

**IHRFG SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING  
JULY 15-16, 2002  
Open Society Institute  
New York, NY**

**Monday, July 15**

**Welcoming Remarks from the Steering Committee**

Tom Leney, United Nation Foundation

Tom Leney greeted attendees and thanked our host, the Open Society Institute, and the Steering Committee members for their work, especially Anna Nygaard Yelk, who will be leaving the committee in September. [The Open Society Institute, General Service Foundation and the UN Foundation generously covered the costs of the meeting.]

**I. HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION SESSION: “Labor Rights and Globalization”**

Facilitator: Mary Estrin, General Service Foundation

Mary Estrin opened the session and stated that this topic was chosen by a majority of IHRFG participants. She thanked Mark Rand and Barbara Briggs for their help in organizing the panel.

Brief introduction of the speakers:

- Charlie Kernaghan has been executive director of the National Labor Committee since 1990. He has put sweatshop issues in the forefront from the early 90's. He has been to Honduras to research factory conditions and also monitored labor conditions in China, Burma, and other countries. Through his efforts, labor rights violations of major U.S. retailers such as Kathy Gifford, Disney, Gap, and Wal-Mart have been exposed. He particularly focuses on highlighting the working conditions of poor women.
- Bayardo Izaba Solis is one of Nicaragua's leading lawyers on labor rights. His organization, the Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights, is well known for defending human rights in the country. Bayardo has spoken extensively on economic and social rights, labor rights, free trade and globalization.
- Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich was elected as mayor of Cleveland, then went into the Ohio senate in 1990's. He has advocated for rights in Burma, for closing of the School of the Americas, challenged the structure of IMF, and advocated on environmental issues.

Brief history of the labor rights movement:

International Labor Organization was formed in 1919 to promote labor standards for poor workers. It was recognized that unfair labor practices could cause instability. The ILO is part of the United Nations system, with core principles such as freedom of assembly, and right to safe work conditions. However, no compulsory, enforceable mechanism exists to protect these rights, so the emphasis is on shaming and pressuring governments to respect workers' rights.

**Charles Kernaghan**

**Executive Director, National Labor Committee**

- The work on labor rights is the next great struggle of the era. These rights are interwoven with human rights. College caps for Harvard are made in Bangladesh, with workers paid two cents per cap. Workers making cars, auto parts, etc are mostly young women. They work 14-15 hours a day, seven days a week, and these women sleep in the factories. Their wages are 8 to 17 cents. Women are beaten, denied maternity benefits, insurance. The women workers are removed from their jobs after they reach a certain age. When visiting Bangladesh, a girl worker talked about the abuses she faces at her workplace. Another women talked about how she worked long hours and slept at her workplace. Others talked about their poor housing conditions, which become vulnerable to harsh rain and weather.
- Right now, the main demand of workers in the developing world are modest: they want to get one day off/week and their wages to be raised slightly to 34 cents. \$1.23 is total production cost for the cap, but it can sell for as much as \$20. Wal-Mart has about 4000 stores, which their products made in one province in China, which they won't disclose the name of.

- Good news is that there is an anti-sweatshop movement to protect workers rights and human rights. There have been victories such as the El Monte case in California, where Thai women workers were kept locked up and threatened with rape. Also, the Kathy Lee Gifford case helped expose the use of underage girls working to stitch the clothes in Honduras.
- The downside is that the surface of the problem hasn't even been scratched yet by the anti-sweatshop movement. We have not answered the questions about the global economy. How do we end sweatshops? We need a campaign that allows everyone to act and participate. The current movement is going to lose momentum if we don't act. We must do something completely different. We must build a broad and diverse coalition to launch a new anti-sweatshop movement and go into the mainstream communities: churches, students' movement, women's movement, etc. In DC, auto workers and the AFL-CIO will be joining the anti-sweatshop movement. The United Methodist Church—Women's Division is involved, as well as Catholics, students, politicians, Anita Roddick, Danny Glover, and others. We need to do this: make the global economy human and accessible to everyone.
- Intellectual property rights protect a Nike sweatshirt, for example, their trademark is protected and the laws are enforceable. We should look for ways to similarly protect the workers. Research done by the Arca Foundation shows that Americans do care about this issue, and want to go to Congress (where the power is). For the November launch of the anti-sweatshop campaign, signatures for a petition will be collected, and delegations will be taken on tours of working conditions in Bangladesh. The issue is not to boycott companies, but to pressure them to pay the workers a fair wage and provide safe and healthy working conditions. Disney pulled out of Bangladesh when the workers tried to get their rights and we are now working with unions in Bangladesh to get Disney back, but with conditions that respect workers' rights. A big part of this struggle is getting proper legislation passed, with the help of elected leaders like Congressman Kucinich. Issue of workers rights is captivating for the students. Now is the time to move. The anti-sweatshop campaign has strength because it is not abstract. We have a powerful voice if we use it.

### **Bayardo Izaba Solis**

#### **Director of Legal Defense, CENIDH / Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights**

- Charles referred to workers in Bangladesh in his talk. Conditions are similar for workers in Nicaragua, but other factors aggravate the situation in Nicaragua. Nicaragua has suffered from cruel wars and natural disasters in the past. Also a serious economic crisis has made the country unstable. The last war was financed by President Reagan, and the U.S. imposed an economic blockade, which ended in 1990. Now the country has had free elections, but has turned to free market systems. In 1992, the maquiladora factories were reinstated. To date, more than 60 companies, and more than 50,000 young workers exist for the North American market.
- Legally, workers are supposed to work eight hours a day, but in Nicaragua, they really work 12 hours a day. Because companies have to meet production deadlines of North American companies, they work seven days a week and the minimum wage is 27 cents/hour, which doesn't satisfy basic needs. Also, women are working under pressure, with even permission to use bathrooms denied. The NCHR did an investigation on one woman, who was denied permission to go to a doctor and had a miscarriage as a result. We're handling her court case right now. There was another case at the Formosa Textile Company, where the human resources manager broke a worker's jaw, because she was sucking on a sweet and he thought it would ruin the clothing.
- Labor rights are an integral part of economic rights and human rights. In whatever country, the maquiladora system is the same system of exploitation. The workers work in poor houses made out of plastic, cardboard, without access to water or electricity. Workers have even been killed in work-related situations. In the last year, there were six cases of abuses. Companies don't comply with rules and report accidents. Just a while ago, a worker suffered severe burns from ironing, but the company only took him to a health center.
- We are convinced that women workers want healthy working conditions, days off to rest, want children to grow up in healthy conditions. They organize unions when they don't see this happening. When they succeed in organizing, the union leaders are all fired when they do. For example, at a factory of a North American company, a union was organized four times, and the company fired the union leaders. They ignored the judgements to reinstate the leaders. In conclusion, it is impossible for workers to exercise the right to organize because of the companies' actions.
- We human rights organizations think these jobs are horrible but needed in economic and social terms. In practice, companies take advantage of hungry people in our country. It is a dehumanizing situation. So we ask if labor rights are respected, can globalization function in our country? We believe that if globalization doesn't include justice and sustainability, it's going not to bring stability in our country. In Nicaragua, we are currently living in peace due to no war, but the hunger of the people bring risk to the country. We often ask how can these miserable jobs be made more dignified? How can we make globalization favorable and a contribution to our countries? We haven't lost hope to humanize it. As Charles said, globalization values things not humans. We need equality and justice, and international solidarity plays a very important role in this movement. We're convinced without this from consumers, we're not going to succeed in this. Without pressure from consumers, unions cannot organize.
- There have been some achievements. Solidarity campaigns in North America and Europe have created a positive environment, and have prevented workers from being fired. What has really helped is international tours of workers,

that included religious and political leaders. The tours of women workers help highlight the problems and put the companies on watch. Recently, we talked with the owner of a company factory, who said that we should confront the transnational companies, not the maquiladoras. He said let's unite and look for ways for the big companies to pay us more money, and then we can pay the workers more. We don't believe this. We want to congratulate the organizers of the new campaign. We want to declare our desire to be part of this campaign. That way, we hope we will win more labor rights in Nicaragua and other developing nations.

### **Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich**

#### **U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC**

- There are connections among us...it is you who confirms the power of humanity. The person who is hungry, who is on death row, the tortured-- That is you and me. That we are all one is a triumph, a challenge to poverty and war. This understanding beckons a future where we can enjoy our rights to liberty. The recent book, *Globalization and Its Discontent*, questions why globalization that has brought so much good also brings so much controversy? Despite constant promises of poverty reduction, the actual rate of poverty has increased, and total wealth has also increased. There are necessary connections between human and workers rights. What is important is man and his humanity. Working 90 hours a week, behind fences, in hot dusty rooms, etc, is a violation of human rights. Being physically threatened to fill quotas is a violation of human rights. This handbag made for Wal-Mart in China costs about \$8, while the worker makes a few cents. This shirt made in El Salvador sells for \$55; the worker is paid 22 cents.
- Next phase of human rights advocacy should be workers rights advocacy. There is evidence of a large movement in the making, which needs religious groups, celebrities, students, etc. U.S. has the largest number of consumers in the world. We have the power to end these abuses. More than 80% of the toys are made in China. Millions of teenagers spend billions on clothes... we need to reach out to them to educate them about how their clothes are made. They are the next organizers.
- I have been successful in Congress, and urging for prohibitions on child labor and pushing for employee benefits. I want to bring legislation to prevent use of child labor. Rights that Americans enjoy today are due to immigrants earlier in this country, who worked for poor wages, fought for rights and to organize. We need to provide greater support to workers. Human rights must be claimed by us... right to water, right to food, we must claim it. The right to a job is a human rights. Let's help workers gain the right to organize, enable them to join unions, enable self-empowerment, and gain better benefits. Economic self-sufficiency is a precondition. All of us can make a difference. We have the power to transform workers rights and human rights. One person can always make a difference. Anytime one person speaks out, it creates ripples of hope, it creates walls of resistance.

