

**International Human Rights Funders Group Semi Annual Meeting**  
**James Irvine Foundation**  
**San Francisco, CA**  
**January 13-14, 2003**

**Monday, January 13**

***Welcoming Remarks***

Cora Weiss, Samuel Rubin Foundation

Good morning, members of the axis of good.

My commiserations to you fans of the '49ers.

How many of you have sent messages of congratulations to Gov. George Ryan? You don't have to be a Republican nor mired in scandal to do the right thing. He's given us the best human rights news in years, emptied the death rows of Illinois.

Welcome to California where lessons can be written every day on water, energy, and human rights. Where windmills stand in stark contrast on the hill behind Lawrence Livermore nuclear laboratory; where on Friday, volunteer monitors were stationed at INS offices to observe and protect from abuse young men from mostly Muslim countries including the "axis of evil," who were required to register.

Welcome to another meeting of the International Human Rights Funders Group at the comfortable and generous home of the Irvine Foundation to whom we say, Thank you, again. And thank you, too, UN Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and an anonymous donor member for covering the cost of this meeting. They volunteered because we are not a paying membership organization, something we might talk about soon.

We're supposed to come away from this meeting better informed, better networked, and better equipped, so we better get started.

Welcome to what may be the darkest year of our lives since the end of the end of World War II, where only a terrible miracle - a heightened oil crisis in Venezuela or increased nuclear threats from N. Korea, or the wonderful miracle of massive public opinion- might deter or avert a war against Iraq.

MedAct, a London based global health organization, released a report on the health and environmental costs of war in Iraq: - up to 4 million deaths if nuclear weapons are used; ½ million in a more contained conflict with a devastating impact on the lives, health and environment of combatants and Iraqis and neighboring countries; it could damage the global economy and thus indirectly harm the health and well being of millions more.

The aftermath of any war could include famine, epidemics, refugees, displaced people, failure of agriculture.

Welcome to the international year of freshwater. At the launch, UN Deputy Secretary General Louise Frechette said, "Freshwater issues are at the heart of humankind's hopes for peace and development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." India has a Campaign for People's Rights to Water, and Water is Life is the Bolivian anti privatization movement.

The World Bank has predicted that World War III will be over water.

Welcome to an effort to get an environmental assessment for operating four ground based interceptors at Vanderbilt Air Force Base. Interceptors are kinetic energy - a "hit to kill" system that collides with a target war head in space. I always hoped that we would have the right to a heaven free of weapons.

Welcome to Jesus Tecu Osorio, a Maya Achi Guatemalan Indian, co founder of the Rabinal Museum where genocide is documented. He's a survivor of the 1982 massacre by the Guatemalan Army against people who opposed forced re settlement to make room for the Chixoy Dam and Hydro Electric Plant funded by the World Bank and Inter American Development Bank. Jesus arrives in February. He lost his parents and all but one sibling in the massacre.

Never forget Arundhati Roy, arrested for protesting forced removal of people for huge dam construction in India.

Welcome to the Human Rights Watch study released last week in time for the World Bank donor meeting in Bali. It claims that Indonesian police and company security forces are responsible for persistent human rights abuses against indigenous communities in the massive paper pulp industry in Indonesia. Abuses include land seizures without compensation and brutal attacks on demonstrators.

Welcome to the disclosure by the Pentagon of 27 secret tests of biological and chemical agents on 5500 military personnel.

Welcome to the Asia Social Forum where a call was made for partnership with the Earth to ensure sustainability; a call for partnership between people to ensure peace and between government and people to ensure democracy and justice.

Welcome to the World Social Forum. But remember the 62,000 hectares and beaches 2 degrees south of the equator appropriated by the Air Force to build a giant rocket base. The forests gave way to roads, a launch pad and barracks. \$300 million and 22 years later it is abandoned. Brazil began building the world's largest bridge span and largest hydro electric dam on the border with Paraguay. Bulldozers pushed the Trans Amazon highway into the jungle and plans were made for 10 nuclear plants. They ran out of money.

Meanwhile untold numbers of people are suffering radioactive related health problems according to a parish priest in Madalena.

Human rights takes human suffering seriously. (Claude and Weston)

I'd like to think that International Human Rights is not only responsive, but leads in anticipating the yearning for basic decency by people everywhere from clean water to a life of dignity free of violence.

We are not meeting at an ordinary time. Perhaps no time is ordinary. At the rate troops and war materials are being moved into the Gulf and official impatience and indifference greets UN weapons inspectors it could mean war with enormous consequences within a month.

"War," said Thomas Mann, "is a coward's escape from the problems of peace."

But for this meeting, with its emphasis on the environment, Rachel Carson might resonate when she said, "The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction."

I applaud your effort to integrate, or at least, link, environmental and human rights messages - if not movements. But I beg you to remember the role violence plays and thus the need for peace because a) Peace is a human right, don't forget UN Res. 39/11. It should be part of everyone's UN UDHR. And b) war and the preparation for war are egregious violators of both human rights and of the environment.

Examples abound:

Take Colombia: where Uribe wants to fumigate his way to victory while US black hawk helicopters carry out assassinations and thousands are displaced. Is this a war on drugs? According to the head of the Southern Command, the drug crop is not substantially reduced. Or is it a war to eliminate the FARC? Or is it a war to protect oil fields and pipelines?

Oil and other resources are increasingly a cause of conflict. Read last week's New Yorker piece on amputated children in Sierra Leone. The real cost of oil says Mark Hertsgaard includes the cost that its production and consumption impose on nature and public health.

I may be trying to squeeze too much in here, but no matter what we do, if women are not part of the solution, the problem will persist. We can not forget women's needs and women's roles. No women, no peace. There are substitutes for oil. There are no substitutes for women.

I have no sympathy for utility companies who can't hang a meter on the sun. They will have to get used to making less money and making life safer for our children and grandchildren by investing in research and developing alternative energy to replace fossil fuels. Prevention must be our call, not preemption.

The donor community is challenged as never before. The stock market has really hurt. Many small funds that are risk takers are down. Congratulations to the MacArthur Fund and Ford and Robin Hood on today's news. (They're giving to core costs!)

Today's solutions to global problems require a cooperative approach and a holistic understanding of their root causes.

\_ The Vietnam war saw the loss of forest cover; 2 million dead Vietnamese, 55,000 Americans, so many wounded, so many traumatized, and a major cultural upheaval at home.

\_ The Kosovo bombing saw the use of Depleted Uranium and burning oil and refineries leaking oil into the Danube and the human toll.

\_ The Gulf war saw oil spilled into the sea and health issues still unacknowledged.

\_ What do you think will happen if there's a war with Iraq? Or North Korea? What will the consequences of Colombia be?

How many times have we heard donors say, we don't do art, or we don't do movies, we don't do health?

The situation is so serious that no matter what you do, you better do one thing to prevent further violence or we won't be doing in the future. And I'm afraid that future, my friends, as someone said, just ain't what it used to be.

## **I. HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION SESSION: "Human Rights and the Environment"**

Facilitator: Chet Tchozewski, Global Greengrants Fund

### Panelists

**Michelle Leighton**, Director of International Program, Natural Heritage Institute (Berkeley, CA)

Michelle is a specialist in international environmental law and international human rights law. Her practice encompasses desertification, marine fisheries and trade, hazardous waste and water management reform, and public participation in environmental decision making. She counsels environmental and human rights organizations, intergovernmental agencies, and United Nations bodies. She is a co-founder of the Institute.

**Stephen Mills**, Director of International Programs, Sierra Club (Washington, DC)

Stephen manages the Club's international Trade, Population, and Human Rights and the Environment campaigns as well as grantmaking and community organizing efforts in Mexico and Southern Africa. He also directs the International program's national level legislative and lobbying activities. Stephen started the Club's Human Rights and the Environment Campaign in 1993, a program that later evolved into a collaborative effort with Amnesty International. While advocating for greater recognition in U.S. foreign policy for the support and protection of environmental activists abroad, the campaign provides assistance for environmentalists worldwide who have been persecuted by their governments or by multinational corporations.

