LAFF

THE LAFF SOCIETY Promoting Social and Professional Contacts Among Former Staff Members of the Ford Foundation

Summer 2018, No. 91

LAFFing Parade

Don Chen is the new president of the Surdna Foundation, the New York-based institution that "seeks to foster sustainable communities…guided by principles of social justice and distinguished by healthy environments, strong local economies and thriving cultures".

He was selected to be its third president because, noted the foundation, his "career has always been highlighted by his focus on environmental and community health in the context of urban environments".

That career includes working for the last ten years at the Ford Foundation as a program officer in the Metropolitan Opportunity, Equitable Development and Cities and States programs and, most recently, as director of Community and Resource Development.

Before Ford he was the founder, CEO and executive director for nine years of Smart Growth America, a housing and urban development coalition that worked to create "healthier and more sustainable communities across the nation".

Chen has a master's degree from Yale University in environmental studies and urban environmental policy.

He serves on several boards, including the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, West Harlem Environmental Action and the Environmental Leadership Program.

"Don has the track record, experience and deep commitment to social justice values that we were looking for," said Surdna's board chair, Peter Benedict. "His passion, purpose and authenticity were abundantly clear and magnetic."

Gordon Berlin, president of MDRC, has been named to the board of trustees of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, which makes grants to "nonprofits that provide direct services to low-income and

Continued on page 6

Anuara Begum, 30, says she gave birth before fleeing to Bangladesh from her home in Rakhine State, Myanmar. The journey lasted nine days. Photo from www.irinnews.org

ROHINGYA REFUGEES SEEK HOPE IN A "CITY OF DESPAIR"

It's been called a "sprawling city of despair", a vast, crowded area in Bangladesh where hundreds of thousands of Rohingyas have sought refuge from years of systematic persecution and violence in neighboring Myanmar, their homeland for centuries.

The United Nations said five years ago that the Rohingyas, most of them Muslims living in a predominantly Buddhist country, were "one of the most persecuted minorities in the world".

Now they live in squalor and fear following what an article in The New York Times in August described as "years of oppression and abuse" that is part of "a broader campaign of ethnic cleansing—burning villages, killing thousands and forcing hundreds of thousands to flee to Bangladesh…."

On the purely political front, the article states, "there has been almost no progress in holding anyone accountable" and efforts by the international community "have largely faltered".

Gowher Rizvi, international affairs adviser to the prime minister of Bangladesh, last fall expressed that country's belief that the only solution is for Myanmar to take the Rohingyas back, and is working as part of an international coalition to find a solution to the deepening problem.

Rizvi, who worked at the Ford Foundation from 1996 to 2002 primarily in the Asia program and New Delhi office, said in a news article that he "has seen lots of refugee camps all over the world and that it is a big challenge to find shelter and food".

It is also a major challenge to get Myanmar to simply recognize the Rohingya people. According to The New York Times, they are considered indigenous to Bangladesh and "interlopers" in Myanmar, where an official of the state of Rakhine, from which most of them fled, said, "There is no such thing as Rohingya. It is fake news."

So while the efforts continue to find a political solution, many work within the camps to alleviate the often intolerable conditions, faced with the reality that the problem will not be solved soon.

"The world cannot let the dire needs of Rohingya refugees go unmet," declared a United Nations report issued in June and

Continued on next page

Rohingya

Continued from page 1

co-written by **Natalia Kanem**, under-secretary general and executive director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). "More funding is required to provide food, shelter and essential support to both the refugees and the affected host communities.

"We call on the international community to urgently step up its efforts to help all Rohingya refugees in confronting their ordeal," said the statement, co-written by Pramila Patten, under-secretary and special representative of the U.N. on sexual violence in conflict.

"We warn of the dire consequences that many of the over 700,000 refugees will face with the anticipated monsoon rains. Flooding and landslides could compound the suffering of these refugees, causing further destruction as they try to rebuild their lives."

Kanem and Patten visited the densely populated camp in the area of Bangladesh known as Cox's Bazar, across the border from Rakhine, in May. Kanem, who has been with the U.N. since 2014, worked at Ford from 1992 to 2005 in several capacities, including in the Lagos office, management services and the Peace and Justice program.

Their report expressed satisfaction with much of the international response to the crisis so far.