### **Q & A**

**Q: It has been said these jobs are needed to prevent working in prostitution, or in worse conditions. How do you respond to this?**

**CK:** No workers anywhere in the world have ever asked for more sweatshops. They say we need these jobs but we want to be treated as human beings, not animals. Workers want to do these jobs *and* they want their rights. In every neighborhood we visited, people said this. Their employers must be held accountable and consumers need to be informed about the *real* conditions of production.

**DK:** Corporate accountability is not merely accounting practices, it must include how they treat workers. The question is how to do that?

**BS:** Historically, our country [Nicaragua] has been dominated by transnationals. Labor rights were officially recognized in Nicaragua in 1919, even before the UN was established. The ILO has no enforcement mechanism to ensure respect for labor rights while transnationals are working to keep labor rights and human rights separate, but they are both connected. Regardless of where they are working in the world, transnationals must respect labor rights. If a maquiladora is producing in Nicaragua, then they have to know and respect both the national and international legislation, and comply with laws in the country in which they operate. We need these miserable jobs and want more of them but we demand that they be dignified. We human rights activists shouldn't permit certain people to enrich themselves on an immoral basis; human rights and human dignity should not be violated for profit. The differences are dramatic when the woman who makes the clothes gets paid 26 cents and the article sells for \$26. Without wanting to promote xenophobia, we believe that unless economic relations are equalized, immigration will continue. We see, for example, more Argentineans coming to our country. What a contradiction given how well Argentineans lived 30 years ago.

**Q: How do you feel about the use of "No sweat" labels? Are there any corporations that are "good guys: to hold up as role models? And is there a list of bad guys? You'll recall the effectiveness of the grape boycott in this country. There is a consumer consciousness in this country, when conditions become outrageous.**

**CK:** [Former Labor Secretary] Reich tried to put a good guy list, but it collapsed. Guess company got removed. Your idea of a bad guy list. When you look at the global economy, Wal-Mart is bigger than 161 countries. They have such

enormous power that if Nicaragua and other countries implemented their laws, they would be gone. You can talk to some companies but others won't respond. K-mart would respond. Eddie Bauer responded. Wal-Mart didn't. It doesn't mean they will change when they respond but some won't even talk, won't even get back to you. When we confronted Wal-Mart about where their products were being made, they said they never heard of this factory. Then *Businessweek* went to China, found Wal-Mart had horrible conditions. The vice president of Wal-Mart admitted that they had lied because they felt defensive about this issue. The "No Sweat" label is attractive but it's nowhere near accomplishing the monitoring. The monitoring is crucial, and cannot be left to the PriceWaterhouseCoopers' financial auditors.

**DK:** We need a consciousness raising in this country. Without it, how can people know?

**Q: Are people monitoring aid money going to the free enterprise zones?**

**CK:** At that point, Bush is spending over \$1 billion to form free-trade zones. A law was passed to stop foreign aid from being used for projects that violated human rights. But we know that after the earthquake that hit El Salvador, U.S. aid was used by the government to build "model villages," factories were built right next to where people lived and wages were lowered as a result because they no longer needed transportation costs. We need to see where our taxpayer money is going. For example, there is a U.S. military joint-venture happening in Burma that's producing clothing for sale in [military] PX stores.

**Comment – Doug Cahn, Reebok Foundation:** Just as Charlie said about a living human rights movement, there are companies that are trying to comply with ILO standards. Not many, but some. If we triple that number, it's still not enough. Reebok's experience of leveraging other companies does not work. The grantmaking community needs help. When we go into factories in China, Vietnam, workers don't know their rights. We need to create a climate in those countries that speak to the protection of workers rights. When they know, our job to apply standards will be easier. We try to fund the company in China, to support China Women's Network, a mobile resource for women workers in China. Imagine if there was a center in China for learning rights, if we tell the government they need to have workers sent. We need a top down approach. We also need a bottom up approach. We need a multi-stakeholder approach. Ways to build a capacity for labor rights to be heard. Help us out in this problem.

**DK:** There are corporations trying to do right thing. What really caused the change is consumers in this country. That movement changed South Africa.

**Q: It is really encouraging to hear a member of Congress speaking like this. There is a global movement around economic and social rights but one major obstacle to the movement is the attitude of the U.S. government, especially the non-recognition of economic and social rights by the government and the role it plays in international for a in stopping discussions of and references to these rights. How do you deal with that? Is there anything that can be done to put a dent in the U.S. government's refusal to deal with economic and social rights?**

**DK:** Many in government are struck by the realization that we are isolated in the world. There is a sense of a lonely and solitary world-view; they don't see the connections. That's why the U.S. is canceling treaties and conventions from a lonely world-view. We can help groups who are coming together around the world to secure the survival of the planet. We are on the threshold of a new era where nation-states become irrelevant if they don't address people's claims to survival – climate, environment, sweatshops. It's a new world. There is an awareness worldwide, a new model of social change, due to telecommunications, internet, etc. What you [funders] can do is to connect the communities together. Our work is to connect them and hope for the transformations. The U.S. government is going in the wrong direction. It's OK, it will pass. People are getting in touch with their essential humanity. I have a sense that something very exciting is happening, about our ability to change the world, and it will change.

**CK:** If you look at the results of our polling, 83% are concerned about sweatshops. We just haven't gone out to claim it. People feel helpless because the system is so big. So the struggle is to empower people so they can have a say and make a difference. It's a movement to empower people. It's a fight for our lives.

**Q: Can you comment on the role of leadership of women around sweatshop issues, given the burdens that women in particular face?**

**BS:** In Nicaragua, particularly, more than 80% of workers are women. In my organization we work on human rights issues with a gender and generational perspective. For us it's become very evident that women have suffered, especially around reproductive rights. If a woman looks for work, she will not be hired if she looks pregnant. Women who finally succeed in getting a job need to leave their children with family and neighbors, since there is no day care. We also met women who have been sexually harassed to keep their jobs. It is women who have most difficulty participating in union organizing. There are three union organizations in Nicaragua, and none are led by women because when a woman ends her shift, she has to go home to do household chores and care for her children. When a woman's child gets sick, she can't just take off; she has to give prior warning to her employer to take the day off. There are cases where women workers had to take their children to get health care and they were docked their pay.

**DK:** We need to understand the role of women in an expanded way. A feminine principles of nurturing and family is part of the growing awareness. There is news this week about a hundred Nigerian women who faced off with Chevron Oil

Corporation officials, for the corporation to provide jobs to their sons. Oil in Nigeria brings tons of money to oil companies. This is an example of women's peaceful blockade. Another example is women's relationship in India to agriculture and biotechnologies and their activism. Women are leading right from the top with their philosophies and challenging corporate power.

**Q: This goes back to your point about intellectual property rights being enforced, but not workers rights. The government annually reviews whether countries are complying with intellectual property rights laws. If they don't, there are consequences; they're placed on a "bad" list by our government. What would it take to get such a list for workers rights? What do our embassies do in Bangladesh and Nicaragua about these things?**

**CK:** There is a Congressional Research Service which monitors issues like this for members of Congress. Intellectual property rights are protected by numerous bills but not workers rights. What we've seen with embassies, they think they represent North American corporations, not the people. We had to fight them on campaigns and they have not been helpful. In Haiti, people tried to shut down maquiladoras. The U.S. embassy said the findings claiming that conditions were bad were wrong, because they sent questionnaires to factories who filled them out!

**BS:** People have worked for greater protections since the 60's. My organization is part of an alliance for a Nicaragua free of transgenics. There are five international laws protecting arts, intellectual property rights, and new genes. Nicaragua signed all of them. The North American embassies lobbied to have them signed. But lobbying on human rights or labor rights has been minimal. Example in the maquiladora cases. We have one experience where there were two officials who were informed about the case but didn't do anything about it.

**CK:** Recently, the alliance found the food aid for single women and children had transgenic products in it. USAID is providing seeds to farmers with transgenic products. We have proof that was confirmed in labs. By chance, the Ambassador said similar things to [NY Times reporter] Nicholas Kristof saying when we denounce the transgenic products in our food, we are being irresponsible because we are not thinking of the hungry people who will get this aid. Kristof reported the Ambassador as saying he's proud that hungry people made these products in factories. This ratifies the strategy to decrease the poverty in this country.

**DK:** There are five bills in Congress regarding genetically-engineered food. People don't know about this. Over 85% of people like to have food labeled. Biotech industry launched a \$50 million campaign to say the food is safe. The reason people are hungry in the world is not because there isn't enough food or production, it's due to mal-distribution. It's a basic human right to know how your food is made. There are moral issues tied to this. It's a collision with corporations. People are affected all over the world. Laws will come but we have to create the preconditions and have people participate.