**Romina Picolotti**, Director of Access to Justice Program, Centro de Derechos Humanos y Medio Ambiente (Cordoba, Argentina)

Romina has worked with various institutions (UN, OAS in Haiti, Peru, Washington, DC, Cambodia), advocating at the local and international level. In 1995, she joined an international task force of human rights advocates to assist Cambodia in reestablishing its judicial system following an era of widespread human rights violations. She advised and trained members of the Cambodian Judicial System, mentoring judges and prosecutors on legal theory and practice, training prison staff and police on human rights, facilitating human rights advocacy groups participation in the judicial process, and assisting civil society. She later joined the International Human Rights Law Group, where she focused her work on defending and promoting human and environmental rights of marginalized communities in Latin America. Now focussed on bridging the fields of international human rights law and international environmental law, Romina co-founded CEDHA, dedicated to defending environmental rights as human rights in Argentina and internationally.

In his introductory remarks, Chet reminded participants that the topic was chosen by members, reflecting recognition of the importance of the growing relationship and interdependence of human rights and environment. He thanked the committee that organized the session: Heather Ryan, Helena Brykarz, Valentine Doyle, Mona Younis. A short video produced by the Goldman Fund was then screened, focusing on Goldman Prize recipient Oscar Olivera, a labor leader in Bolivia who worked against water privatization.

### **Michelle Leighton**

*Michelle presented background information on the growing human rights and environment movement, spoke about the role of governments and corporations in these issues, and the current work being done by NGOs.*

- The U.S. consumes more than 1/2 of the world's freshwater resources currently. Another startling statistic is that 90% of the wastes discharged to waters in the developing world is not treated sewage, leading to contamination of drinking water. As it is, 250 million people suffer from waterborne diseases and still 3.3 billion people don't have access to freshwater that is clean and useable. Very shortly, there will be not enough water for farming. The situation is happening all over the world... water is getting scarce. There is a lot of reality of the next war being over water.

- The issue of environment and natural resources as fundamental to livelihoods, health and human rights is not new. It wasn't clear what government's obligations to water was. However, articles in treaties show great obligation, but it was not being enforced. They also mention ecosystem protection and issue of sanitation. It was debated by the Council of Europe in the 60s and whether it should be part of a protocol to the Covenant of Rome, the European Covenant on Human Rights. In 1972, it was incorporated by governments into the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment. It made its way into discussion on nuclear arms in the 70s and 80s. In 1986, it was adopted as a resolution in the General Assembly. In 1992, governments met in Rio de Janeiro during the UN Conference on Environment and Development and the "Rio Declaration" emerged as one of the key documents reaffirming importance of human rights. Human rights, including the right to food as a basic human need, was reaffirmed in the recent Johannesburg Summit on the Environment (10 years after Rio conference). The UN Summit on Children, negotiated at the UN last May discussed children's rights, and we formed a coalition of NGOs that successfully pushed for language on environmental protection as key obligation of governments. This right has been recognized for many years. What is new is the current grassroots movement and indigenous peoples seeking to clarify rights and government obligation—advocating a rights based approach—environmental rights within a human rights framework. But human rights need to do more, need to clarify on both international and local level.
- Direct violations of civil and political rights have included prohibiting free speech and association, building of large dams and forcing relocation of people, and forced labor (such as in Burma). They are less obvious but more vicious—violations of civil and political rights, which is not taken on as key issues by human rights organizations. Indirect violations by government of civil and political rights and direct violations of economic, social and cultural rights include: being complicit in adopting policies to open up indigenous lands to settlers, causing direct cultural changes to indigenous people; allowing unsafe workplace conditions for workers to continue. Pollution of rivers, lakes, streams by unregulated oil, mining and logging industries, irresponsible construction of dams, lack of access to clean drinking water, contamination of marine environment and fisheries used by coastal communities, and hazardous waste disposal all persist from lack of government control and in some cases, blatant disregard for life.
- Third generation right to a healthy environment—Like economic, social and cultural rights, some in the international community are calling for a right to environment. Over 90 Constitutions contain right, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Costa Rica and the Philippines. NHI and other organizations have been successful in having a Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Environment appointed by the Commission in 1990, and then having her appointed as the Special Rapporteur on Toxics globally, to investigate the dumping of harmful chemicals and toxins in poorer developing nations. There has been other coalitions forming around these and other issues to promote economic, social and cultural rights that involve environmental rights and access to justice. This was evident at our Johannesburg Workshop on human rights and environment this past fall.
- What is the role of private sector? There is great consensus government must be accountable. Corporations work in partnership with repressive governments. For example, the government in Nigeria stepped in and used Chevron helicopters to suppress protesters. In cases of expropriation of property, there is no negotiation and governments are made to take these lands. In Equator, the government expropriated indigenous lands a while ago, which led to a breakout of violence. Multi-national corporations wield more power than governments. Of these top ten corporations in the world, most are U.S. based and they are not regulated. Wal-mart has a revenue that is larger than the revenues of 161 countries. GM's yearly income is larger than that of Denmark and Ford's is larger than that of South Africa. Does government know corporations will use forced labor? What is the role of corporations regarding labor? There is a real need for government to enforce.
- NHI and other groups are promoting increased regulations to require corporations to disclose their human rights/environment/labor practices. This and other "Right to Know" campaigns are moving forward to advocate for political reforms, which we'll see more of. Groups had been working separately, but are now coming together as a coalition for greater leverage.

### **Romina Picolotti**

*Romina highlighted cases of environmental degradation in Argentina.*

- Statistics from World Bank: 800 million live in poverty; 2 million die from pollution; 700 million people—mostly women and children—live in polluted areas; 60% of people in developing countries do not have access to water. Environmental degradation is poverty: unemployment, environmental refugees (8 million people), forced people to live elsewhere. It means people living in lands where you can't speak the language and work is not available. Environmental degradation equals poverty and vice versa. With family to feed, people will overwork.
- One case we are working on is a waste disposal case. 2000 people are living near waste in a low-income neighborhood. There, people were burning waste. There were one hole opening after another. We went to the waste disposal and found 300 families living in the trash, eating trash, doing work with trash (by separating trash and selling pieces). In Patagonia, the people say they are not stealing since trash is for everyone, and they are maintaining their dignity, and their children are able to be with them. One person says there's less and less food. You cannot go in with traditional environmental attitude. Waste management in city is a concession. The contract says you need a fence around waste. They say they won't do anything to the people living there. But they do interfere, since they reduce

waste. The press went there but the trash workers didn't want to be filmed. The political debate focused on what to do with waste. They're not sure how to dispose.

- The people we spoke with are literate people, who were proud of an emerging economy. It was a model economy before. Now there is poverty. One person, before being unemployed, was an oil company inspector; with privatization of the company, he lost his job. Other people were carpenters, technicians. This is a new kind of poverty in Argentina. Violence and poverty.
- Human rights and environment is a fresh, new approach. The answer is not to sue; not sure what is the answer. The answer though is not to kick the people out. It should be about access to resources and empowerment of community. Human rights and environment is a huge issue: it is not seen, it is voiceless, and environment is attacking human rights in a new way.