"The Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis, launched in Geneva earlier this year," it noted, "requested $951 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.3 million people. Thanks to the response from the Government and people of Bangladesh, with the support of the international community, life-saving assistance has reached more than a million people."

But, it cautioned, more action is needed beyond the pledges as "only 18 per cent of the funding needed for the joint response plan has so far been provided".

The shortfall is especially acute for the work Kanem is most involved in at the U.N.: the health and safety of women, many of whom in Cox's Bazar were victims of sexual assault and rape by members of the Myanmar militia before they fled.

"UNFPA faces a funding gap of $3.7 million for the emergency response to meet the critical health, hygiene and protection needs of Rohingya women and girls through the end of 2018", said the report. "The survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence continue to suffer acute physical and psychological trauma, which is often compounded by social stigma and unwanted pregnancy…."

"We are also deeply concerned about reports of women and girls, who have already been subjected to unthinkable hardship, violence and abuse, now facing escalating risks of child marriage, trafficking and gender-based violence. Securing the safety, well-being and dignity of women is—and must remain—paramount."

The anticipated rains did come and, while work continued to make the camps habitable and safe, brought with them much of the difficulty that had been predicted.

On a second visit, in July, when she accompanied the U.N.'s secretary-general, Antonio Guterres, World Bank president Jim Yong Kim, and other international humanitarian aid officials, Kanem observed that the "heavy rains and their impact are already compounding the suffering of these refugees, even as they try to rebuild their lives."

Most refugees were living in makeshift huts constructed from bamboo sticks, with plastic sheeting for walls and tarpaulins for roofs. The New York Times described one setting on a hilltop as "benefiting from a gentle, if occasional breeze that wards off the oppressive heat, sour aromas and swarms of black flies that make life in other parts of the camp more miserable.

"Still, there is no running water or electricity, nor is there much prospect for jobs or lives beyond dull subsistence on the handouts of foreign aid groups."

"It's heartbreaking," Kanem said during the July visit, as quoted in a story in the Bangladesh paper The Daily Star, "to think that human beings can be cruel to each other even at a time of conflict and disagreement. Women and girls bear the brunt of conflict, not only of displacement but also by the type of sexual and gender-based violence and the heinous crimes which have been recounted….

"They have found refuge across the border here," she said. "Now the very basic needs of survival—food, appropriate shelter and the ability to feel safe and protected—are barely within reach."

She said that as many as 60 babies are born in the camps every day, while scores of pregnant women need proper nutrition and

Continued on next page

The LAFF Society
c/o Nellie Toma
PO Box 701107, East Elmhurst, NY 11370

E-Mail: treasurer@laffsociety.org
www.laffsociety.org

Shepard Forman, *President*
Betsy Campbell and Suzanne Siskel, *Vice Presidents*
Nellie Toma, *Secretary-Treasurer*
Dorothy Nixon, *Administrative Secretary*
Michele Cole, *Administrative Secretary*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sheila Gordon
John LaHoud
Janet Maughan
N. Bird Runningwater
Michael Seltzer

ADVISORY BOARD

David Arnold
William Carmichael
Peter Cleaves
Mahnaz Ispahani
Lance Lindblom
Michael Lipsky
Theodora Lurie
Mary McClymont
Mora McLean
Janice Molnar
Sheila Nelson
Raymond Offenheiser
S. Gowher Rizvi
Anthony Romero
Kerwin Tesdell

John LaHoud, *Editor*
Nellie Toma, *Assistant Editor*
Susan Huyser, *Graphic Designer*

Newsletter Index

Nellie Toma, *LAFF's secretary-treasurer, has completed the arduous task of indexing every newsletter since the Society's inception in 1991. As she explains in this letter to all members:*

I did it!

After six months, I finally finished indexing all 92 issues of the LAFF newsletter and all are now available at http://www.laffsociety.org/NewsArchive.asp. You can access the index at http://www.laffsociety.org/NewsIndex_Search.asp. Type the first few letters of the name you're looking for, or scroll down until you reach it. I will be adding to the index with the publication of each new issue.

It was a daunting task (4,300 entries), but I enjoyed doing it because, as I scanned the issues for names, I got to read many interesting articles, one of which appears on page 5 of this issue. Perhaps that's one of the reasons it took me six months to accomplish the task. I learned so much about the early years of the Foundation and the amazing men and women who brought it forward to where it is today. There were interesting articles, some of which were personal and entertaining. If you have the time, I think you'll enjoy reading some of them.