**Q: Are there plans to include Canada in the sweatshop Campaign?**

**CK:** Meetings in Washington, DC with unions are discussing contacting Canadian unions. We have to raise awareness everywhere so there's no place corporations can run to find very low wages.

**Q: How can you help us be more strategic? You talked about consumer campaigns. This [funders group] is a very diverse group of institutions. We need many strategies for everyone in different ways.**

**CK:** For those of us in the U.S. doing labor rights work, it's not popular. It's a very lonely issue, and gets worse in the developing countries. There is very little money in these countries. We can do things here that they can't do there. In Nicaragua, they say that human rights work is killing the work in their countries.

**DK:** We must first agree on the link between human rights and labor rights. You can help by bringing people together to see what they can do. Look at it holistically. Some may want to do work domestically then link it internationally. If we can't find a way to link this campaign to people here, then there's no way people there can escape this reality.

**Q: In India, we support tribal, Dalit, women's, and other unorganized sectors to organize. Need to say how important it is to support these groups, and it doesn't cost much money. Labor leaders in these countries know what the people need. But in terms of the interconnections, in India, a rug that has a label saying "not made by child labor" may be made by a child laborer! One question: Charlie, how will the Campaign deal with the unorganized sector, home-based producers?**

**CK:** In Honduras, we found children who took sweaters home to finish work. Homework is coming back in Nicaragua. No monitoring and verification is possible in those settings. There's no monitoring without involvement of local organizations, unions, etc. It's a struggle.

**Q: I've been hearing a lot of interesting things and awful situations, and different solutions. There are many questions, though, not being answered or asked. Corporations have unlimited and uncontrollable power throughout the world. Where are the accountable institutions? Is it the ILO? What are other strategies for curbing the actions of these corporations? It's hard to think of government going against them. Consumer pressure will help but more is needed. How difficult it is to establish accountable bodies?**

**DK:** Many in Congress believe that workers rights and human rights are included in any trade agreements passed. Have to remember that the wheel has turned again. With the help of investigative journalists and others that changed the conditions. Comes down again to our abilities.

**Q: Who are the women leaders who can do panels such as this and reach the consumer level? Have you had frustrations reaching out to women?**

**DK:** In Congress, it's the women who are leading.

**CK:** For the anti-sweatshop movement, it's been difficult. We will have women leaders from Bangladesh in November joining us. We have found women to be more militant in these workshops.

**Q: Are there any proposals in Congress regarding disclosure? Until American consumers are given access to meaningful information, and until workers are given access to their rights, it's hard to address this in concrete ways.**

**DK:** Most of these decisions are settled outside of international courts on trade issues. We are encouraging consumers. We are at a challenge point and trying to develop awareness on these issues.

**CK:** There is a 1939 law that makes it illegal to enforce prison labor that is being amended for sweatshop and child labor practices. The WTO now would say it is illegal. These institutions are set up to institutionalize relations, but we can change them, in the service of humanity.

**Q: If we had this talk a year ago, it would be different. Can you say whether you think the current discussion in Congress can go forward?**

**DK:** There is an imbalance. We have learned that we can still change these institutions. It is time for re-regulation. There needs to be greater corporate responsibility. There has been a change. If you have ongoing commitment, this becomes part of that.

## **II. SPECIAL PROJECTS SESSION**

Facilitator: Shalini Nataraj, Reebok Human Rights Foundation

### **Leveraging New Funds to Support Human Rights**

Presenter: Dorothy Thomas, Shaler Adams Foundation

Interest in human rights is exploding. Today's meeting is the largest turnout for an IHRFG meeting and reflects the growing interest of groups in framing their work in human rights terms. On some level, we couldn't be meeting at a more important time. How can we continue to strengthen ourselves and other funders, and also reach out to others who will actually give support in this area?

There are now three components to this project: 1) materials; 2) outreach and contacts; and 3) events and programs. The first that emerged was to develop materials to explain what human rights is, what the IHRFG is, what work is being done. We didn't have materials two years ago. Now, we have two brochures, a human rights grantmaking statement, and other materials. Thanks to Ruth Messinger, Bob Crane, and Sandy Silverman in assisting with the materials. At this session today, we want to find out what people like, what people don't like, discuss obtaining contacts, look at events, and find other non-material ways to reach funders.

#### **Materials**

**Booklet #1: Case Summaries:** A sample of 13 cases of the successful application of a human rights approach was distributed. **[Copies available on request.]** With regard to the case summaries, thanks to everyone who worked on them, particularly to Miriam Porter, Valentine Doyle, Joe Wilson, Larry Cox and Dorothy Thomas. People should consider their immediate reactions, what the booklet should look like, what regions or issues are missing, the title, etc. We particularly need input from the new funders.

#### **Discussion and Feedback on Case Summaries Booklet**

- Issue of lobbying... What can you say to funders who are nervous about funding in this area?
- There was talk about FAQ as part of this project. It is very high up on the list.
- War on terrorism is masking human rights issues around the world. We have to address the relationship of the war and mass violations of human rights and unmask. We should keep that issue in mind throughout the whole discussion.

- Case summary in the area of Conflict Resolution and Peace should be included. With domestic violence, violence is a very broad subject. It should be dealt in its many forms. Torture too. A case on freedom from torture should be included.
- It was explained that the booklet is a compilation of cases from fields normally not associated with human rights. Peace is a good example but freedom from torture is already very much associated with human rights work.
- The cases should provide a HUMAN RIGHTS dimension to folks funding in other fields. As we solicit more write-ups, we will not focus more on criminal justice but rather areas like the environment, education, health. We want to use the booklet as a cross cutting effort in programs.
- Suggestion was made to include the cost of carrying out the project in each case summary. We already include funders, we should add how much was contributed to make the project successful.
- Drug policy reform... interesting that it wasn't listed as a field. See how this issue is on a matrix of other issues. Will volunteer to work on this (**Michelle Coffey**).
- We need a case summary on disabilities. Funding goes to curing, instead of for access for people with disabilities. One-fifth of the world is disabled, but they are not recognized. Will volunteer to work on this (**John Harvey**).
- Need a market of materials. Found it valuable for trustees, but this material is too advanced. Found the language too technical, and needs a prerequisite understanding of human rights framework. Maybe can be bridged with introductions. Will volunteer to work on this (**Michael Hirschhorn**).
- Supplementing case summaries: can have testimonies of people talking about why they moved into human rights. Testimonies from these people have more credibility. Will volunteer to work on this (**Larry Cox**).
- It needs a paragraph about reason for emphasizing ESC rights and explaining why civil and political rights are not highlighted and contextualize the rights.
- Lots of funders fund livelihood, income generating, etc. but not all look at rights, such as child labor, bonded labor.
- Question of the length of the list: do we want a shorter, punchier versions? Can we use pictures, boxes, different formats to liven up the appearance?
- Give a brief description of areas of rights not covered, including summary of concepts (e.g., what is "child labor"). It's good to see lesbian rights, which is an achievement in human rights since the UN doesn't recognize it as such. What's not included here though is transgendered rights.
- Put total budget of each organization. There are no coalitions listed here (except one). Lots of coalitions that need funding and to address the need for supporting coalitions that link and cross sections of fields. Will volunteer to work on this (**Cora Weiss**).

#### **Decisions regarding Booklet #1:**

- Should have a short, accessible docket and mention to users that there are various documents available. They can then choose which fields they want to read case summaries.
- This is good enough. Let's use these now.
- Need for a contextual piece. Individual case studies can be used.
- We are having focus group meetings in September. People can sign up for the Leveraging Project and/or the focus group. Committee members need to form focus groups and give them cases, specific questions, etc. Volunteers for the focus group: **Michael Hirschhorn, Larry Cox, Karen Colvard, Katherine Acey**.
- We need to ask ourselves: what do we want people to do?
- In terms of regions, we need some write-ups from the Middle East,
- Need to include other Eastern European nations, besides Russia.
- Include only success stories.
- When you think of human rights campaign, you only think of lawsuits. But it could also be ways of raising public consciousness, getting large turnouts at events, that are success stories. Don't just think of traditional forms of victories and efforts. We can add categories/types of successes.

The following foundations offered to cover the costs of the production of the booklet: **Atlantic Philanthropies, Shaler Adams Foundation, Otto Bremer Foundation, Conanima Foundation, The Overbrook Foundation, Rights and Democracy, Wellspring Advisors.**

**Booklet #2: A FUNDER'S PERSPECTIVE:** We need materials to show how we as donors support human rights work. How do you fund? Why? How does it work? This is almost like a talking point, showing the donor side. Ideas for this project?

- Something specific that can be written up
- Can be interviews from individuals
- They should be integrated, the how and the why (from the donor side)
- Funders Network on Trade and Globalization has case studies, which analyze issues, different entry points for funders, background. Can help with this (**Mark Rand**)

## **Outreach**

How do we do this strategically to meet a need and interest? How do we identify people? What strategies do we use to reach them?