### **Stephen Mills**

*Steve provided background information on Sierra Club and an overview of its involvement in human rights issues. He then spoke about the current political climate and the importance of groups working together on human and environmental rights.*

- Founded in San Francisco in 1892, The Sierra Club is the oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization in the country, with 750,000 members in 400 operating entities. Its strength is in its grassroots work and in holding politicians accountable for their actions. It works to influence American foreign policy as well as American domestic policy. We learned through many legislative victories that our grassroots public education efforts are effective in achieving public policy gains. We use money from individuals and donors and membership dues to educate members and to lobby Congress. Since environment is a very local issue to most Americans, our membership is more domestically focused.
- The human rights and the environment program came out of several things. Members believed that everyone should have the right to speak out on environmental issues. We were noticing many colleagues around the world were being routinely harassed, jailed, or even murdered for their activism, including Wangari Maathai in Kenya, Alexander Nikitin in Russia, and Ken Saro-Wiwa in Nigeria. Another factor was the Goldman Prize and being inspired by the Prize recipients and their stories. Our greatest involvement is in defending the civil and political rights of environmental advocates—rights to political participation, personal security, and freedom to organize.
- Sierra approached Amnesty International about four years ago to coordinate our work and address the shortcomings in American foreign policy and to make political change. Amnesty was already doing a lot of work defending environmentalists, but wasn't publicizing it as such. It became challenging to work with an international organization with a huge bureaucracy. However, we have come to work together on behalf of the Ogoni people and Mexican anti-logging advocates. We have been successful in getting increased media coverage and greater attention of politicians at meetings.
- Human rights and environmental issues are infused with a profound and unresolved tension. That tension is nothing less than the tension between the way Americans would like to relate to the world and the way we actually do. Americans want to be good global citizens. Yet, many U.S. based companies engage in international development project that damage valued ecosystems, violate human rights, create more instability and increase local resentment toward the U.S. If we expect to have a lasting effect worldwide, we must recognize that this can only be accomplished if U.S. natural resources consumption patterns are also changed. In the era of globalization, human rights and the environment grow increasingly more vulnerable to forces of production and consumption, which are dispersing faster than the institutions of accountability, transparency, and democratic oversight.
- Security and economy in the U.S. are two issues that are shaping the debate in the next two years, as these are the greatest concerns of most Americans. Our challenge is to make our issues fit into that frame. Five areas to focus our efforts on include: defending environmental and human rights advocates; educating decision-makers about the need for disclosure standards for U.S. companies operating abroad, advocating for global accountability standards (human rights, labor, environment); changing the politics surrounding commodity exploitation (oil, forests); and inserting human rights protection language into international trade agreements.

A short Goldman Prize video was shown on Nigerian activist Ken Saro Wiwa, who was executed a few months after the video was made. Afterwards, session participants broke out into four groups to discuss further the following areas: right to water, corporate accountability and global south, environmental justice and U.S. policy, and defending the defenders/advocates.

### **Q & A Session**

**Q:** How can donors have a role, to come in and help, without interfering?

**ML:** The company that owned the subsidiary which took over water services in Cochabamba, Bolivia, is based here in San Francisco. Bechtel, one of the world's largest engineering firms, has great resources but utterly failed to improve the situation. The government cancelled the contract after the protests and demonstrations in the streets. What can funders do? This firm is now suing Bolivia for the costs of its cancelled contract to provide water services (somewhere around \$150-200 million). Empower communities, look at much more holistic perspectives.

**Q:** Can you describe a success story? If possible, can you also talk about the role a foundation played in the success?

**RP:** There was a community where people were dying from pesticides. The people said that they couldn't stop the fumigation. We were saying that they can have an impact. From that, the health of children improved tremendously. We went to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and worked to include human rights environmental activism, which they did. We got funding for capacity building in that case.

**SM:** Our work was not possible without the Goldman Prize for the human rights program. We were able to talk to more people about these issues. We took Ethel Kennedy to Mexico, met with President Fox. We built public support. Now, there are Sierra Club groups in colleges working with Amnesty International groups. We've been working in collaboration and building credibility.

**ML:** We were also funded by the Goldman Fund. It led us to do the first real coalition work with religious, environmental, and other groups. The coalition is promoting legislation on the right to know. Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation also provided early support of our human rights/environment work, for environmental refugees and for documenting the linkages between human rights/environment for our work at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. It allowed us to do groundbreaking work on these linkages for the case between Slovakia and Hungary, both countries fighting over the construction of a dam, where Hungarian minorities in Slovakia were being directly harmed by the environmental damage of the dam. On behalf of an international coalition, I was able to submit the first ever NGO Amicus Brief (independent legal brief) accepted by the World Court in the case documenting the linkages and legal issues. The Court ruled basically in favor of Hungary, the country supported by our NGO coalition, and one of the highest ranking Justices discussed several of the legal concepts we presented. Since then, NHI has continued to work on these issues.

## **Conclusion**

**ML:** I want to thank Global Greengrants for organizing this panel. Time has come. A lot of work is being done. There is a high potential for leverage. I encourage you as funders to think of how to build coalitions, which is still fragile.

**RP:** Work is not possible without the funders. Civil society movements in the south need funders. Doors are not open if you don't have strong organizations representing you. Human rights work need folks to open their eyes and pockets.

**SM:** Our groups have more commonalities. Now more than ever, we need to work together. If Bush has his people, Nancy Pelosi needs her people too. I hope to do more collaborative work together.

## **II. SPECIAL PROJECTS SESSION**

Facilitator: Dorothy Thomas, Shaler Adams Foundation

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

Presenter: Michael J. Hirschhorn, Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation

Dorothy Thomas opened the session. She was joined by Michael Hirschhorn and Regan Ralph. Michael began by showing slides demonstrating the effectiveness of the Leveraging Project committee's work to date. He unveiled the new lottery, "Mega Millions for Human Rights" and announced that Warren Buffet and Bill Gates had invested huge sums in human rights grantmaking!

While we all wished that these events had actually happened, the LP committee does have a strategy for recruiting new grantmakers to the field. The committee seeks to gain more funding to human rights by the following ways:

- research
- materials development
- peer to peer outreach (why funders go into human rights)
- building awareness among grantmakers via conferences and affinity groups
- responding to "how to" inquiries
- individual donor outreach

As part of the work to develop materials, case studies were written to highlight instances where human rights lens were successfully applied to women's, environmental, and other issues. Four to five case studies will be fully developed and included in an IHRFG publication. Michael asked the group to review two case studies and asked if they were persuasive.

### **Feedback on case studies:**

- Environment and human rights case—it should be more explicit about pairing of human rights and environment.
- Human rights approach needs to be more explicit in how it's different from other approaches. Force of law is mentioned but not law of force.
- Women and human rights case—we see results and success but don't know until the end what it took and what it is. Human rights should be mentioned earlier and more prominent.

- Dollar numbers should be included (cost for these cases)—would be helpful to board.
- Introduction page—“righting the wrongs” seem to apply only to communities, and not individuals.
- Have the case studies reviewed by non human rights funders.
- Make the case studies two pages instead of one, to unpack the story.
- Women and human rights case—need to specify which rights were violated and how things would change.
- Use photographs that capture the sentiment of the message.
- Start from basic place using statistics (on human rights funding) to provide context.
- Human rights and environment—need to talk about how environmental movement also violates human rights. For example: use of national parks to displace indigenous people. This needs documentation.

The LP Committee is developing a second booklet containing funder self-interviews, to give voice and experience of human rights grantmakers. One self-interview is already featured on IHRFG website. Thanks to Otto Bremer Foundation, John Merck Fund, Rights and Democracy, Conanima Foundation, and Wellspring Advisors. Please give feedback to Mona Younis and Dorothy Thomas.

### **Comments**

- Our website will include news of new funders that enter human rights field.
- We need to take part in various affinity group meetings and find ways to collaborate from beginning. These conversations need to occur more explicitly.
- Peace and Security Funders Group meeting with environmental funders—suggest meeting with all three groups later this year.
- There will be an international policy briefing on Feb 4-5 in Washington, DC of the impact of trade and globalization on climate change

### **Fund for Global Human Rights**

Regan Ralph, Fund for Global Human Rights

Regan Ralph, who started in October 2002 as the executive director of FGHR, gave a progress report and spoke about the Fund's goals. Its mission is to expand resources to frontline human rights activists. In the past months, FGHR has been building on the initial research of a consultant to develop an 18-month plan. They will make two rounds of grants this year (spring and fall) totaling \$1 million, continue building the board and organizational structure, attract new funders, refine grantmaking strategy, and hire a program officer to start in February.

Four geographic regions are targeted for possible funding: South Asia, North Africa, West Africa, Central America/Mexico.

Priorities include looking at under-funded areas with serious human rights problems. They look for operating human rights groups with an existing expertise. The Fund's guiding principles are to be responsive to the needs of activists, to start with what they know and develop a network, and to be flexible and adaptive. Regan stated that she would like to fund a spectrum of work rather than defining human rights work narrowly. A network of advisors in the regions will help to define what is needed and to elaborate the engagement strategy.

The Fund will ask the following when evaluating groups:

- Does the group use a rights based approach?
- What is their track record?
- How do they work locally?
- What kind of relationship do they have with existing funders?
- What difference does their work make locally?