As much as I would like to think of myself as perfect, I'm sure there are some errors (spelling, omissions, etc.). I would be most grateful if you would bring any errors to my attention because I would like the index to be as complete and accurate as possible.

I hope you find the index useful. You can look up your own names and read about yourselves. ■

post-natal care. Many of these women, she said, are victims of crimes of sexual violence by Myanmar soldiers.

To provide the care these women need, and a safe refuge, the UNFPA created 19 centers, known as Women-Friendly Spaces (WFS), offering healthcare and counseling and professional case management for victims of violence. But to illustrate the fragile nature of life in the refugee camps, 10 of these centers were damaged by rain and mudslides in the early weeks of the summer monsoon.

And the rains were keeping people away. Even before the monsoon arrived it was estimated that no more than a fifth of all babies were delivered in health facilities. As the rains persisted, use of the women-friendly spaces declined by 60 percent.

To try to counter the damaging effects of the weather, and to supplement the work of the centers, UNFPA workers have been distributing sterile-delivery kits, including a plastic sheet, razor blades, gloves and towels, to help ensure a safe delivery for women who cannot reach a center or other health facility when they are about to deliver.

Community watch groups, comprised of women in the camps and local residents, have been formed to locate women who are pregnant so they can be taken to more secure settlements and health facilities, especially to help them cope with "trauma and loss". Midwives and case workers travel along rutted and water-logged roads to reach those in need.

But Kanem saw some hope through efforts by the Bangladesh government to support structural improvements in the camps, and by recent international decisions. Just prior to her visit with the secretary-general in July, the World Bank said it would provide up to $480 million to U.N. agencies and their partners to "strengthen humanitarian efforts".

"It was encouraging," Kanem said, "that the current infrastructure will be strengthened by the Bangladesh government so that semi-permanent structures will be constructed in view of longer-term sustainability.

"We pledge to do all we can to provide life-saving services for women and girls within the refugee population as well as the host communities, who have been so generous in welcoming the Rohingya people."

She was also encouraged by small, individual demonstrations of hope by the refugees themselves.

"I was very pleased," she said, "that among the women who spoke to the secretary-general and World Bank president was a woman with her baby. The baby was six months old, and she declared her son was the result of rape and she has treated the son with full love and she was being treated with full respect from her community, which she deserves.

"This showed we made some progress. Women should not be victimized twice for what happened to them.

"We also believe," she said, "that no matter what has happened to you in the past, the future should be different." ■

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Memory is the essence of LAFF. We share the individual and collective memories of our time at the Foundation. We link them in multiple ways to national and global trends and events and compensate the loss of once tangible connections to individuals and institutions that were central to our professional, and sometimes personal, lives.

I felt this starkly on the night of September 2 when a disastrous fire devoured the contents of Brazil's National Museum of Natural History, a part of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

I recalled the first time I entered the Museum in 1961, as a young Fulbright Fellow on a year's fellowship to study at first hand the history of a Brazil that I had known only remotely in graduate school. To my inexperienced eye, the declining majesty of the former Imperial Palace that housed the Museum faded as backdrop to its extraordinary collections of natural history, paleontology, archeology and cultural anthropology. That and subsequent visits awakened career interests that I hadn't as yet begun to contemplate.

Little did I imagine then that, 17 years later, as a full-fledged anthropologist–thanks to various Foundation-related fellowships–I would be working in the Rio office, recommending funding to graduate programs in the social sciences and economics at Brazilian universities and teaching a course on peasant societies at the Museum's doctoral program in anthropology, then the premier institution of its kind in Brazil. Sadly, the institutional neglect that I witnessed then only deepened over the past 40 years, taking its toll on infrastructure, collections, research and staff morale.

The fire that occurred on September 2, just two months after a muted celebration of the museum's two-hundredth anniversary, obliterated the nation's ethno-scientific history, material culture and tangible memory. Housed in the Nineteenth Century residence of Brazil's royal family, the Museum was the repository of Brazil's national patrimony.