- Talked about CoF session on this. Task is how to sell it. Find an intern to research foundations who have some components of human rights.
- Best way is to go through affinity groups. There are regional ones as well as issues-based. We wrote up an environment and human rights proposal to several groups. They may be open to these new issues. Should reach the Association of Community Foundations.
- Leaders of IHRFG and PSFN could hold a meeting a year later? Merge serious groups of people to converge on these issues.
- 40 affinity groups at CoF. They exchange mailing lists. New foundations open (Association of Small Foundations). Use their newsletter. Women's Funding Network and Women & Philanthropy—reach out to these people.
- Make sure we coordinate and collaborate with others. Strategy to use can be to identify funders, especially the larger ones, who have been doing this and have them meet with other large funders.
- GWOB is interested in working with us. There is also the Disability Funders Network. GWOB's conference is in November. Will extend deadline so that IHRFG can submit a session proposal.
- Be active in CoF. Recently had a joint meeting of IHRFG, Peace and Security Funders Group, and UN Foundation. UN Foundation agreed to sponsor a series of joint education sessions with the two groups.

## **Programs/Events**

This year, our special evening event is the dinner with Mary Robinson. Other ideas for future IHRFG events?

- FNTG organized a site visit of funders to the World Social Forum last January and will do it again next year. Meeting global justice advocates in Brazil on their terrain, in their language, proved very powerful.
- GWOB's experience indicates that it's best to do 90% of your work on outreach; organizing site visits is extremely difficult.

## **Conclusion**

Leveraging Project committee will convene meetings in fall to flesh out ideas for materials, outreach and programs.

## **Fund for Global Human Rights**

Presenters: Mary Ann Stein, The Moriah Fund and Melanie Oliviero, Consultant

The Fund will be a very concrete thing to provide to members, nonmembers, etc, who want to support human rights work around the world and get help to organizations who are having difficulty getting funds. The Fund was concerned about groups in developing countries, where there were serious human rights abuses, yet groups have formed to promote and protect human rights, and fight against abuses. Obstacles for these groups include: no connections to funders, particularly in the U.S.; lack of formal status to receive funds; smallness of organizations; lack of money to make money. On the donor side, many large funders can't make small grants to a lot of groups. There are many foundations that can't make many grants, but would like some money to go to human rights, and don't have resources to screen small groups. Another example is a small foundation that wants to make a grant to one small organization, but it can't make grants to organizations without 501(c)3 status or without doing expenditure responsibility.

The Fund currently has the following things: board of directors; committee (including Josh Mailman, Mona Younis, Mary Ann Stein, Chet Tchozewski, Larry Cox, Jesse Margolin, Maureen Aung-Thwin); initial by-laws; a budget; and a brief concept paper. It has also hired a search committee, applied for 501(c)3 status, hired a director and raised over \$1.7 million. The new Executive Director will be announced soon.

The challenge is how to make grants. Global human rights is a big concept, so we need to pick a few regions to focus. As we build the organization, grants will be made in the range of \$5,000 - 30,000. Grantmaking may start immediately or next year. The Committee will be meeting to discuss these things.

The Fund hired Melanie Oliviero to research other re-granters and report on a variety of aspects of their grantmaking. The information is to inform our deliberations.

## **Melanie Oliviero, Consultant to the Fund for Global Human Rights: Research Findings**

- The inquiry focused on the challenge of setting up and developing processes for global human rights grantmaking. The approach was to consult experts all over the world.
- The first question was **Who to target?** The groups that don't have access; especially grassroots groups. We know we are only reaching a portion of people who do human rights work. One thing to be clear about: do people



understand the term human rights the same way? In general, the guide appears to be: Are the activities, approaches rights-based. Themes can be varied. The Fund was encouraged to think about how to reach under-served communities. The selection criteria are thus use of rights-based approach, and having some degree of readiness to use grant s effectively.

- Then we asked: **What rights?** Rather than setting a theme, and having a strategy in mind, find groups who say they are doing human rights work, and let them define the priorities. Feedback received was to stick to general support, and not overburden grantees with your own goals. This is the lesson from groups who did capacity building, but learned it didn't transform the landscape, as predicted.
- Another question is **Where are we going to fund?** People said under-served places are those now out of the spotlight, or areas that are well funded, but not for human rights. Another question asked of the Fund: Are you going to fund in the U.S.? If you want legitimacy in funding global human rights, you have to fund U.S. groups. People recommended an incremental process: create a 2, 4, 6 year plan to grow areas gradually to achieve global coverage.
- Another lesson learned: Idea of advisors is crucial to make informed decisions and to stay lean as an organization (unless you are Ford with field offices). Alternatives: Create community trust model, with distance from conflict of interest; adopt Global Greengrants regional advisory model; or Global Fund for Women model with 100-plus advisors.
- People said you have to think of more staff; making small grants with two or three staff is unrealistic. The Norwegian Fund for Human Rights has two staff and a budget cap of administration at 15% as set by its eight donor owners. They still say they can't make the scope that they want. Everyone said you had to do some technical assistance to some degree, but need to realize that it's labor intensive. Charities Aid Foundation model is they have partnerships, with clear expectations: how to track finances, receipts, etc. There are known challenges and labor in this process of making small grants.
- In terms of grant amounts, some said \$500 can go a long way for an organization. The advice in general: Track and do a high-end and low-end (\$500/1,000 – 25,000/30,000). Try to evaluate your own model as you go along. See if you can figure out how to divide labor, use other intermediaries.
- Question: does the Fund see itself as an ongoing initiative, or a term-limited organization? This has implications to how it designs its operations.
- Interest was high in all the conversations because we are a startup. The biggest challenge is also the most exciting opportunity – to live up to its name: Fund for GLOBAL Human Rights. Have to build a structure that is global (board, decision making that is decentralized, etc). A more logical feedback is you have a concept in global human rights, set up a structure that is similar, not driven by anyone (northern, American).

Mary Ann Stein: Copies of Melanie's research report are available for those interested. Committee needs to be global for advisory function (funders, people from the region, etc); this is now stated in the by-laws. Want to develop criteria as we bring new people in. With respect to technical assistance, really small grants will be given to groups who are stable and some that are not stable. Based on Melanie's report, while we are in the beginning stages, it would be better to make larger grants than small grants. Will be experimenting with ideas.

### **Discussion**

**Q: You said it was not possible to do funding with a skeletal staff and Mary Ann is saying large grants... how do you think this will work out?**

**MO:** It's a labor-intensive practice; it has to be evolutionary. Need to get a sense of how much time it takes and take it back to the board.

**MS:** We would need to make large grants as a start, and rely very heavily on advisors to help us. We'll seek to collaborate with international human rights organizations. If we have a broad net, we can get very useful information in terms of need. Intended to keep it a lean organization, to get much money to these organizations. One thing we will look into doing is to seek others who do technical assistance. We will have a lot of practice and discussion and experimentation. Learn from the experience as we give to regions.

**Q: Will you be accepting unsolicited proposals?**

**MS:** No. We will ask advisors about groups who can submit proposals. But not all of this is set in stone.

**Q: How soon will you have advisory board members?**

**MS:** We have three, the maximum is 20. We'll get experts from those regions.

**Q: Can you talk about the relationship between advisors and board members?**

**MS:** The board will act as advisors. Advisors will have specific areas to advise us on.

**Q: Have you discussed, once you have priority areas, multi-year grants?**

**MS:** Yes. One year of funding is not particularly helpful.

**A:** Term technical assistance: what is the appropriate technical assistance? What kind will enable organization to become grant-ready? Power relations need to be considered. Astraea has an international fund that is six years old. Advise you to take time to establish this.

**Q: Are you going to cap overhead?**

**MS:** Yes, very conscious of this. Administrative expenses will be higher in the first years. Originally wanted to use two staff but after interviews realized that two staff was not feasible. Point is to get the money out, not have the Fund grow.

**A:** Collaboration and coordination with other funders: will work best if we work with other international intermediaries on similar issues.

**Q: Would you target countries where human rights can be done openly, or not? Such as Thailand and the Philippines? Or will it be Vietnam and Laos?**

**MS:** Our primary criterion is need. Our intent is to be working in both areas. More so, where groups have to work underground. Also make sure it doesn't bring harm. Want to attract high bona fide people on the board. Want to get high visibility leaders in these groups, to demonstrate this is not a western idea (human rights). One suggestion made was to pick and make diverse choices (pick easy choices, pick hard countries). Down the road, help organizations network.

**A:** Great idea to fund small community organizations, but it's difficult to find them. So finding the right advisors, who are your only vehicle, is very important. One reason not to depend too heavily on American human rights organizations is their focus on civil and political rights and not economic, social and cultural rights as do groups in developing world.

**A:** A unique contribution of the FGHR is being able to take greater risks.

**Q: What do you think the relationship between this Group and FGHR will be in the future?**

**MS:** Would hope every member of the IHRFG contributes to the FGHR. Give feedback on how the Fund is doing. Should be a very close relationship.

**MO:** With the question of where we are getting funding, I got interesting feedback from Europe. Although government aid and faith based philanthropy dominates, there is a constituency of human rights funders. One funder thanked us for consulting them early on, noting that what often happens with Americans is, they cook the meal, invite Europeans to the feast and ask them to pay for it, and don't ask Europeans to share in the preparations.