At this point, the Fund needs help in identifying the basic building blocks. They welcome suggestions about the four regions, especially people, advisors and resources.

### **Questions/comments:**

**Q:** Is human rights and the environment an interest of the Fund?

**RR:** These areas are flexible: environment, women, globalization, etc. We will work with a range of issues.

**Q:** What is the role of advisors?

**RR:** It's not yet defined, but for now we'll start with a small international board and some regional advisors. The role of regional boards will evolve over the next 5-10 years.

**Q:** Where are you on discussions on able to fund grassroots groups in North America? If you're not going to, how do you avoid being seen as contributing to the belief that human rights is only an issue outside the U.S.?

**RR:** U.S. groups are not likely to be the focus, but it's not ruled out.

**Q:** Will you solicit proposals?

**RR:** We should be open to accepting them, even though there is a fear of being overwhelmed. For the initial round of grants, it will be a hybrid process.

Many Ann Stein emphasized that many decisions have yet to be made and that the Fund is waiting on input from international folks and activists, so that decisions are not made by funders only and that it's an international effort.

**Q:** Apart from grantmaking, any other interactions and programs for the Fund?

**RR:** We are well positioned to help and facilitate organizations and their interactions. How to do it remains to be seen.

**Q:** Will your relationship with grantees be long-term? How about evaluations and follow-up?

**RR:** Grants will not be one-shot grants, especially with our commitment to these organizations to strengthen their base. It is a challenge though, being a small staff.

Mary Ann thanked Larry Cox, Chet Tchozewski, Mona Younis, Michael Posner and others who deserve credit for making the fund a reality. So far, they have raised \$1.6 million. Mary Ann's goal is for the fund to eventually distribute \$40 million per year and asked folks to consider supporting the Fund.

### **III. SUB-GROUPS SESSION**

Facilitator: Mona Younis, Mertz Gilmore Foundation

Mona described the origins of IHRFG subgroups, how different ones have evolved, and the variety of activities they pursue. For example, she noted that the Fund for Global Human Rights grew out of the subgroup on Direct Funding for Small Indigenous NGOs. The Steering Committee, which encourages participants to join existing subgroups or to start new ones, is ready to extend any support it can. Since human rights intersect with so many other issues, being involved with subgroups is a good way to explore these areas and link up with colleagues in other fields. She also noted that the IHRFG website has sections for the subgroups.

The four current subgroups and the Fund for Global Human Rights (a special project) met separately then reported back to the full group with the following updates:

#### ***Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Kevin Callahan)***

This subgroup held a teleconference a couple months ago. Subgroup members agreed on the importance of influencing the climate in North America regarding economic, social and cultural rights, particularly within government, and changing attitude about these rights. The body shop has made various ads using human rights--ads that were particularly successful. They identified a problem with language of ESCR and challenges in convincing funders to agree to fund under this theme and in using a language that people understand and are familiar with. An ESCR conference is being held in Thailand in June (contact Larry Cox for more information). The subgroup will present a report on this conference at the upcoming IHRFG meeting in July. Subgroup members hope to work closely with the ESCR network in which Larry is active and will attempt to insert ESCR issues at various conferences they attend.

#### ***Human Rights and Environment (Valentine Doyle)***

This subgroup is mainly focused on reaching new funders. There are powerful, cross-cutting issues such as water, dams, etc that affect human rights. The subgroup will organize these ideas into a paper to use as an educational and promotional tool. Subgroup members will do outreach outside of normal traditional funding agencies and will seek to reach donor-advised funds and small foundations among other donors.

#### ***Peace, Security and Human Rights (Johanna Mendelson-Forman)***

This subgroup is considering holding a small retreat to discuss these issues and consider how to bring them into the research and policy realm.

#### ***Civil and Political Rights (John Taylor)***

This subgroup has focused on the situation in the U.S. and attempts to incorporate language. With the increasing efforts to use the constitution to limit people's rights, the subgroup is seeking ways to help people use the constitution to strengthen and enhance civil and political rights. How can foundations play a role to enhance respect for the constitution? One idea is to develop and use international frameworks and instruments and human rights arguments in court cases (ex: detention of immigrants, criminalization of juveniles, etc). Terms are not clear to us, but conservatives are very good at using this language. A possibility is for this group to do research on language on rights. We need to affirm citizens rights instead of



states rights. There needs to be a discussion on the issue of our rights in time of war. The funder community can take a role in promoting and advancing this important discussion.

### ***Fund for Global Human Rights (Mary Ann Stein)***

The Fund is working to find ways to increase diversity and enhance the international character of its board, and is seeking individuals for the board and as advisors. The Fund is seeking to raise additional funds for its work.

**Tuesday, January 14**

## **I. NETWORKING SESSION: Funding Social Movements**

Facilitator: Kevin Callahan, Rights and Democracy

### Panelists

**Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi**, Executive Director, African Women's Development Fund (Accra, Ghana)

Bisi is currently the Executive Director/co-founder of the African Women's Development Fund, the first Africa-wide fundraising and grant-making organisation for African women. Prior to this, she was Director of AMwA an international development organisation for African women based in the UK. She has an M.A in History from the University of Ife, Nigeria, and an M.A. in Gender Studies from Middlesex University, UK. She has experience as a journalist, writer, lecturer, trainer, feminist activist, and as an organizational development specialist.

**Ann Bastian**, Senior Program Officer, The Phoenix Fund for Workers and Communities/New World Foundation (New York, NY)

Ann Bastian is a senior program officer at the New World Foundation, where she directs the Phoenix Fund for Workers and Communities. The Phoenix Fund is a donor collaborative supporting the economic justice movement in the US and globally through grants and technical assistance to immigrant worker centers, labor-community collaborations and maquiladora organizing. Ms. Bastian comes to this work with experience as a union organizer in the US labor movement in the 1970s and 80s, an activist in the anti-apartheid movement in the 1980s, and a funding midwife of the environmental justice movement in the 1990s. She is also a college history teacher at the School of Visual Arts.

**Larry Cox**, Senior Program Officer, Human Rights and International Cooperation, Ford Foundation (New York, NY)

Prior to his role with the Ford Foundation, Mr. Cox was Executive Director of the Rainforest Foundation, an international organization that works with indigenous peoples in the Brazilian Amazon to protect their land and rights. With Amnesty International for fourteen years, he held a number of positions including Communications Director, Director of the Program Against the Death Penalty and Deputy Director of Amnesty International USA. He also served for five years as Deputy Secretary General of AI's International Secretariat in London.

**Vernice Miller-Travis**, Program Officer, Community and Resource Development, Ford Foundation (New York, NY)

Ms. Miller-Travis serves as the Program Officer for Environmental Justice, and is responsible for shaping and defining the environmental justice field for Ford. She also served as member of the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, the Federal Advisory Committee to the Environmental Protection Agency. She has also served for six years as Director of the Environmental Justice Initiative of the Natural Resources Defense Council. Among the organizations she has founded are: the West Harlem Environmental Action, one of the leading community-based environmental justice advocacy organizations in the nation; the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance; and the Northeast Environmental Justice Network. Ms. Miller-Travis has also served as the Director of Development of the Center for Constitutional Rights and as the New York Coordinator for the U.S. Citizens Network for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit).

**KC:** How would you define a movement?

**VMT:** My task is to grow the environmental justice movement fund [through strengthening] community based organizations and public policy advocacy. Examination of industrial and economic policy shows a dire, disproportionate effect on some people. It's not easy to navigate at Ford to fund something so eclectic—there's no central locus, it's amorphous, it has no central body. It's hard to fund small grants. Most of my groups don't have development officers, and it's work to get a report out of them—or even a proposal! It's challenging for Ford to support social movement. It's more than a notion to bring a constituency that is so grassroots. The challenge is to help the field understand how to approach funders. The groups don't know how, and they send what we don't like to fund. I would work with grantees to make the proposal work. People who most need resources are the one with least access to them.

**AB:** New World Foundation funds social movement—that's our field. You know it when you see it. People who lived through it know it. It has music, it involves youth, it has no central leadership, it is a mass movement. It's a mass

mobilization of people from many sectors trying to realize the moral center of the society; it makes some injustice visible that wasn't before.

