	box 5
Development Planning and Management -- Conferences and Seminars -- Miscellaneous, 1968-1976	box 5
Development Planning and Management -- Project Proposal -- INPED, Algeria, 1973-1974	box 5
Development Planning and Management -- Public Management Program Development -- Richard S. Roberts, Jr. -- Visit to the U.S., Summer 1973	box 5
Development and Planning -- Historia -- Algeria, 1972	box 5
Development and Planning -- Project Proposals (Information Sheet and Miscellaneous), 1974	box 5
Project Proposal -- Possible Consultancy for I.S.G. Dr. Khemakhem, 1974	box 5

Development Planning and Management -- General Specified Files -- Management Strategy Review, Sep 1973	box 5
National Institute of Productivity Management and Enterprise -- Training -- Tunisia, 1968-1971	box 5
Development and Planning -- Urban Renewal -- Morocco, 1968-1972	box 5
CODESRIA and Educational Development -- Memoranda re: Activities, Meetings, etc., 1972-1973	box 5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Education, 1960-1978

Title/Description	Instances
Center for Economic and Social Research -- University of Tunis, 1966-1968	box 6
Center for Economic and Social Research -- Reports I, 1961-1967	box 6
Center for Economic and Social Research (1/2), 1961-1964	box 6
Center for Economic and Social Research (CERS) (2/2), 1968	box 6
Education -- Assisting Educational and Cultural Development, 1974	box 6
Education -- English Language in Tunisia, 1974	box 6
Education -- Discretionary Grants -- Faculte de Lettres, Tunis -- English Plavers, 1969-1970	box 6
Education and Research -- Discretionary Grants -- Ecole des Beaux Arts, Tunis, 1969-1970	box 6
Education -- Carthage English Seminar, 1969-1973	box 6
Education -- CAFRAD, 1970-1973	box 6
Education -- Discretionry Award -- English Training, 1969-1970	box 6
Education -- Discretionary Awards -- Representative's Contingency Fund, 1968-1969	
Education -- General and Textbook Project, 1971-1974	box 7
Education -- Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- CERES, 1975-1977	box 7
Education -- Revue D'Histoire Maghrebine, 1975-1977	box 7
Education -- IPSI, 1975-1977	box 7
Stambouli, 1976-1977	box 7
Education -- Textbook Project, 1971	box 7

Education and Research -- Conferences and Seminars -- Miscellaneous, 1969-1971	box 7
Education -- Summer Seminar, 1968	box 7
Education and Research -- General Correspondence I, 1970-1972	box 7
Education and Research -- General Correspondence II, Jan-Aug 1973	box 7
Education -- General -- Seminars and Conferences, 1973	box 7
Education and Research -- General Information I, 1969-1972	box 7
Education and Research -- General Information II, 1973	box 7
Education and Research -- General Information III, 1974	box 7
Education and Research -- General Reports I, 1969	box 7
Education and Research -- General Reports III, 1973	box 7
Education and Research -- General Reports IV, 1974	box 7
Travel and Study -- TOEFL/Algeria -- Kouloughli, 1971-1972	box 7
Education -- Travel and Study -- General File, 1970-1971	box 7
Education -- General Information -- History, 1967-1973	box 8
Education -- General -- Restrospective Study & Harrison/Fox Correspondence, 1973	box 8
Education -- Instituts de Technologies, n.d.	box 8
Education -- Migration -- Iranians, 1972	box 8
Education -- Report -- Ford Foundation Consulting Mission in re: Request from Algerian Ministry of Higher Education, 1975	box 8
Education and Research -- Reports -- Project Proposals -- Social Sciences/Migration of Scholars -- Micaud, 1973-1975	box 8
Education -- Special Topics - -Institut de Presse Tunis, 1973-1975	box 8
Education and Research -- English for Special Purposes -- Linguistic Institute, 1974-1975	box 8
Education -- Tunis -- National School of Administration -- Reports II, 1968-1973	box 8
Education -- Tunis -- National School of Administration -- Correspondence I, 1962-1966	box 8
Education -- Tunis -- National School of Administration -- Correspondence II, 1967-1974	box 8
Education -- General -- Information -- Tunisia, 1972-1973	box 8
Education -- General Information -- Algeria, 1971-1975	box 8