**MS:** Haven't addressed the question whether we will accept government money. Have to seriously think about it. If we do, U.S. is the last government from which we will accept money. Can envision \$10 million in a few years; I would like to see it go to \$40 million. This organization will not only fund small, unknown organizations, but will also fund grantees who will get money from other sources.

**A:** With regard to priorities, it is most important to think about approach; being receptive to what people need for their self-determination. What we've done over the years at Inter-American Foundation is to think about travel grants. To visit others in different regions. We don't fund human rights as such, but it is called grassroots development. Will be happy to help as we've funded in almost every Latin American country and have funded over 4,400 projects over the years.

**A:** Even large human rights groups suffer from lack of resources. That argues for including US groups, too, as international human rights work in the U.S. is grossly under-funded.

**Q: How or when do you foresee funding these groups when they do exist? If there are funders here who already want to give, is it ready?**

**MS:** We already have several donations. Philanthropic Ventures Fund is receiving our funds and we have capacity to pay out grants. With regarding to proposals, we've gotten mostly from U.S. based international human rights organizations. The new director will be starting soon. But until we know what region we are funding, it can't work.

**Q: Have you gone to talk about which regions? And which people to contact?**

**MS:** We haven't gotten very far.

### I. BUSINESS MEETING SESSION

Presenter: Mona Younis, Mertz Gilmore Foundation

Mona began by pointing out the many and varied ways each Steering Committee member and the IHRFG Assistant contributed to making the meeting a success. She expressed the Committee's regrets over Anna Nygaard Yelk's soon-to-end tenure on the Steering Committee due to her departure from the H.M. Jackson Foundation in September. Anna's remarkable dedication and thoughtful input will be missed sorely by her colleagues.

#### ➤ Old Business: Previous meeting's decisions

- IHRFG has joined the Council on Foundations affinity group. Submitted session proposal for the Council's 2003 conference. Thanks to Valentine Doyle for a very creative proposal idea.
- After considering everything involved, the Steering Committee decided to postpone obtaining 501(c) 3 status. Instead, we have asked the Philanthropic Ventures Fund to set up a donor-advised fund for the IHRFG.
- The Web site is still not ready. Will explain why.
- We clearly succeeded in inviting a "big name" speaker for our July meeting—the dinner event with Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, is tonight.

#### ➤ Where We Are: Accomplishments in 2000-2002

We've come a long way since our July 2000 meeting at Ford! Twenty-three funders attended that meeting—all fit on one page! Moreover, it was a one-day meeting and it did not end with an address by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The meeting was significant in another way: It marked a definite turning point for the IHRFG. Established in 1994, the IHRFG largely focused on semi-annual meetings with experts on timely subjects of interest to funders. As the secretariat, the Henry M. Jackson Foundation carried virtually the entire load of holding and organizing meetings; they kept it alive and going. But the field was undergoing many changes and developments and these began to influence the funders who funded it.

At the July 2000 meeting, participants were keetching about writing so many decline letters without being able to direct grant-seekers elsewhere. There was a sense of a burgeoning field – something to celebrate – but no comparable growth in US foundation support. The July 2000 meeting launched us on a new course. One discussion facilitated by Melanie Oliviero (MacArthur) committed us to what came to be known as the Leveraging Project. Equally important was a discussion facilitated by Lara Iglitzin (Henry M. Jackson) regarding our goals and strategies, which produced the current form of our meetings and agenda.

From 23 to 85 meeting participants represents stupendous growth in interest in the IHRFG and attests to the Group meeting a need. We are now 199 grantmakers, representing over 90 foundations but the qualitative growth is even more impressive:

- Initially, the "international" in IHRFG modified "human rights." Human rights funding was understood as funding "out there" in developing countries. Now we have participants who fund human rights domestically in the US, Canada, Europe.
- We kept the "international" in IHRFG but now it modifies "group": There are participants from Canada, the UK, the Netherlands, Poland and Ghana, and India is a possibility. More work needs to be done to expand participation beyond US foundations.
- "Human Rights" has changed also. It is no longer only civil and political rights but a broad range of rights reflecting the "interrelated" and "interdependent" nature of all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights.
- Methodologically, rather than only legal work and approaches to advancing human rights, the Group is committed to providing a forum for dialogue between a variety of approaches. So we have participants who fund grassroots

organizing, human rights education, constituency building, etc. as well as those who fund legal work and “naming and shaming.”

These are important developments. They are not, however, innovations of the IHRFG; they are reflections of developments in the field. If the IHRFG can take credit for something it is that it is becoming a better reflection of the field and more responsive to its needs.

### **What need are we filling?**

The IHRFG is providing services to grantmakers. We're becoming a resource for funders exploring human rights, fielding many calls and responding to meeting requests and information. When they're finally up and running, the Web site and database should become important sources of information, latest news and articles. We will develop the site as needed and we'll depend on participants' to update their own funding information and share articles and information with their colleagues.

The IHRFG should also provide a service to grant-seekers. The database should certainly help facilitate their access to vital information. And the Fund for Global Human Rights will be filling an extremely important niche in the area of funding for small human rights groups around the world.

But there is much more that we can do to meet the challenge presented by the growing needs of human rights NGOs. For the coming year, the Steering Committee has committed itself to the following:

### ➤ **Where We Are Going: Plans for 2002-2003**

The Steering Committee will work to:

1. Expand the participation of grantmakers from around the world to become genuinely “international” by:
  - linking with Ford, OSI and others with field offices abroad to identify grantmakers in the global South;
  - establish a human rights “Interest Group” with the European Foundation Center's Trans-Atlantic Donors Dialogue.
2. Expand the participation of grantmakers from other fields by:
  - forming sub-groups to explore areas of common interest and potential collaboration with our colleagues in areas like health, education, the environment, etc.;
  - reaching out to other grantmaking bodies, like family foundations, small foundations, community foundations, as well as thematic affinity groups.
3. Develop the Web site and database to serve human rights funders and grant-seekers.
4. Oversee the implementation of the Leveraging Project.

These require commitments from IHRFG participants and financial resources. So far we have covered costs with requests on an as-needed basis, and the response from participants has been terrific: The Leveraging Project Report, meeting costs, and the Mary Robinson dinner could not have been possible without this sort of support. Some participants – General Service Foundation and the United Nations Foundation -- volunteered to contribute annual support. We encourage other participants to consider doing the same. And of course, the Mertz Gilmore Foundation continues to contribute by allowing me to take on the role of coordinator as part of my job and hiring our new (part-time) assistant, Mijoung Chang. Mertz Gilmore is also covering most of the running costs.

To conclude, we are moving forward -- the fact that the UN High Commissioner agreed to meet with us in Chicago in April and accepted our invitation for tonight's dinner attests further to that – but there is much yet to do. Thank you.

### ➤ **SUB-GROUP REPORTS**

- **Human Rights and the Environment**  
Valentine Doyle (Lawson Valentine Foundation): Two outreach events have been planned: sessions on environmental rights are human rights for the Environmental Grantmakers Association conference in September 2002 and Council on Foundations conference in April 2003. The sessions will include short films/clips on the environment and human rights and funders from environmental and human rights fields on the panel talk about how they intersect not only in the area of civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights. We encourage participants to join this sub-group, become involved and suggest ideas for work in this area.
- **Human Rights and Peace and Security**

Tom Leney (UN Foundation) was delayed so Ram Manikkalingam (Rockefeller Foundation) and Conrad Martin (Stewart Mott Charitable Trust) presented: A joint symposium was held in May with IHRFG, Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) and the UN Foundation; approximately 30 people attended to hear a number of panelists speak on various aspects of human rights and peace and security in three phases (pre-, during, post-conflict). We need to build our arguments for peace. There are obvious areas of common interest between human rights and peace and security funders and movements to end conflict. PSFG's next working meeting will be held in Belgium in September with about 20 European funders attending. They will be soliciting ideas for the group, for a series of workshops, and to discuss strategies.

- **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

Julie Richardson (General Service Foundation): Warren Allmand who headed the sub-group has left his position at Rights and Democracy. The Steering Committee thought that perhaps the focus for this group is too broad and that it might help to narrow it down to specific ESC rights of interest to participants. Kevin Callahan (Rights and Democracy) expressed readiness to take on where Warren left and head the sub-group as it is (ESCR). Kathy Sreedhar and Larry Cox volunteered to work on this as well. A meeting of ESCR NGOs is going to be held in Mexico City on November 5-8 where a global network of ESCR groups will be launched. Donors are welcome to attend and this is a possible way to link up. There is still an enormous lack of ESCR funders as compared to civil and political rights. If anyone is interested forming in another sub-group on labor rights, please contact Julie Richardson.

- **Web site and database**

Despite repeated promises from the Web site consultant to complete the work in spring 2002, the site is still not operational. Mona explained the difficulty we have had with the consultant, and that a decision was made to contract someone else. Mijoung Chang (Mertz Gilmore) provided a demonstration of the Web site and database in their current form. A number of helpful suggestions were made for improvements and additions to the site. It was also noted that, given that the database promises to be a valuable resource for grant-seekers, IHRFG participants will need to update their funding information once the database is up and running, and it will be easy to do so with the system that is being designed.