In funding social movement, you have to see the movement as a process, not an event. As a process, there are four stages, and funding them is a strategy: 1) a social movement built on some pre-existing infrastructure—for instance, the SCLC, unions, string of immigrant centers, anti-sweatshop organizations. No social movement hasn't gone through this stage. If it looks like an outpouring but went through these, that's necessary but not sufficient; 2) consciousness-raising—a movement-wide perspective. It's looking further than single issues, people connecting with other folks on related issues, doing collaborations, all which is critical for building indigenous leaders. People talk about what's happening in New York, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Thailand—people are identifying key structural changes necessary. A movement identifies what the prize is... that is what a movement works for; 3) movement moment—it is identified as a movement, you feel its presence and its impact; 4) post-movement—this is after the huge mobilization dissipates the energy or consolidates it into new forms of power. Knowing how to fund is dependent on which process you're looking at.

**BAF:** I see social movement as human agency. People coming together around social issues, access to resources, freedom from discrimination or exploitation. I'm a bit hesitant about naming stages, because no social movement is homogenous; it's got its radicals and its conservatives. It's also important to see what is not happening in the movement, but happening in a sub-movement—eg, a black women's movement within the female genital mutilation movement. This movement realized very soon that it couldn't act in isolation, but would have to address the larger issues of women's empowerment. As a funder, I see to see the different politics of an African state, different personalities and agendas, the different subgroups. I have to be very careful and observant to see the movements and what tent they pitch.

**LC:** It's a simple definition for me. If you have three or six or ten groups working together, they are a coalition not a movement. Movement resonates in society; it involves people from all parts of society. It causes people to disrupt normal lives, and not do what they're paid to do. The challenge for human rights is that it was a movement, with grassroots people from all walks of life. As it has become more professionalized, it has tended to lose its ability to mobilize others.

**Q:** Should we get funders to accept applications as they are, instead of having groups rewrite them?

**VMT:** At a certain point, going back and forth with rewriting grants, will not give you the same thing as a professional grantee. The greatest contribution is to help colleagues to go out in the field and help grantees. Ford has gone a long way to streamline their work. We ask for less than before, but it is still burdensome for grantees. It is not a very productive use of time for grantees. If we really believe in social justice movement, we have to help grantees navigate through philanthropy.

**Q:** A key part of the question—how do you fund social movements as compared to a cluster of groups? What do you do with a board that doesn't "know social movement when they see it"?

**AB:** It's an educational process myself. Listen to how grantees talk about it. When they talk about going to see other people, "synergy" begins to happen. Structure grantmaking around collaboration. Add criteria for a group—vision, ability to work with other groups. Then you can get to something all boards love—scale.

**LC:** What boards worry about is spending money with nothing to show for it. The key is the question of victory. We need to show and document victories. Show that social movements bring about social change. Plenty of examples where social movement has been key. Civil rights, for example. It's not as if they didn't win victories before the Huge Victory. Part of weakness is when they don't see the need to document. It's not necessarily wrong for boards or donors to say they need to see documents. We should help people do these, not as an ultimate or final stage, but as a step.

**BAF:** A lot of work needs to be done in foundations on boards and staff. We need board to understand that it takes a long time. We can't check off funding boxes because it doesn't end. We have to be with them through the good time and the hard time. You need to allow the movement to qualify its own success. If boards can't assist them, you will not get far. We funded a network of women lawyers in Tanzania who worked on a bill on inheritance law. They may not necessarily get the bill through, but it's not a failure if this doesn't happen. It's about how many women and men were involved, doing research and advocacy, and know that inheritance is an issue. If you can support that kind of a group, process is equally important.

**Q:** In educating boards about movements, we know it's long-term investment. If you don't have long-term capacity, what would you suggest for alternatives for those who can't do this, but rather "catalytic" funding?

**LC:** You go to stage funding. You recognize what stage you can fund... maybe a network or capacity building? For example, with human rights in the U.S., we reached big moments where some money was needed to get to another stage. Boards can say we contributed to that stage, if your foundation can identify one element of that.

**AB:** Do look at the stages and see where you fit in terms of your expertise. People fund missing pieces. Social movement is a stream. It's clear that as social movement goes forward, there are people who should be there and can't be yet. Public health people to environmental justice, for instance, or in the sweatshop movement where immigrants should have a voice. Don't go for that thing that looks good on TV, that big one-shot demonstration and not look beyond it.

**VMT:** Different boards are intersected in different things. Some movements are so amorphous, so don't try to grab the whole thing about the environmental movement. Grab what you can. There's a whole section of people in this movement

that does just one thing. Don't bite off the whole thing, do research and try to chart course in what your foundation is interested in. Throw a rock, hit something and fund it!

**BAF:** Be a facilitator of resources, spaces, for key actors. When you withdraw, pass them on to someone else.

**Q:** We wrestle with formats and proposals, with the question of what do you accept? Do you use internet for proposals? Do we as donors push groups toward being more "professionalized"? Or are we becoming too professionalized?

**VM:** I'm struggling because there's an inherent sense in the environmental movement to become less professionalized, that being more professional is moving away from the grassroots. We bought into that, but it's not totally true. To have stronger financials does not make one less revolutionary. There's nothing wrong, unless if you're asking people to choose their core values. It's not heresy to do things in a more regularized manner. Grantees create more work when they don't sit down and streamline their work, so I put a lot of time into it. We're also investing in stronger organizations to continue. There is tremendous burnout so we invest in leadership retreats, sabbaticals for activists leadership. Sustainability of organizations is part of funding social movements. The only people who can navigate easily through this are the ones who often do it.

**LC:** With being professionalized, I meant "professional" when you feel instead of trying to mobilize others to do the work, you think you can do it because you are the professional, instead of seeing your role to advocate as well. What matters is the content of the presentation. What are your connections to people in your community? What is your constituency? Do you have support? The role of funders have been money for the group, instead of the groups doing outreach and getting money from the community. Funders then become the constituency, instead of the community. In the beginning, Amnesty International got all its money from its membership contributions--not funders. The price you pay for getting money from just one large funder is that you lose your communication and contact with your community. We should not romanticize efficiency.

**AB:** It's about what you ask for in a proposal. If your proposal says you have to look like this to be accepted, then you're putting a lot of pressure on groups. Are you asking an organization that mobilizes a base of people to look like an advocacy organization in Washington? They are supposed to look like a staffed office with not much constituency? How much are we expecting these groups to be advocacy groups and not organizing groups? It's too easy to fund intermediate organizations rather than look for grassroots organizations that will be there in twenty years. Organizing on grassroots level takes more fieldwork intelligence and different evaluation.

**KC:** What groups in the movement do you prioritize? Big groups or small groups? The most dynamic? What are the criteria?

**VM:** There are various elements of a social movement. It's not easy. In the civil rights movement, there were legal advocates, grassroots organizations, students, union organizers, labor organizations (which doesn't get credit for the work they did). All of them supported the movement. Investing in one piece instead of the other is detrimental. All of the elements were important. It's not difficult to find a piece that you can invest. I try to fund cross-sectionally (legal advocacy, social research, principled community-university partnerships, etc). You can fund grassroots organizations directly, or through networks, etc. Find the pieces that work for you. I haven't seen a movement that has just one element you can fund.

**BAF:** We fund research, advocacy, community level, regional level and national level. Look at how strategically placed these groups are. One thing I'm involved with is to develop a national African women's institute, to tap into women in the professional field, to push them for more resources. It's important to apply your vision. We don't have to be drawn into the politics but be close.

**LC:** I look at growth stages. I can't figure out who's the really important organization. Spread the money around... let the flowers bloom. Out of that process, you see what happens. Sometimes I'm wrong with the results. Then you have to make the decisions. Third element: what point do I start to bring the blooming flowers together, to make a garden? Networking is another element you do to try building capacity.

**AB:** Fault lines and lines of division run through movements. There's knowledge that grows. One of them is in the sweatshop movement between dividing and immigrant worker centers. They have common interests but you can see the different styles, cultures, etc. Fault lines can lead to polarization. There's the arrogance of impotence from isolation, which becomes a weakness. Sometimes funders play a constructive role in seeing fault lines and help to make bridges. Or for example in the environmental justice movement, where there is tension between workers who need jobs and environmental advocates. You can help by bringing dialogue. Look at groups that really understand. It requires patience, knowledge, and relationships between people before you intervene. Social movements are not socially engineered. There are ways to do respectful intervention.