Education -- Algeria -- Recruitment Project -- Professors, 1975-1976	box 8
Education and Research -- Algerian Language Institute -- Survey, 1975-1976	box 8
Education -- Report -- English Language Teaching in Algeria, Sep 1975	box 8
Education -- Algeria -- Miscellaneous, 1975	box 8
Education -- Algeria -- Scholarships, 1962-1965	box 8
Algiers Linguistics Project, 1968	box 8
Algiers Linguistics Project, 1969	box 8
Algiers Linguistics Project, 1970	box 8
Education and Research -- General Correspondence, 1974-1975	box 9
Education -- General -- Other Agencies -- American Friends of the Middle East and/or Maghreb -- Mrs. Patricia Payne, Jan 1974	box 9
Education and Research -- General -- Other Information, 1974-1976	box 9
Education -- Conference -- Social Sciences -- North Africa, 1976	box 9
Education and Research -- Conferences and Seminars -- Miscellaneous, 1974-1975	box 9
Education -- Tunisian Desert Biome Project -- Novikoff, 1974-1978	box 9
Education -- General Information -- Morocco, 1972-1976	box 9
Education -- Fundamental Arabic Project -- Seminar and Proposal (Olson, Beirut), 1973-1974	box 9
Education -- General -- Other Agencies -- Overseas Liason Committee -- American Council on Education, 1974-1975	box 9
Education -- General -- Other Agencies II, 1973	box 9
Education -- English for Special Purposes Conference -- Hannamet, Tunisia, Feb 25-28, 1975	box 9
Education -- ELT Project -- Correspondence, May 1973-Jan 1974	box 9
Education -- English Language Textbook Development for Secondary Schools -- Reports (E1690-0742) (1/2), Jan-Dec 1972	box 9
Education -- English Language Textbook Development for Secondary Schools -- Reports (E1690-0742) (2/2), Jan-Dec 1972	box 9
Education -- English Language Textbook Development for Secondary Schools -- (690-0742) -- Reports (1/2), 1969-1972	box 9
Education -- English Language Textbook Development for Secondary Schools -- (690-0742) -- Reports (2/2), 1969-1972	box 9

Education -- English Language Textbook Development for Secondary Schools -- (729-0046) -- Reports, 1974-1975	box 9
Education -- English Language Textbook Development for Secondary Schools -- Financial, Jun 1974-1975	box 9
Education -- ELT Project, 1960-1978	box 10
Title/Description	Instances
ELT Project -- Requests for Grant Action, 1963-1967	box 10
ELT Project -- Summer Seminar, 1970	box 10
Education - English Language Textbook (ELT) Project -- Correspondence IV, 1972-1973	box 10
ELT Project -- Textbook Project IV bis -- Summer Course -- Bizerta, 1973	box 10
ELT Project -- Textbook Project -- Tunisia -- IV bis -- Seminars, 1971-1972	box 10
ELT Project -- Group Study Tours, 1973	box 10
ELT Project -- Textbook Project Tunisia -- Budget, 1973-1974	box 10
ELT Project -- Algeria -- R.M. Payne Trip, May 1974	box 10
Report -- The Economy of the Maghreb, 1963	box 10
Study of the Creation of the Tunisian University, n.d.	box 10
La Situation de L'Enseignement en Tunisie 1958-1964, May-Jun 1964	box 10
A Ten Year Prospect of School Attendance, n.d.	box 10
Situation Scolaire, Jun 1961	box 10
New Conception of Education in Tunisia 1958-1959, [1960]	box 10
Situation de L'enseignement, 1962-1963	box 10
Universite de Tunis -- Fondation et Premieres Realisations, 1960-1961	box 10
English Language Education in North Africa -- English Textbook Project (DAP 759-0800) (1/2), 1974-1978	box 10
English Language Education in North Africa -- English Textbook Project (DAP 759-0800) (2/2), 1974-1978	box 10
Education -- English for Special Purposes Conference in Hammamet (1/2), 1974-1975	box 10
Education -- English for Special Purposes Conference in Hammamet (2/2), 1974-1975	box 10
Linguistics -- Summer Seminar -- Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, 1969-1970	box 10