In addition to the restored residence of the Emperor and his family, the most extensive archive in Latin America included: Dom Pedro II's library of rare manuscripts and books, and his collection of Egyptology; copious descriptions of botanica and minerology, and the five-ton Bendegó, among the largest meteorites to have fallen in the western hemisphere; extensive butterfly and entomological specimens; the dinosaur Maxakalisaurus tapai, painstakingly reconstructed over a ten-year period; Lúzia, the oldest human fossil in the New World; indigenous skeletal remains and artifacts; ethnographic and linguistic studies and photographs of Brazil's indigenous tribes, many now extinct, with a map of their original locations; and a priceless record of Brazil's African Heritage, among other national treasures.

Only Bendegó remains, at the main entrance to a once impressive structure, now reduced to blackened walls and ashes.

While the origin of the fire is being investigated, recriminations have inevitably begun, most faulting government indifference. The last presidential visit to the nation's repository occurred in 1958! Despite an anniversary appeal from the Museum's directors and numerous admonishments regarding the precarious state of the edifice, no preventive steps were taken by the university or the federal government, which bears ultimate responsibility for the nation's patrimony.

No active sprinkler system existed, nor was there sufficient water pressure in nearby hydrants when firefighters responded to the alarm. Dedicated staff rushed to the Museum to try to save what they could, and waited despairingly for the arrival of water trucks and hoses to pump water from an artificial lagoon, the centerpiece of the Palace's lush gardens.

While a national lament continues, debate now turns on the question of recovery and restoration, if that is at all possible. National museums throughout the world have responded with messages of solidarity and some with offers of contributions, but most observers believe the damage is irreparable. The archives were neither digitized nor backed up with copies, a particularly painful truth for indigenous Brazilian scholars for whom the Museum's records were the primary source for the study of tribes exterminated in the course of Brazil's landgrab history.

One leading Brazilian anthropologist suggested the building remain a ruin, a monument to Brazil's failure to respect its historic patrimony. Reflecting on last year's opening of Rio's Museo do Amanhã (Museum of Tomorrow), another colleague questioned: "How can you have a museum of the future in a country that has obliterated its past?"

Some, like BrazilFoundation's president, are decrying the lack of private philanthropy in support of the infrastructure required to sustain public institutions, as well as the near total reliance of Brazilians on public funding, even when an unprecedented economic crisis engendered ever more draconian cutbacks in institutional support.

No appeal to the civic spirit that lends itself to public-private collaboration was made in the run-up to the bicentennial celebration. <www.museunacional.ufrj.br/memoria> has only now cried out to the public for photographs of collections and exhibits that can serve as a shared memory of their bicentenary house and as testimony to what was lost.

Memory, of course, is an important antidote to the destruction of a material past. It's the link that LAFF provides to our own tangible history at the Foundation. It's a thread that those of us who worked in Brazil, and visited and supported the Museum, can draw on to visualize more than charred walls and Bendegó. The Museum fire reminds us of the need to record our memories. Sometimes they are all that remain. **Shep**

Radhika Balakrishnan, on the right, with former President Jimmy Carter to her right.

ECONOMIC POLICY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

By Radhika Balakrishnan

The author, director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership and a professor in Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University, was a featured speaker July 24 at a forum in Atlanta sponsored by the Carter Center on "Restoring Faith in Freedom". She spoke after opening remarks by former President Jimmy Carter, founder of the center. This article is based on a transcript of her remarks.

Radhika worked in the Asia and Pacific program of the Ford Foundation from 1992 to 1995, and has a doctorate in economics. She is a member of the Commission for Gender Equity for the City of New York and co-chair of the Civil Society Advisory Committee for the United Nations Development Program.

We're living in a time of extreme inequality, as President Carter has already talked about. An Oxfam report in 2018 said that 82 percent of the wealth globally is in the hands of the richest 1 percent.

What's interesting about that number is that in 2017, 42 people—42 individuals—held the same wealth as half the world's population. That's 2017. In 2016, that number was 66. And in 2009, around the financial crisis, that number was 366. So the concentration of wealth is getting narrower and narrower every year we go on. The concentration of wealth is also taking place in the United States, not just globally. The United States is now one of the worst, most unequal societies that we've seen.

One of the interesting things is that from the late 1940s to 1980 there was shared prosperity. The bottom 20 percent of the population increased their real income by over 100 percent. The middle class grew at fairly equal amounts, and the top 5 percent also increased, by about 86 percent. There was shared prosperity.