**Q:** How do you address concerns emerging of social justice organizations to re-grant to other grassroots organizations?

**VM:** It becomes messy for a group in a region to redistribute money. It's really a burden to ask them to do it working shoulder to shoulder and it may create more problems. If you get people together, agree on a process, get a consensus, then it might work.

**AB:** Positive examples are peer collaboratives. Organizing collaboratives were needed to increase funding in the South. They needed a bigger entity to receive and distribute the money, so they created a peer collaborative. If you have right folks in place in a region, then it can work.

**BAF:** It can be problematic for an entity made with a movement to do this task. You have to come up with different strategies. No community-based organization can do that.

**Q:** I really believe that there are very few funders who know how to fund. There should be a whole job description for a program officer for social justice movement. It should include: working more closely with grantees, knowing the stages, linking to other types of funders and having credibility with them, networking information, networking groups, benchmarking success, and being an advocate. We should put together a job description.

**AB:** This is the identity of New World Foundation, which is a very small foundation. Since we're devoted to this movement, we have learned from doing this. I would add to that description: listen to the field and be governed by the field. Be accountable to the field. Have practitioners in the field on board. Not all can—for example, with family foundations. But at least with advisory structures, you have potential to listen to people in the field, which is a vital resource. I still don't trust myself without having those other voices—after years of experience.

**Q:** Too often, we evaluate our funding through grantee work. How do we evaluate funding social movement? The things we want to see are general support, building capacity, message building, etc. What are ways we can evaluate ourselves, what are our benchmarks? Do we use them?

**LC:** We have a formal process. We develop indicators of success for our funding. There is a strategy paper program officers have to write. What are the indicators, from grantees, that we are succeeding or failing? It can be a very useful tool to use to go back to the community. I fund economic, social and cultural rights. Very few groups are working on economic, social and cultural rights. At the end of 2 or 3 years, would there be more organizations doing this? Also check for visibility (in media, policy advocacy, etc). It's not mysterious, and it's not rocket science.

**Q:** With human rights in the U.S., there is enormous pressure for organizations to have impact on legislature and policy, but that's not necessarily the only or the most vital measurement. Their greatest accomplishment may be that they exist. Standards are different from what the organizations does. There needs to be flexibility in evaluating effect, for example, with environment.

**AB:** Administrative practices for these organizations are weak. Most of the work of organizations is about building relationships, sharing common vision, working together. These are hard things to measure. There needs to be more qualitative process over time: meeting them in your office, in their field, hearing from the community, is very different. Listen to voices around the work. The word is sustainability. This for organizing is critical, aside from immediate organizing. Are they building the next generation of leaders? Someone said "revolution was not made from a foundation grant." How are they approaching different funding? The foundation world isn't the decisive resource.

**VMT:** We have to create space for groups to have weaknesses. As a grantee, I was able only to talk about perfection. Organizations go through cycles, but they don't know that sometimes. They think they only stay up or down. Encourage grantees to talk about things that are not going well. It's huge burden off them. We had a grantee, who was concerned about the college students who were in the group's leadership training, but these students were not going on in the field afterwards. They couldn't engage young people to continue. It made me think: change dynamics in these organizations. We created a safe space for them to talk about it, outside of Ford's office. Issue of sustainability is critical. This is a down time for social justice activists—financially, globally, spiritually.

**BAF:** Two things that are important: space and voice. To see it in physical terms and also as political space and voice. For women's movement, it is about women having a physical voice. That is how I evaluate social movement.

**Q:** In the environmental justice movement, funders are criticized for doing project funding, and not doing core funding. Is there the same tension in the human rights community? How do we address this issue?

**LC:** I provide core funding. There's not a substitute. We're able to do this at Ford, even at project support. There's an easy modification process. Donors can facilitate movements or make a barrier.

**BAF:** Foundations in the U.S. that have lots of money can provide core funding for years and years. We have all kinds of funding. If we don't provide core support, we're undermining trust. You're forcing your grantees to be dishonest. You need to maintain open and honest dialogue.

**VMT:** The environmental justice movement is perhaps the most underfunded movement. It makes up only 2/10 of 1% of all foundation giving. Issue of core support vs. program support. I like core support because there are few organizations and we can give core support. There hasn't been much core giving which has led to fragmented organizations.

**AB:** What are you asking grantees to do? We are asking them to be very dishonest [by not providing core funding]. If you add up all their grants [does it cover their running costs]? A complement is single-issue, narrow-issue funding, which ignores how issues intersect with others. What's happening in labor, for example, is neglecting housing. Living wage is a logical issue. Next issue is housing. If you're not dealing with housing, you're not dealing with a living wage. Otherwise you're not defining issues in an organic way.

**Q:** In funding that you do, organizations can articulate how their work is contributing. When there's a social movement, you can see how you fit it. We're trying to figure out within our limitations, to push forward for social change. We all start with how philanthropy can contribute to this. Because funders are forced to choose what to fund, we can do a disservice. When you're working on behalf on the movement, how can we be sure we're not favoring certain sectors? It's a fraught area.

**BAF:** Philanthropy has given major support. The up side is when we needed support, we had all the money we needed for the women's global conferences. The down side is, after the Beijing Conference, we were checked off as being done. Every social movement needs a defined base of sustaining itself. We need to ensure how they can survive on their own, otherwise it runs out of steam.

**AB:** There are two negative reasons why foundations are important in the U.S. We have a weak state apparatus, which is getting weaker. The capacity that was invested in government to build public sector, making significant gains in the 30s and the 60s, have been intentionally destroyed. It leaves folks without core survival mechanisms. Philanthropy grew out of unaccountable national wealth and has no chance, nor should it, since a just society would not have foundations. Another reason is weakness in civil society. Unions are 10% of the workforce, down from 35%. Church attendance and membership organizations are weak in this country. One of the big tasks is to rebuild membership organizations. Philanthropy has a very important role, being attentive to folks redressing those conditions. We're just a small wedge in this. We can be critical in growth moments. It doesn't create organizations and in the long run won't sustain them. In California, labor collaboratives exist. They attract young staff members. Critical funding for these organizations led them to grow. Part of the evaluation is: Do we enter at a right time when we can make a change in developments/

**KC:** Can you talk about funding social movement in a highly charged political context? And how do you bring boards along? Are boards set out to fund social movements?

**VMT:** It is an interesting set of issues. We don't do any social screening, except tobacco stocks. I don't talk about it. I feel more comfortable not talking than talking about investment. Ford doesn't put restrictions on funding. The work we've done on globalization was cutting edge work and so successful that it made people uncomfortable. You become a bit more stealth about funding these organizations, but you're not violating laws. My grantees are trying to bring political, social, cultural change in society, and change communities, relationships, structures. This can't be done through conversations in a boardroom making compromises. You see it in the World Social Forum, the Beijing Conference, World Conference Against Racism, the World Social Forum.

**LC:** Certain kinds of grants get more scrutiny than others. The biggest danger is always self-censorship. I was told at Ford what I couldn't do at first—ESCR, labor rights, etc. A key is to talk about it with your board. What are their values? When they do want to scrutinize, they want to see results. You can be a martyrdom case, or you can ask yourself the real questions. You're going to have to battle with boards, but as long you reflect the values of the board, they can't stop you.

**BAF:** For the program officer job description, we should add maturity and humility and tell boards what's going on. The issue of the context you work in needs to be considered. Sometimes our work puts grantees' lives in danger, and immediate funding for such emergencies are needed.

**AB:** We have a great board. We killed them with information: evaluations, charts, etc. Over time the board has changed. There are term limits, practitioners on board. It's much more reflective of the work we do.

**Comment:** We should do a really short clear paper on the stages of social movements that identifies problems groups will face. Present that to the board to prepare them. How can you support the causes even if you can't continue funding?