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

General Reports, 1960-1973

Title/Description	Instances
General -- Information -- North Africa Review, 1972	box 11
Middle East and Africa (MEA) Program Report, 1973	box 11
General -- Reports -- Quarterly (Tunis Field Office), 1972-1973	box 11
Quarterly Reports -- Tunis, 1972	box 11
General -- Reports -- Algeria/Tunisia/Morocco, 1968-1971	box 11
General -- Reports -- Administrative Reports, 1966-1970	box 11
General -- Reports -- Evaluation Correspondence, 1968-1969	box 11
North African Program Annual Report, Nov 1970	box 11
North African Program Annual Report, 1971	box 11
North African Program Annual Report, 1972	box 11
Ford Foundation Annual Reports 1969 Distribution, 1970	box 11
Ford Foundation Annual Reports 1970 Distribution, 1971	box 11
Ford Foundation Annual Reports 1971 Distribution, Summer 1972	box 11
General -- Reports -- Annual Reports, 1970-1971	box 11
General -- Government Relations -- Tunisia, 1968-1971	box 11
General -- Government Relations -- Algeria, 1965-1971	box 11
General -- Government Relations -- Morocco, 1960-1972	box 11
Tunis Field Office -- Local Ford Foundation Correspondence Left by George Sheldon, 1968-1970	box 11
Tunis Field Office -- Inter-office Memoranda, 1969-1971	box 11
Tunis Field Office -- Financial Management Reviews and Internal Accounting Control -- Price Waterhouse & Co., 1963-1971	box 11
Special Reports -- Comptroller's Office, 1970-1971	box 11

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

General -- Subject Files, 1965-1971

Title/Description	Instances
International Division Conference -- Mexico -- Representatives Meeting, 1968-1969	box 12

International Division -- Representatives Meeting -- Nairobi, 1968	box 12
International Division -- Representatives Meeting -- Tunis, 1965	box 12
Education -- New Delhi Conference, Oct 1971	box 12
International Division -- New Delhi Conference -- Discussion Paper, Oct 1971	box 12

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

General Correspondence, 1963-1974

Title/Description	Instances
Correspondence -- General -- Other Agencies -- Miscellaneous, Jan 1973-Dec 1974	box 12
Correspondence -- General -- Other Agencies -- Divers, 1970-1972	box 12
Correspondence -- General -- Other Agencies -- Morocco, 1972	box 12
Correspondence -- General -- Other Agencies -- Tunisia, 1968-1972	box 12
Correspondence -- General -- Other Agencies -- Algeria, 1972	box 12
General -- Conferences and Seminars -- MEA Economics Program Advisors Conference -- New York, Sep 1971	box 12
Correspondence -- Administrative Conference -- Nairobi, Jul 1969	box 12
Correspondence -- General -- Non-Program Conferences -- Divers, 1969	box 12
Chronological Correspondence -- Algiers, 1971	box 12
Marshall, R., 1969-1970	box 12
Correspondence -- Brown, 1969-1971	box 12
Brucher, Mr. Felix, 1970-1971	box 12
General -- LeMelle, Wilbert J. -- General, Apr-Sep 1973	box 12
General -- LeMelle, Wilbert J. -- General, Oct-Dec 1973	box 12
General -- LeMelle, Wilbert -- Personal, 1973	box 12
General -- Guillaume deSpoelberch's Fairwell Letters, 1973	box 12
Chronological Correspondence, Feb 16-Sep 30, 1963	box 13
Chronological Correspondence, Oct 1963-Mar 1964	box 13
Chronological Correspondence, Apr-Sep 1964	box 13
Chronological Correspondence, Oct 1964-Apr 1965	box 13