- **Other Business**

- IHRFG logo: Participants chose a logo from three design options. [Used for the first time as letterhead with this mailing.]
- Visit to the Office of UN High Commissioner on Human Rights in Geneva: Participants agreed to accept the invitation from the OHCHR to visit. Spring 2003 was determined to be the best time, prior to the IHRFG meeting. Will explore additional meetings in Geneva with the European Council, NGOs, etc. Cora Weiss will work with Tom Leney to explore this.
- Making IHRFG participants' contact information available to others: No objections were raised to our providing the full contact information to funders who request it.
- Next meetings: January 13-14, 2003 in San Francisco; July 14-15, 2003 in New York. Costs of January meeting will be covered by **Rockefeller Foundation, Wellspring Advisors, and UN Foundation.**

## **II. PROGRAMMING TRENDS SESSION**

Facilitator: Julie Richardson, General Service Foundation

The idea for this session emerged after September 11<sup>th</sup> and was held for the first time at our January 2002 meeting. That was such a success that the Steering Committee decided to try it again. This time around we examined "gaps in the field." Participants were invited to share their observations regarding current gaps in human rights funding, whether programmatic (activities or programs), substantive (rights or issues) or geographic (countries or regions). The objective was to assist and inform grantmakers with regard to the prevailing and/or emerging resource needs of the human rights movement. Human Rights funders are often asked about gaps in field. The Steering Committee will try to synthesize the list into a document for reference.

- Funding for HR in India: Rights have become trendy. Lots of European funders talk about funding rights. But what does that mean? Programmatic changes? In India, besides Ford and UU Holdeen Fund, no other U.S. funders fund the Indian human rights movement. UU Holdeen supports the most marginalized groups of people in India (Dalits, women, etc.) on whatever rights they are fighting for, for them to organize, etc. Q: Have you tapped into diaspora

funds? A: You can't mention "rights based" work in the diaspora community. May need to be creative with our language on rights to reach others.

- U.S. Patriot Act: I don't see much activity by funders on this issue. The language of the Act is so broad. Lots of groups have shut down. Can we fund to make materials available? Though it is focused in the U.S., it has tremendous implications for people worldwide. National Network of Grantmakers will be holding regional meetings in the fall, the theme is the "war on terrorism," to see the impacts on grassroots social justice organizations. Anyone who funds organizations overseas can come under threat. In Canada a similar situation exists. A coalition is being formed, and is hoping to bring cases to court. One idea is to do a mailing with information on the Patriot Act to funders.
- Disability rights and poor in US: Lots of groups trying to focus on human rights in the U.S. Poor people's organizations, groups consisting of poor folks get little money, even though groups working *for* poor get more. People with disabilities organizations taking on a human rights approach, too. They're the least funded and most in need.
- Sexual minority rights: Last year, noticed little funding and decreasing funding for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender organizations internationally. Only a handful funding these groups. Lots of these groups doing dangerous work. In terms of foundation support, there is hesitancy.
- Israel and Palestine: Jewish women's organizations are saying no amount of money can help with their problems. What can we as funders do differently?
- Response to globalization: Transnational social groups, focusing on treaties like NAFTA and other trade agreements. Land rights, economic rights in the Third World. Going to NGO sector and intermediaries, but little money to these groups. How to address corporate power. Same way of a challenge as slavery, apartheid, etc. implications of this on environment, politics, labor rights, indigenous rights, etc, is incredible. Important issue to include in our discussions. IHRFG had a whole meeting on this issue before. Maybe time for another whole day meeting.
- Labor rights: Still few funders funding labor rights.
- Media: January meeting raised issue of media and its role in educating and advancing human rights.
- Methodology: Struggling with functional distinction between confrontational and collaboration human rights groups. Challenge in developing world is creating rights that will go against fragile structures of government/nation. How do we promote participatory democracy? How can we change, add dimension of getting economic and social enhancement to this? People engaged in this struggle are saying this can be done concretely. Do budget analysis work (Web site available on budget and rights).
- Latin American migrants: Trying to understand what's happening with migrants, Latin American migrants. Remittances to Latin America -- how do you channel this money into good uses for development agencies? Poor people are sending money to poorer people and maintain links with hometown community. How to encourage the linkages and in terms of thinking of rights? How can you set up in Mexican, Honduran communities so they do not need to emigrate, so they have choices?
- Small grants: In every area, grants below \$10,000 and even \$5,000 are rare. Foundation Center doesn't even include grants that are less than \$10,000. A lot of opportunities exist to make grants to NGOs in the developing world. Gap between corporate grantmaking and other kinds of grantmaking.
- Regional work: We're only talking about NGOs but we need to find ways to work with government, national agencies. Sometimes governments form commissions, even though they are often forced to do so, these may provide a window of opportunity that donors can use to make them meet standards. In Asia, many set up standards, and commissions play an important role with NGOs and government. Regional work is important, and we need to support.
- Community or collective rights: We're thinking about rights relating to individuals. There are rights that belong to communities. With indigenous people, there are issues of rights to land, fishing, etc. Also other rights, such as right to national determination, right to food sovereignty. Rights of larger groups, from small communities to nations. This is absent from the discourse. These collective rights can be outlined in case summaries. Will volunteer to work on this (*Rainy Blue Cloud Greensfelder*).

- Shareholder activism: What we do with our investments, in terms of corporate investments. How can we do a better job with this?
- Universal jurisdiction and Africa: How to join forces of African organizations with northern groups to push space for international jurisdiction and end of impunity. Build to use in human rights framework more aggressively for these organizations. It's an institutional, long-term effort needed for prevention.
- Water rights: Issue of water. From human rights perspective, it allows you to get to the privatization issue, besides basic human rights issue.
- Labor rights: Suggestion for the FGHR to look at systematic approaches. Different ways to move forward. Benefited from attention to this issue, but still lack of funding.
- Mexico: Funders feel that Mexico has graduated since President Fox has been elected, but it's still in a financial crisis.
- Accountability of non-state actors: How do you make non-state actors more accountable? Still state-centric how we talk about this, especially those who have big cross-borderings. In human rights field, there are ways to hold government responsible, but very few for private sectors. Several groups working on this though on national and international levels. There's a lot of action, but a lot of difficulty, too. With European funders, this has been a big issue. Check European Foundation Center.
- Right to know: A global right to know. Holding corporations accountable. Right to know policy.
- Foundation News and Commentary began focusing on economics and globalization. Maybe we can do an entire commentary over the next year on these gaps, since there are many issues covered here.
- Prisoners' rights: One big gap not mentioned: prisoners rights and criminal justice system. Part of this will be anti-death penalty movement around U.S. human rights and funds to focus on community-based level. Balance the gap of work being done internationally.
- Columbia and Venezuela are becoming very unstable countries.

### **Suggestions on follow up**

- Rank areas of interest to participants. Create more sub-groups and enlist more volunteers. Find ways to group these issues.
- Have a committee to do a regular "gap check." Revisit these issues.
- Acknowledged limited and poor quantitative data on human rights funding, which is often requested by foundation trustees.
- Acknowledged receiving many requests for information about funding in certain areas of the field.
- How many of us are influenced by meetings like this to change our guidelines or programs? Will inform how much involved we will get. More in depth conversation like yesterday helps to understand issues better, and can bring this information back to my foundation. For future, ongoing use, bring three or four areas to learn to share our grantmaking. It's helpful for FGHR to see where people think it's useful.

### **III. FUNDERS SOAPBOX**

Facilitator: Valentine Doyle, Lawson Valentine Foundation

- Jonathan Pfeizer (OSI) – Software application for human rights organizations available to monitor human rights abuses -- Martus System. Enter information in a local computer in secure environment, which will exist in servers hosted around the world that maintain the data, in case records are destroyed.
- Joe Wilson (Public Welfare) – introduced JoAnn Chase as new ED of National Network of Grantmakers. Now NNG is located in NYC and will soon launch regional workshops in NYC. Will also hold events in DC, Bay Area, Tucson, and other cities.
- Larry Cox (Ford) – International network of ESCR will be starting. Check [www.escr-net.org](http://www.escr-net.org) as a resource for donors, which has several databases: one on litigation on ESCR; another on donors. And for Dorothy Thomas (Shaler

Adams) spoke about another network of U.S. human rights organizations recently held a very successful meeting on how to advance human rights in the U.S., with a diverse group of attendees.