**VMT:** We're not asking for perfection. But it's hard to get them to believe you do mean it.

**Q:** What have you learned in this area, that led to change in your institution?

**LC:** What I learned, is the limits of money. I was an activist before Ford and with \$20 million, I thought I can change the world. With too much money, you can impede change. We thought the key was to promise unlimited financial support for network.

**BAF:** All the work we do is connected. We have added other things—emergency funding, solidarity grants, small grants. It's important to address the structure. It's also important to fund things that give them space and voice.

**AB:** We went from a private to a charity foundation. We were small and there were donors and others who were interested in doing same work. We set up a fund structure that is involving. We talk to practitioners and the field has big impact.

**Q:** What are ways to do social change funding that is globalized, so the movement doesn't suffer in one area when it's succeeding elsewhere? Regarding the need to differentiate evaluation and making simple report requirements, we also need to consider cultural differences.

**LC:** All social movements need to be globalized. That's why philanthropy is key. It requires resources from all over the world. You can't really do this work without being global.

**BAF:** The fact that women's movement grew after Beijing, we can quickly recruit. There's a global network of women's fund. We have to continue to grow and move and ensure movement lives on.

**AB:** The nature of maquiladora workers organizing has become women's organizing. The way we fund requires a knowledge base. Move your knowledge base as the field moves. Concerns about globalization are that we should be following, but also being U.S. based, there are plenty counter agents. We need to create a two-way street in the globalization process.

**Q:** These issues go to the core of philanthropy, as part of U.S. society. Beyond at events like this, how do we raise these issues in the field as a whole? How, as a field, do we do better grantmaking?

**BAF:** By existing as an Africa-wide organization, as a global phenomenon, we are adding something.

**AB:** Something is pushing this field. I am here now, going to more funders. More fundamental questions are being asked. We are examining these issues, maybe because of the dire world situation. This is a good moment going on in the funding world.

**VMT:** There are lots of groups doing critical work. These conversations keep popping up. We're trying to think strategically about common work. One struggle for all of us. We need to help others to understand it. Because of work of Larry and Alan (at Ford), at the World Conference Against Racism, we were able to take U.S. activists talking about environmental racism through human rights. An environmental justice caucus was created. Taking them into that conversation had enormous impact about global connections. There is an environmental justice movement happening in India, Brazil, South Africa, Nepal, Malaysia. All it required was to be in the physical presence for a global conversation—and plane tickets to get there.

## II. THE FUNDERS' SOAPBOX!

Facilitator: Valentine Doyle, Lawson Valentine Foundation

- Kevin Callahan (Rights and Democracy)—The UNCHR is setting up a working group to draft an optional protocol on ESC rights in autumn in Geneva. This optional protocol would allow individuals who cannot get their ESC rights cases heard in their own countries to be able to get a hearing at the UN. Such a mechanism already exists for civil and political rights and is an important tool in the universal recognition of these rights. The working group must hear from those most affected by abuses of ESC rights so I encourage all funders to consider sending spokespeople from the global South to make presentations to the working group. It would also be good if representatives from U.S. groups could be there as this might put more pressure on the U.S. government to recognize ESC rights. So please consider funding activists and NGOs who work on ESCR to attend the working group in Geneva. Check the IHRFG web-site for more information.
- Phil McManus (Fund for Nonviolence)—Involved in a project to forge North and South alliances. Grantmakers Without Borders' task is to increase funding outside the border. Groups in Latin America are underfunded, especially by funders from U.S. Latin American activist were interested in a forum to address these issues. Besides facilitation, they offer funders access, advocate for increasing international funding, offer information about international giving. A website is being developed.
- Rebecca Rittgers (Atlantic Philanthropies)—Atlantic has made a commitment to Mary Robinson to continue her work and encourages others to support her as well. Mary Robinson is working on globalization issues and will be attending the conference in June in Thailand.
- Julie Richardson—General Service Foundation is supporting a sweatshop campaign, which is working to broaden the group. Campaign includes bringing factory workers from Bangladesh to the U.S., doing national petition drive, etc.
- Rebecca Adamson (First Nations Development Institute)—Member of an affinity group called International Funders for Indigenous People. Membership is free. Indigenous people are most oppressed group of people in whatever country they are in and are tackling multiple issues (biodiversity, mining, etc).
- Andrew Park (Wellspring Advisors)/Julia Greenberg (American Jewish World Service)—On funding social movement, we need to look at people living with AIDS. It's no longer acceptable to say that there's no treatment for AIDS by 2010 by international activists. Issue cuts across to right to health, anti-discrimination, corporate responsibility, etc. There are currently only a few funders who are interested in this.
- Johanna Mendelson (UN Foundation)—UN Foundation's five-year report is available. UNF is going into greater partnership and supports projects on peace, security and human rights, but it's also looking into environment, women's rights, and other issues.
- Miriam Porter—Requested feedback from participants on how to put together a good conference. Responses on what people look for in a workshop/session at the Council on Foundations or other funders meetings include: clear description (available in advance) of the likely level of discussion (intro? advanced? all levels?); secure audience participation (networks of people in attendance); engaged facilitator who allows conversations to be interactive; adequate time for Q&A session; to share my foundation's experiences if I'm the speaker; speakers who show respect for audience and not patronize; having choices of variety of topics. Suggested conferences to which IHRFG could submit proposals for human rights panels include: National Network of Grantmakers, Grantmakers without Borders, African Grantmakers Affinity Group, Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, International

Lesbian and Gay Fund, The Law and Society Foundation, Grantmakers for Income Security, International Fund for Indigenous People, American Anthropological Association (they have a Human Rights panel), The Conference Board (corporate philanthropy), Socially Responsible Investing, Association of Family Foundations, American Sociological Association.

- John Taylor (Wellspring Advisors)—Would like to vote for next session at our meeting to be on international convention for the rights of the disabled. Landmines Survivors Network campaigned for land mine treaty. It's a broader issue of rights of disabled people. There are 600 million disabled people; 80% are in developing countries. Compounded by employment, housing, etc., this area needs more attention from funders. Movement is being driven by leaders in Mexico, Jordan, Ireland, South Africa and some other countries. The convention has been approved by World Bank, Kofi Annan, European Disability Forum, Mental Disability Rights International.
- Larry Cox (Ford Foundation)—On March 11, there will be a ceremony in the Hague to officially open the International Criminal Court. Also, there is no conference in Mexico happening, but the ESCR conference is being held in Thailand in June.
- Heather Ryan (Global Greengrants Fund)—Case of Burmese workers against U.S.-based oil company Unocal in court for violations against international human rights and environmental laws.

### III. PROGRAMMING TRENDS SESSION

Facilitator: Johanna Mendelson-Forman, United Nations Foundation

This session was designed for participants to talk strategically and tactfully about giving and to share strategies. Johanna began by describing some general trends in grantmaking:

- Total aggregate giving by foundations continues to grow rapidly. It is estimated that between 1999 and 2000 alone, aggregate grant levels grew by 29.7%.
- The number of individual grants rose by approximately 10% to about 120,000 grants over the same period, of which, 582 of these grants were of amounts equal to or exceeding \$2.5 million.
- In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, grantmaking and philanthropic efforts in general focused largely on victim relief, thereby diverting a massive portion of the funding previously earmarked for other areas. The effect of this diversion, and the sheer pervasiveness of giving after 9/11 is still affecting the grantmaking philanthropic community, resulting in generally lower levels of funding for all programmatic areas.
- The general downturn in the global economy has also impacted the philanthropic community, most notably the private foundations, which derived a large portion of their endowments from stock and security, based investments, which have seen substantial devaluations over the past two years.
- International vs. domestic grantmaking—In 2000, international giving jumped by 86%, with the majority of the funding going to U.S. based projects. Yet, despite this massive increase, 80% of the total grantmaking dollars went to domestic programs.
- Domestic grantmaking by area—education (25%) and health (21%) programs receive the largest portion of total giving, with human service (24%) programs receiving the greatest number of grants. International Affairs programs captured only 3% of the total funds available for grantmaking. Children & youth /economically disadvantaged /ethnic or racial minorities /women & girls received the largest programmatic based share of total grant dollars.