Chronological Correspondence (1/2), Jan-Apr 1968	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (2/2), Jan-Apr 1968	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (1/2), May-Aug 1968	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (2/2), May-Aug 1968	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (1/2), Aug-Dec 1968	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (2/2), Aug-Dec 1968	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (1/2), Jan-Mar 1969	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (2/2), Jan-Mar 1969	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (1/2), Apr-Jun 1969	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (2/2), Apr-Jun 1969	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (1/2), Jul-Oct 1969	box 13
Chronological Correspondence (2/2), Jul-Oct 1969	box 13
Administrative Chronological Correspondence, Jan-Oct 1973	box 14
Program Chronological Correspondence, Jan-Jun 1973	box 14
Program Chronological Correspondence, Jul-Dec 1973	box 14
Chronological Correspondence Files -- Algeria, 1973	box 14

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Population, 1962-1976

Title/Description	Instances
Algeria Family Planning Program -- Demography Project I, 1964-1965	box 15
Algeria Family Planning Program -- Demography Project II, 1964-1966	box 15
Algeria Family Planning Program -- Demography Project III, 1966-1967	box 15
Algeria Family Planning Program -- Demography Project IV, 1967-1968	box 15
Algeria Family Planning Program -- Demographic Assistance, Jan 1968-Feb 1970	box 15
Population -- Demographic Assistance in Algeria -- Reports I, 1971-1973	box 15
Population -- Demographic Assistance in Algeria -- Reports II, 1973	box 15
Population -- Demographic Assistance in Algeria -- II, 1970-1971	box 15

Population -- Demographic Assistance in Algeria -- III (1/2), 1971-1973	box 15
Population -- Demographic Assistance in Algeria -- III (2/2), 1971-1973	box 15
Population -- Demographic Assistance in Algeria -- IV, 1973-1974	box 15
Population -- Demography Algeria -- "La Republique" Article (June 23, 1973) -- Translation/Distribution (June 1974), 1973-1974	box 15
Population -- General -- Migration -- Algeria, 1973-1974	box 15
Algeria Family Planning Report ("Les Imperatifs d'une Planification Familiale en Algerie") by Pierre Pradervand et al., Apr 1966	box 15
Survey of Family Planning Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice in Algeria (#670-0134), 1967-1970	box 15
Family Planning and Demography -- Maghreb (North Africa) -- Reports (1/3), 1962-1969	box 16
Family Planning and Demography -- Maghreb (North Africa) -- Reports (2/3), 1962-1969	box 16
Family Planning and Demography -- Maghreb (North Africa) -- Reports (3/3), 1962-1969	box 16
Population -- Kingdom of Morocco -- National Family Planning Program -- Reports I, 1965-1967	box 16
Population -- Kingdom of Morocco -- National Family Planning Program -- Reports II, 1967-1970	box 16
Population -- Kingdom of Morocco -- National Family Planning Program -- Reports III, 1970-1971	box 16
Population -- Kingdom of Morocco -- National Family Planning Program -- Reports IV (1/2), 1971-1972	box 16
Population -- Kingdom of Morocco -- National Family Planning Program -- Reports IV (2/2), 1971-1972	box 16
Population -- Kingdom of Morocco -- National Family Planning Program -- Reports V, 1972-1973	box 16
Population -- Kingdom of Morocco -- National Family Planning Program -- Correspondence, Jun 1971-Dec 1973	box 16
"Family Planning in Morocco, 1965-1972: The Role of Ford Foundation and Population Council Assistance" by Richard S. Roberts, Jr. (1/2), Dec 1972	box 16
"Family Planning in Morocco, 1965-1972: The Role of Ford Foundation and Population Council Assistance" by Richard S. Roberts, Jr. (2/2, second copy), Dec 1972	box 16
Family Planning in Tunisia, 1963	