- Cynthia Ryan (Schooner) – Grantmakers Without Borders will have its annual meeting on Nov 17-19 in DC on global philanthropy. If GWOB gets \$25,000 in donations by Sept 1, it will be met by a matching grant.
- Shalini Nataraj (Reebok) – On the board of Grassroots International, who is doing exciting work. Involved in looking at concept of security, especially in today's climate of militarism. What is true security? They organize on grassroots level for basic rights such as land, water, etc. and overlap with fighting for rights and empowerment. Facilitated visit exchanges, with people from campesinas going to Palestine. Need to look at how to fund groups here in the U.S.
- Mark Rand (FNTG) – World Social Forum. Organizing another delegation in January 2003. Started two years ago, organized by folks in global justice movement, as an alternative to World Economic Forum. Theme is "another world is possible." Expected 5,000 people but about 60,000 people came in 2002. It's a space to talk about specific strategies with 300-400 workshops held on several campuses. Well-organized meeting with municipal buses accommodating to the participants. Headsets for various language translations were available. Eight organizations in Brazil organized the meeting, along with an international network. Government donated about \$1 million.
- Lani Shaw (General Service) – Conference in October by Funders Network on Population and Reproductive Rights. Theme is to make links and be efficient in the movement. Will have panel on reproductive rights as human rights. Coalition of organizations in Mexico working on campaign for civil rights ([www.laronda.org.mx](http://www.laronda.org.mx)). Integrate in human rights and political rights and to raise awareness. National universities have been supportive, and thinking possibly about adding to curriculum.
- Katherine Acey (Astraea) – LGBT issues in human rights: Astraea has an international fund and an U.S. fund for LGBT rights under socio-economic framework. Internationally, they have the Social Change Opportunity Fund--to work with a limited amount of organizations in every place, giving multi-year grants for capacity building, operating costs. Organizations will work for institutional social change (health systems, school systems, etc) for at least one to two years. Grant budget is \$300,000. These are groups doing human rights work on LGBT issues and a lot of these groups don't have capacity to come together or have interactions with groups in the U.S.
- William Cotter (Oak) — Benefit from other funders in other fields in civil and political rights. Possibly have a sub-group on civil and political rights.

#### **IV. NETWORKING SESSION: "Human Rights Practitioner Training Programs"**

Facilitator: Nancy Stockford, John Merck Fund

##### **Panelists:**

**Helena Brykarz**, Program Executive  
Goldman Environmental Prize  
Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund  
San Francisco, CA

**Michael Gibbons**, Associate Director  
Banyan Tree Foundation  
Washington, DC

**Flora Liebich**, Senior Governance and Human Rights Specialist—Asia Branch  
Canadian International Development Agency  
Québec, CANADA

**Nicole Vaillancourt**  
Senior Development Officer  
Canadian International Development Agency  
Québec, CANADA



**NS: Can you talk about your organizations?**

**HB:** Goldman doesn't fund in human rights area, but our programs have human rights implications. The fund focuses on large environmental problems, as does the Prize, which we award to environmentalists in different countries. Many of our environmentalists work at great risk to themselves. In 1995, we gave the award to Ken Saro Wiwa in Nigeria, who was organizing people to respond to the oil corporations' abuses. He was executed in 1995. We didn't want this to happen again. We saw a huge gap between the environmental and human rights movements, so we funded collaborative efforts in grassroots advocacy, legal strategies, and corporate accountabilities.

**FL:** CIDA is a Canadian government agency and provides development assistance throughout the world. I work in Asia with Southeast Asia Fund for Institutional and Legal Development (SEAFILD). It assists regional efforts and was developed in 1996 to address rights in southeast Asia. It was an innovative project at the time. Project ends in September 2002, and we have funded 140 human rights initiatives, including human rights training awareness, women's rights, child rights, media training. CIDA introduced results based management, which made them think about how to evaluate. How you get your components to articulate those results?

**MG:** Banyan Tree funds wide access to basic education in poor countries and to advance human rights. Their main concern for the last five years has been to build capacity of southern human rights organizations. The main way to do this is by training and capacity building activities. In December, we convened the project leaders and managers of all our projects for a roundtable discussion on issues and strategies, to define terrain of capacity building. A whole range of questions came out about principles of adult education and learning.

**NS: Can you talk about particular training programs?**

**HB:** I didn't think of our program as training. Amnesty and the Sierra Club did a lot of work with local affiliates. They also do youth leadership program to protect rights of environmentalists. The Earthrights School in Thailand works with youth; they've created a resource center and a training manual. Organization created a resource center in D.C.

**FL:** Human rights training through Human Rights Foundation. Every summer they offer a three-week training course around the world to NGO activists. It started in the 1950's in the Prince Edward Island cottage of John Humphries with the drafting of the UN Convention on Human Rights. Then the Canadian Human Rights Foundation took over and now holds it annually, and there are 40 participants from Asia alone. Train on international human rights instruments, advocacy campaign, with a strong focus on economic, social and cultural rights. Started doing regional training in the Philippines, which brought activists together. That led to the Thai participants coming together and preparing recommendations to the Thai committee for a national human rights commission. Another training, with Malaysian participants, asked for help with the Malaysian Human Rights Commission—they feared it was not independent enough. It's better now.

**MG:** We funded advocates' training at Columbia University's Center for the Study of Human Rights, which is a residential human rights program bringing folks from around the world. NGO leaders who want to further human rights actions. We also support Lawyers Committee for Human Rights refugee training program, human rights abuses of refugees in West Africa. They brought leaders together, had annual workshops for annual problem solving, and an NGO consortium on solving refugees rights systematically. All cases raised the issue regarding adult learning of activist leaders to organizational capacity to work on human rights. It's hard to maintain this chain. After the training completed, the question is has that person's capacity changed? It's hard to track, and expensive to evaluate.

**NS: Can you explain how you did it?**

**MG:** From speaking with others, measure is to figure at what level can we say the results correlate with training. CIDA is given result oriented. What helps is to define before the training program what specific questions will be addressed. In retrospect, we realized we needed to do this. Also, find out about the training. Training is done in about everything, so we need to understand what those are, who are learning, and how they're going to effect human rights condition. Help focus the trainee about the expectations. The day training ends, need to know how to apply it. Challenge is implied in feeling accountable to human rights role, clarifying what measures are attained and how to link to human rights conditions.

**FL:** Bureaucratic answer in SEAFILD: results based management. We look at creation of human rights institutions in the countries, results of lessons learned being applied, sustainable training programs established, southeast Asian partners. Logical framework analysis and questionnaire was developed. Activities, such as training, are inputs. Output is short time results. Outcomes are long term results. Impact is program level results, of the conditions of human rights in their countries. Southeast Asian and Canadian networks were being made. Let southeast Asia define their issues. Produce long term results and sustainable regional networking. Also allowed Canadian capacity building, and to let them build knowledge about partnerships. How do you translate this to someone who wants to do anti-corruption posters? We worked with a consultant, who came up with an adapted questionnaire.

**NV:** Results based management was first seen as problematic by program officers, NGOs and regional governments because it was a very rigid, systematic ways to design projects. First, it was done without any operational tools. What we found was that people working with us didn't understand what we wanted in terms of information. We wanted to

understand how intervention was going to bring change. We would ask questions like, "how does your organization work?" We walked them through series of questions: how was the organization created? What experience did they have? What is the issue? How did the problem arise? What people did it affect? What solutions do you bring?" We wanted to know what kind of change it would bring (in attitude, professional practice, policy, legislation, etc). What results were they looking for? If it was a huge change, it might need more than one workshop.

Some NGOs would say they wanted workshop to protect migrant workers. We would ask if that is sufficient. What was also important after this is also what kind of risks are involved? In one country, a group wanted to work with factory workers about their rights. We saw a problem... they were migrant workers and viewed as people with no rights. They wanted to train the migrant workers and then do advocacy work. But we pointed out that that could be dangerous to the workers. How could they check in the middle to see how they were doing? Were they being realistic—could, say, two people in four countries do the job? Was the budget feasible? We also tried to make them see what they saw as results. We invested with the organization and helped them develop other projects at the same time. Process was very worthwhile.

**HB:** We're a small foundation with a staff of 18. We don't have a formal evaluation program. We rely on reports from organizations. We also look at how many people were involved, coverage people got in press, what materials they distributed. People have been talking more about environment and human rights together. When we first funded, human rights and environmental funders didn't fund each other, but we see a change in overall attitude. Amnesty and the Sierra Club collaborated to release a Russian activist.

**NS: Training programs vary in length, location, duration. Viewpoint on advantages, disadvantages in different formats? Long, short, over days, over months?**

**MG:** Knowledge – sectoral rights, change benefit group needs, what is a right? We created a typology on different factors and have various approaches. Skills – organizing, monitoring and reporting, program planning. We generally look for smart choices for goals and context, trying to logically understand: are the participants the rights learners? The right trainers? Best place for location to train? All of these questions depend. Usually interacting with grantee in this discussion. Break down these variables for context and need. Choices of design elements in relation to the need. We learn along with the grantee. We don't ask for a final proposal, we want to be in a dialogue.

**Q: What are the advantages to bringing folks, for example, to Columbia University?**

**MG:** In-depth learning in a diverse, multi-cultural group. When folks come out of workplace, they are stimulated by different input, and learning curve is high. Feel sense of solidarity. Less pressure from time to do work. Challenges are distance from actual work environment. The lessons have to be general for everyone (in context, etc) and the adaptation is up to the individual. Ford put out an international human rights review, which recommended a follow up program after training program. If you don't have follow up, the circle is not completed. Training concentrates on inputs of new knowledge, but the rest of the project is thinking and tinkering through real life. Need to talk with someone after training to make it concrete. Follow up is critical but often not funded or structured in. Workshop training is the beginning of the process.

**NS: Does Columbia have a follow up?**

**MG:** No, not a formal one. Hard for them to follow up on everyone at Columbia.

**A:** Columbia gets a lot out of this. Value placed for Columbia as well as trainees. One tension is the focus on individual versus organization. We need to focus on organization and capacity building. In addition to annual assessment, there is question of how to build alumnae. Funders need to think about alumnae, think about best results possible. You can change the design by what you learn from people—create an alumni network. They will help you get the design you need. We can learn from stuff from the past.