#### Suggestions and comments:

- After 9/11, Guggenheim Foundation talked about research on terrorism only, instead of violence. Tension placed in one direction.
- Ford Foundation lost \$16 billion in assets from stock drop. This led to cuts in staff, closing of an office in the Philippines. Next year, there will be cuts in core budget; in my own human rights program, there is a 25% budget cut. It becomes critical for leveraging to happen.
- Increase of 1/3 in funding program at Fund for Nonviolence.
- For IHRFG, we are leveraging for new funders to incorporate human rights approach to their existing programs, and to give money never given before to the field. One way is for partnership.
- Leveraging—always thinking *inside* of box. With tax code, incentives can be created for tax code (for international giving, for example).
- Family foundations haven't slowed down but continue to be set up. Vast majority have no staff and wait until end of year to give. How do we tap into resources? Attending Council on Foundations conferences is incredibly rich.
- Donor-advised funds—they are growing and are very similar to family foundations. People fund more than the 5% requirement. Website can be very useful.
- Use the various Regional Association of Grantmakers (RAG) branches as a greater resource.

- Changemakers—promoting community-based funds, such as women’s funds. Activists involved in advising and trying to get to new money. Also look into Resource Generation, a Boston-based group for young philanthropists.
- Do a human rights media campaign (ex: United Way, European Funders Network, Body Shop).

#### IV. BUSINESS MEETING SESSION

Facilitator: Mona Younis, Mertz Gilmore Foundation

##### ➤ IHRFG: 2002 and Forward

Mona began by noting that the IHRFG would not be possible without the work that its members themselves do. She acknowledged the wonderful work done by the Steering Committee members; thanked Mijoung Chang, the IHRFG assistant, for her terrific contribution to the Group; and recognized the contribution of many others, like Miriam Porter, Ruth Messinger, Michael Hirschhorn, Karen Colvard, and others, who have contributed in so many varied and vital ways to moving the work of the IHRFG forward.

##### ◆ **Old business—July 2002 meeting decisions**

- Expand membership to international funders: We have been partially successful. Currently, approximately 300 funders are on our mailing list, of whom 140 joined in 2002. However, only 8% of our current members are non-U.S. funders (Australia, Belgium, Finland, Ghana, Mongolia, S. Africa, Ukraine, U.K.). As an “international” network, we need to expand the percentage of non-U.S. members. Among other things, we are working with the European Foundation Centre in Belgium to meet our counterparts around the world.
- Expand membership to grantmakers in other fields: In 2002 we held sessions at the Grantmakers Without Borders’ and Environmental Grantmakers Association’s annual conferences. Our session proposal for the 2003 Council on Foundations conference was also accepted.
- Website: Completed and available to public!
- Leveraging Project: We have made important strides on the Booklet (*Righting Wrongs*), whose development is being overseen by Michael Hirschhorn. More work lies ahead but with Michael leading, we are in great shape.

##### ◆ **Other Accomplishments in 2002**

In addition to the above, accomplishments included: held Mary Robinson dinner/evening event at the July 2002 meeting; hired a terrific Executive Director, Regan Ralph, for the Fund for Global Human Rights; and experienced a notable increase in requests from grantmakers for information on human rights funding.

##### ◆ **Finances: 2002 Income and Expenses**

The income and expense report for 2002 was distributed and discussed. [A copy of which is available on request.] Mona noted that the IHRFG’s work in 2002 was made possible by the generous contributions of numerous foundation members who came through when contacted on an as-needed basis. Special thanks were expressed to foundations that gave general operating support: United Nations Foundation (\$10,000), General Service Foundation (\$5,000), and Mertz Gilmore Foundation (\$13,000 + underwriting position of coordinator and assistant)

##### ◆ **Finances for 2003**

A budget for 2003 was distributed and discussed. [A copy of which is available on request.]

Meeting participants suggested that it was time for the IHRFG to request membership dues, given the notable advance of the Group and its activities. Participants further noted that dues rather than grants were preferable as it is much easier for foundations to pay membership fees than go through the grants process. Most people expressed agreement with this suggestion. A request was made of the Steering Committee to present a proposal for dues, one with gradations (e.g., \$500, \$1,000, \$2,000) to accommodate different foundation budgets. It was further agreed that no foundation would be excluded because of the inability or lack of readiness, because of newness to the Group, to pay.

##### ◆ **Future**

- It is extremely important that funders add their funding profile to the Funders Database. By providing accurate and comprehensive information on foundations’ funding in “one stop shopping” format, the Database has the potential of serving as a vital resource for grantseekers around the world. It is also a valuable resource for funders who seek information about grantmaking in specific areas of human rights or about each other.
- Explore with other Rights-based affinity groups (e.g., GCIR, reproductive rights, FNTG) the possibility of holding a joint conference to address our common concerns and fears under the prevailing circumstances, both at home and abroad.
- Outreach:



- Professional associations, such as academic networks, to hold sessions on human rights. This was first proposed at our January 2001 meeting on Ellis Island. IHRFG has been approached by the American Sociological Association to hold such a session at the Association's 2004 conference. Mona is working with another sociologist to pull a panel together. Other possibilities include, Law and Society, American Anthropological Association, and area studies associations. It was pointed out that the American Anthropological Association has a human rights committee, which holds sessions at their annual meeting, and that Global Greengrants is holding a session at the Latin American Studies Association. We should explore collaborating with and learning from these and other groups.
- The Conference Board—we can have a whole session with them and make a case for corporate giving. Rebecca Adamson will send contact information.
- Financial advisors, especially socially responsible investors.
- Community foundations—donor-advised funds may also be promising.

#### ➤ **Website and Database**

Mijoung Chang presented the completed IHRFG website. A suggestion was made to incorporate metatext so that the site can be easily found during searches.

#### ➤ **Visit to Office of UNHCHR in Geneva**

Johanna Mendelson-Forman gave an update on the meeting being arranged by the United Nations Foundation for IHRFG participants to visit UNHCHR Office in Geneva. Tentative date is for September. She will get a list of possible specific dates. Duration of meeting was discussed; would depend on what is to be accomplished. Other potential groups to visit in Geneva: ILO, UNHCR, COHRE, International Services for Human Rights, International Council on Human Rights Policy, World Council of Churches, WHO. Anyone interested in working on the visit and program with Johanna, Larry Cox, and Cora Weiss, should contact Johanna.

#### ➤ **Past Meeting Evaluations**

Valentine Doyle shared with the group evaluations of past meetings, based on completed evaluation forms from meeting participants. The meeting component that is most popular is the Funders Soapbox! People liked the amount of time allotted for the panel sessions, but felt the two-day meeting in general was too long. People didn't like the business meeting session time and requested fewer details at this session and more materials ahead of time for the meeting.

#### ➤ **Next Meetings**

- July 14-15, 2003 in New York. We will consider Open Society Institute for meeting space again.
- January 12-13, 2004 in San Francisco! Since Irvine Foundation can only accommodate 60 people, we need to consider other spaces. Possible locations: Yerba Buena Arts Center, Oakland; Mills College; University of San Francisco; San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Community Center (recently opened with space for 100 people); and Hastings College.
- July 2004 – Possibly 12-13 or 19-20. Kevin Callahan pitched for Montreal as a new venue. Another possibility: Chicago, to reach Midwest foundations. MacArthur Foundation offered to host us. What are the disadvantages of holding our meeting in a new city? What is the basis for choosing these cities? It should enable more members to attend our meetings. It was decided that participants would be asked their preference (Chicago, Montreal or NY) for the July 2004 meeting via e-mail.
- Other meeting suggestions: Develop a list for future meeting key speakers; film screenings (possibly as an evening event); plan more time for meeting participants to meet and network with other funders during the meeting, possibly by scheduling a dinner and evening session at future meetings.

#### ➤ **Other business**

- John Kowal (Open Society Institute) was welcomed as a new Steering Committee member.
- Council on Foundation 2003—IHRFG will be presenting a human rights session titled "The Human Rights Challenge: *What does Human Rights have to do with it – our grantmaking?*" We'll also be holding an affinity group morning meeting on April 28th. Suggestion was made to have a human rights symbol of some sort that can be added to the name tags for ease of identification of human rights funders, and to encourage other funders to inquire about funding human rights.