	box 17
National Program in Family Planning -- Tunisia -- Correspondence Vol. I (63-270A), Mar 1962-Dec 1964	box 17
National Program in Family Planning -- Tunisia -- Correspondence Vol. II (63-270A), Jan 1965-Jun 1968	box 17
National Program in Family Planning -- Tunisia -- Correspondence Vol. III (63-270A) (1/2), Jun 1969-Apr 1970	box 17
National Program in Family Planning -- Tunisia -- Correspondence Vol. III (63-270A) (2/2), Jun 1969-Apr 1970	box 17
National Program in Family Planning -- Tunisia -- Correspondence Vol. IV (63-270A), May 1970-May 1971	box 17
National Program in Family Planning -- Tunisia -- Correspondence Vol. V (63-270A), Jun 1971-Apr 1973	box 17
Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning -- Reports I, 1962-1966	box 17
Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning -- Reports II, 1967-1968	box 17
Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning -- Reports III, 1969-1970	box 17
Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning -- Reports IV, Apr 1970-Apr 1971	box 17
Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning -- Reports V, May 1971-Jan 1972	box 18
Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning -- Reports VI, Feb 1972-Jul 1972	box 18
Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning -- Reports VII, Aug 1972-Dec 1973	box 18
Population -- Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning, 1967-1969	box 18
Population -- Republic of Tunisia -- National Program in Family Planning, 1970-1975	box 18
North African Regional Program in Family Planning, 1973-1976	box 18
North African Regional Program in Family Planning (690-0657), 1969-1973	box 18
North African Regional Program in Family Planning (690-0657) -- Correspondence (1/2), 1973-1976	box 18
North African Regional Program in Family Planning (690-0657) -- Correspondence (2/2), 1973-1976	box 18
North African Regional Program in Family Planning (690-0657) -- Reports, 1970-1973	box 18

North African Regional Program in Family Planning (690-0657) -- General, Reports, 1974-1976	box 18
Family Planning and Demography -- Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria -- General Reports (1/3), 1971-1972	box 19
Family Planning and Demography -- Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria -- General Reports (2/3), 1971-1972	box 19
Family Planning and Demography -- Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria -- General Reports (3/3), 1971-1972	box 19
Family Planning and Demography -- Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria -- General Reports, 1974	box 19
"The Ford Foundation/Population Council North African Population Program in Retrospect: 1963-1975" by Alain Marcoux, Dec 1975	box 19
Population Evaluation of North Africa Programs and Marcoux Report, 1975-1976	box 19
"Report on the North African Regional Program, 1970-1971" by the Population Council Re: Ford Foundation Grant, 1972	box 19
Population -- General -- Alumni Association, ENAP, Morocco, 1973	box 19
Population -- General Correspondence, 1972-1973	box 19
Population -- General Correspondence, 1974-1976	box 19
Population -- General -- Other Agencies, Jun 1974-1976	box 19
Population -- General -- Other Agencies -- Women's International Forum on Population and Development and Ford Foundation International Division Women's Programs, 1973-1974	box 19
Population -- General -- Other Agencies -- Resource Institutions (Harvard Center for Population Studies), 1973	box 19
Population -- General -- Other Agencies -- Rennes, School of Health, 1973-1974	box 19
Population -- General -- Evaluation Mission Review 1972 for North Africa, Part I, Sep 1971-Apr 1972	box 19
Population -- General -- Evaluation Mission Review 1972 for North Africa, Part II, 1972	box 19
Population -- General -- French Family Planning, Part I, 1971-1972	box 19
Population -- General -- French Family Planning, Part II, Dec 1972-1974	box 19
Population -- General Information, 1972-1974	box 19
Population -- General Information IV, Jun 1974-1976	box 19
Population -- General -- ICOMP -- Wickham, R.S., 1974	box 20