**HB:** Program we funded are activists in the U.S. and overseas. We make sure we don't preach to the converted, reach out to folks who will get a lot out of this. Haven't seen corporate people for workshop such as corporate responsibility, other than students and state actors. We look at the environmental and human rights records of corporations based in California.

**FL:** One thing brought to CIDA is that folks were encouraged to build in 10-20% of their budget for evaluation after six months. Let time pass to see if implementation is happening. SEAFILD has had varying degrees of success. Training on media didn't bring results we were looking for. In this case, participants came from wide variety of countries, different political cultures, had different expectations, some didn't have clear vision, no common language. In Asia, people are sent as a reward or because they speak English. Programs that touched on practical needs have been successful. On issue of training at location or elsewhere, it's hard to say. Cost is a factor; we want to avoid freebies. We will have a program in law with Vietnamese, placements in Canadian law offices for practice as well as theory.

**NV:** Because SEAFILD is mostly regional projects, we had to be careful about sensitive issues.

**Q: Do research why funders fund capacity building? Does it work? Funders don't normally want to fund training capacity building that have the long cycle, the tailends. There are different standards of best practices in one place, and another in another countries.**

**MG:** We can mention several principles we look for in these training programs. Our hope is to be screening more for principles that work, backed up by research. One is that it be designed by grantees need and human rights program goals. Is change in skill, knowledge or attitude what you're looking at? When learners are not motivated to learn, it's because you are not motivated by what you are learning, not because you are not motivated. Another principles is involving participants in all levels of training, needs to be negotiated. Third principle is very useful to implement: blend external and internal information, that is, learner's new input. Sharing systematized learning can construct new knowledge. Fourth principle: build in time to practice what you've learned and to implement these ideas. Work out action plans for the field.

**FL:** Some of our trainees come back in government—we get a sort of train the trainers.

**Q: Can you give specific examples?**

**MG:** Group found out they needed to group things thematically. Combining training with coaching/ mentoring. Trying to help training experience link to action planning to changing conditions.

**HB:** Because we fund in such a small area, we know who the experts are.

**Q: I think we know what best training looks like. But is there is resistance to funding best training programs because of cost?**

**FL:** Other problems can be political sensitivities. We funded in the Philippines, but hard for folks to agree on the process. Also, abolition of the death penalty... that's another sensitive case.

**A:** I have just the opposite experience. In India, everyone funds capacity building. There are many advocacy training programs in India, but what else is there? A woman from India who came to U.S. said she didn't see any feminist perspective in that program. All the perspective you want should be there in the training program, besides processes.

**A:** We tend to focus on individuals and on issues—we don't think of organizations and communities. Really, the key thing is how we can link individuals to the community and context? Great leaders aren't often the best folks to train. Moving a campaign is different from building and organization.

**Q: When you bring someone from the Third World to the U.S., you can create an elite who know it all and don't want to share knowledge. Sometimes we're kingmakers? How do you guard against that?**

**A:** Selection process is very important. You have to do lot of follow up. Talking about Columbia's program. We pick people because they have connections to the organizations. You have to call community members. We do shortchange ourselves when we choose design but not careful about selection process. Assessment is very important. Need to look at the trainer at the same time periodically.

**Q: I heard two different things. We have to have a good selection process and we are building an elite. There is a difference from elite to elitist. Why not bring an elite? Our question: why bring them here to the North? Heard we need to expose them to American democratic process. But sometimes we just create an elite who realize they want to live like Americans.**

**A:** I have one reason why they should. Ford brought leaders to the U.S. They worked half time in advocacy with an American organization while doing training.

**A:** For one training center, a large part is identifying folks and giving them training tools (writing proposals, dealing with Congress). If you look at alumnae who are women, a number of them have becomes mayors and leaders in politics.

**A:** There's a danger in focusing on one program. It used to be the norm to bring people here, but the norm now is in-country. In terms of learning advocacy, folks can learn those here as well as in the global south. Human rights internships used to bring people to Human Rights Watch, but now the majority is having African organizations work with other African organizations and learn it there. As for donor responsibilities, very few donors will do all the best practices and fund the whole process, because of pressure from other donors. We give just enough money so it will fail.

**FL:** When SEAFILD looks for participants, we look for champions, not elitists, from everywhere. People who can advance human rights, who can speak with government, with information from local NGOs. Canadian missions abroad and local NGOs are helpful in finding people.

**MG:** Norms of training have shifted from "technology transfer" from North to South. Increasingly, we get more lateral access than North-South access. Finding ways to seek out ways to best fit. What is the advantage of doing it differently? Other thing is training...we don't do training to individuals for individual's sake. The process is to fund person in the organization. Train the individual to change the organization to change the human rights environment. We're faced with individual learners in order to play a better role in that organization, for that organization to better function in that context. Change skills, attitude, knowledge to improve organization.

**Q: Have you documented that chain of change?**

**MG:** No, it's been a struggle.

**A:** If you can show this, maybe you can prove to funders, to fund the whole process.

**MG:** This may be where co-funding will be helpful.

**A:** I have a feeling that this doesn't work. If you show with documents, maybe it will help.

**A:** We need to be more careful about scholarships programs, such as those giving \$60,000 to two students. OSI brings Burmese students to study at Harvard. But if OSI brought them closer to where they are, in India, the Philippines, then they can send 20 times as many students to study in these countries.

**A:** We need to know how much money we're putting into this. About the debate on bringing folks here or there, there are benefits to both ways. People who have gone through this have contributed greatly.

**Q: For building capacity building for organizations, are there specific elements of design that you look for?**

**FL:** Key is sustainability for CIDA, whatever mechanism it took. We don't fund scholarships. In SEAFILD, we do scholarships. At SEAFILD, we sent three activists to a university in Thailand. One-off funding doesn't take organization too far. We support small organizations or initiatives when no one else will (eg. started a conference in Bangkok on trafficking women and children). The problem is when the person goes back to the organization—how to support them. We also look at other funders' donation.

**MG:** When someone mentioned about the watering and lack of financial resources, the problem is financial trouble of the organization.

**Q: With the selection process, what's the experience of organizations sending more than one individual and their roles? And their commitments?**

**FL:** It really depends on nature of training problems. For human rights training, yes, there are more than one. There is commitment to go back, but have had one or two defects over several years. It's been monitored by the Canadian Human Rights Commission. But a number of other projects come up during the process.

**MG:** Individuals come and go back to their organizations. Things have changed, they have moved from a trainee to a changing agent. Make that explicit in the program.

**A:** At a training program in Amherst, they will always have two people from one organization for the program.

**A:** I'd like to make a small argument about the question of linear planning and results. We funded a women's group in Bogota, Colombia to find space for child care, who have been successful. For 10 years after the program, we had no contact with them. But they have evolved into a metropolitan association, which was having legislation passed. Another case of a group of Mapuche Indians in southwest Argentina, who wanted a community store in the desert to lower food prices and help market goatskins. I evaluated the project five years later with the folks. I asked: What's the biggest change you see? One man said people started talking. They can confront outsiders. We have experiences like this. Grassroots development framework have to list out intangible outputs as well as tangibles. Is this linear model from science the best way to analyze this? What about chaos theory (butterfly effect)?

**Q: Building capacity of group is why we need to bring activists to the West. Giving support to institution. In terms of networking, international networking... a lot of this happen in the U.S. Question is whether you would support regional network and international network outside of the U.S.?**

**HB:** At the Earthrights International school in Thailand, the graduates made local human rights group. We support a great group in Argentina that works on human rights and the environment. Grantees have come together in South Africa.

**FL:** One focus is regional focus on regional organizations. We have trained people in regions on conflict resolution. Conflict center was built up in southeast Asia (Cambodia). It is to develop capacity to develop region. At the University of Victoria, there is an alternative dispute resolution.

**MG:** Rights Action channels money to small local groups over the last few years. They have been asked from smaller groups for training, so they look for Guatemalan organizations that can provide it. Their approach is to build indigenous organizations and to build relationships, of local groups to national groups in the capital city.

**Q: Can it sometimes be a problem to use something culturally sensitive as dispute resolution to groups like in Asia?**

**FL:** We have unexpected results. CIDA learned how Buddhist monks dealt with this issue. In all these groups, the Canadian group does not lead these projects. They discuss about cultural sensitivities, etc. Canadian organizations feel like they learned from these other organizations.

***July 16<sup>th</sup> - Special Closing Event***

**Dinner and Conversation with Mary Robinson,  
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
St. Bart's Café and St. Bartholomew's Church**

**Welcome** by Mona Younis, IHRFG Coordinator

**Opening Remarks** by Gara Lamarche, Open Society Institute

**Address by Her Excellency Mary Robinson**

*This event was made possible by the following IHRFG participants:*

Shaler Adams Foundation  
The Atlantic Philanthropies, Inc (USA)  
Ford Foundation  
General Service Foundation  
John Merck Fund  
Mertz Gilmore Foundation  
Reebok Human Rights Foundation  
Rights and Democracy  
Rockefeller Foundation  
Samuel Rubin Foundation  
United Nations Foundation