Population -- General -- Dr. Jongmans Report and Correspondence, 1974	box 20
Population -- General -- Population Office Mailings, 1974	box 20
Population -- General -- Population Office Questionnaire on Management of Family Programs, 1972	box 20
Population -- General, Special Topics -- Population Strategy Review, 1973-1974	box 20
Population -- Beyond Family Planning -- Reports, 1969-1975	box 20
Population -- Beyond Family Planning, Oct 1972	box 20
Population -- Reports Re: Ford Foundation Supported Population Studies Centers, Bellagio Conference, Women's Roles, etc., 1973	box 20
Population -- Bellagio Population Group -- Project Proposals, International Division Conference Memo, Reports, 1970	box 20
Population -- Elisabeth Mueller (Population Council) -- Reports, 1970-1972	box 20
Population -- Ford and Rockefeller Foundations -- Social Science and Legal Research on Population Policy, Part I, 1970-1971	box 20
Population -- Ford and Rockefeller Foundations Program in Support of Social Science and Legal Research on Population Policy, Part II, 1972-1973	box 20
Population -- Project Proposal -- Taylor/Berelson Scheme Re: Family Planning, 1972	box 20
Population -- Program Proposal -- Population Association of Africa, 1973-1974	box 20
Population -- Proposal for a Ford Foundation Mission to Survey Project Possibilities in Demographic and Social Science Research in Population in West Africa, 1971	box 20
Population -- "Rolling Mission" (Family Planning Review Mission, January 22-26, 1973) -- Maghreb, 1972-1973	box 20
"Health and Nutrition in India: Recommendations for Ford Foundation Support" by Davidson R. Gwatkin, Jan 1974	box 20
Family Planning, Fertility, and Abortion in Africa and Developing Countries -- Reports, 1974	box 20
Family Planning, Population -- Africa (and elsewhere) -- Reports, Travel Logs, Ford Foundation Reprint, Conference Memoranda and Agenda, 1964-1970	box 20
Family Planning, Population -- Reports, 1965-1974	box 20
Family Planning, Population, Social Science Research on Population and Development -- Memoranda and Reports, 1973-1974	box 20

Population -- Conference -- Third Annual Wheat Workshop (1/7), 1975	box 21
Population -- Conference -- Third Annual Wheat Workshop (2/7), 1975	box 21
Population -- Conference -- Third Annual Wheat Workshop (3/7), 1975	box 21
Population -- Conference -- Third Annual Wheat Workshop (4/7), 1975	box 21
Population -- Conference -- Third Annual Wheat Workshop (5/7), 1975	box 21
Population -- Conference -- Third Annual Wheat Workshop (6/7), 1975	box 21
Population -- Conference -- Third Annual Wheat Workshop (7/7), 1975	box 21
Population -- Conferences, Seminars and Workshops -- General, 1971-1974	box 21
Population -- Conferences, Seminars and Workshops -- General, Jun 1974-1975	box 21
Population -- Conferences and Seminars -- African Population Conferences, 1971-1974	box 21
Population -- Conferences and Seminars -- Micro-Economics Seminar Re: Fertility (Tunis, February 1972), Feb 1972	box 21
Population -- Conferences and Seminars -- Population Meeting (Elsinore, Denmark, June 1972), Jun 1972	box 21
Population -- Conferences and Seminars -- Third Population Conference (Bellagio, Italy) -- Summary and Projections -- Moderator, David Bell, May 12, 1973	box 21
Population -- Conferences and Seminars -- Tentative Plans for Workshop jointly Sponsored by Inst. Nat. du P.F. et de la P.M.I. Ministry of Health, Tunisia, and Community and Family Study Center, University of Chicago (Tunis, July/Aug 1973), 1972	box 21
Population -- Conferences and Seminars -- International Union for the Scientific Study of Population -- Liege Conference, 1973	box 21
Population -- Conferences and Seminars -- International Conference on the Physician and Population Change (Stockholm, September 4-6, 1974), Sep 4-6, 1974	box 21

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Public Administration, 1964-1968

Title/Description	Instances
-------------------	-----------

"Etude Preliminaire sur la Reform Administrative en Algerie", Jan 1966	box 21
"Ford Foundation Public Administration Program in Tunisia" -- A Report to David Heaps from Maxwell Lehman, Oct 1968	box 21
Public Administration -- Algeria -- Administrative Reform, 1965-1966	box 21
Public Administration -- Algeria -- Civil Service, 1968	box 21
Public Administration -- Pan-Maghrebian Meetings, 1964-1967	box 21
Public Administration -- Tunisia -- National School of Administration -- Reports, 1966-1967	box 21

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)