And then my favorite president didn't win the election in 1981. Things changed. There were consequences. What we see from about the early 1980s is an incredible increase in the concentration of income and wealth by the top 1 percent, whose income increased by huge amounts....

As an economist, you always look at graphs, and so you see this increase in the concentration of wealth of the top 1 percent while the rest are pretty stagnant—not moving and at times going below zero. When the wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few and the rest of the economy has stagnated, as over the last 30 years, there are consequences.

And globally we see similar levels. Inequality is increasing in almost all parts of the world with very few exceptions. Even organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—not known for redistributive policies—have been warning that this level of inequality is unsustainable for the kind of economy we live in. So it's not just that this is bad, it's really not sustainable.

But they don't offer alternatives to the existing paradigm. So you have the IMF and everyone, really, issuing this rallying cry that this level of inequality is unsustainable. But what's the answer to that concentration of wealth? What new paradigm are they offering us besides the kind of economic policies we've seen since the 1980s?

One of the consequences of this concentration of wealth is also the rise of right-wing nationalist governments and xenophobia. These are not an accident but really a consequence of the kind of economic policies that we've been following. In the U.S., in Italy, in Hungary, in the Philippines and in India we see the rise of right-wing nationalist governments. So something is not working.

The question I have—and it seems like a simple question, but I think it's really a radical question—is what is the economy for? Why do we participate in it? We all participate. We work, we buy things, we eat breakfast, we buy coffees. What is the purpose of the economy? Is it to make sure that our 1 percent gets wealthier? Or is there some other purpose?

And so the work that I've been doing with my colleagues is really trying to address that question, to assess a normative framework for what the economy is for. Economists like to pretend that we're some positivist science that's focused on data, but we all are normative. We wish for something in the world. The work that we've been doing is to say: What if the purpose of the economy was to fulfill human rights? What would happen? What if we assess the economy in terms of its obligation to fulfill human rights? What do we see as a result of that policy?

What if we look to fulfill human rights, such as the right to health, the right to education, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to food? If these were the rights that were held as a normative framework to assess how economic policy is made, what kind of economic policy would we see? Human rights norms and standards can be that alternative evaluative and ethical framework for assessing economic policy. Not just policies, but also the outcomes of those policies. Do people actually have the right to food? Can we look at that as a way to see if economic policy is working?

We need to look at the basic principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially the absolute indivisibility of rights. For many years, the work on economic and social rights has been looked at sort of secondarily. But the indivisibility of rights, which is at the heart of the U.N. declaration, is critical when we look at economic policymaking. And President Carter signed the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, which most people forget. Those covenants together give us the normative framework in which to assess economic policy.

And what this gives us in terms of economic policy is a collective responsibility to

Continued on next page

ensure an individual right. And so it's critical because a lot of people criticize human rights as being too individualistic. It's not too individualistic. It's a collective responsibility! But we're making sure that individuals in all their complexity are taken care of.

Now, to turn to civil and political rights. We've heard over the last three days from the human rights defenders who are being attacked around the world why civil and political rights are very integral to the support of economic, social and cultural rights. You cannot have one without the other. We need to remember that policymaking is a political process, especially economic policy making. It's not a technocratic process.

In our work, we use an idea that we hope will catch: TINTA, which means, There Is No Technocratic Answer. Human rights gives us an evaluative framework by which we can judge economic policy. The human rights principles of accountability, transparency and participation are critical for economic policy making. We use these a lot in terms of civil and political rights, but not in terms of economic policy making. Using a human rights framework does not provide a blueprint. What it does is give us a process by which to evaluate the economy.

Many times, people from the human rights movement say, "Okay, you're the economist. So what does a human rights economy look like?" Well, there is no answer. But what it does is give us a process and a certain evaluative framework by which to judge economic policy.

In the human rights framework, the duty-bearer is the state. And the state is paradoxical. The state can deny rights, but the power of the state can also be harnessed to realize rights. That's the aspect of economic policy making that I would like to focus on. It requires collective action to ensure accountability. Human rights requires that collective action hold the state accountable and that this state accountability is an open-ended process that allows for ongoing discussion and deliberation. It does not say what the distributive outcomes should be, but it gives us a normative idea by which to look at what they could be.

The question I have—and it seems like a simple question, but I think it's really a radical question—is what is the economy for? Why do we participate in it? ... Is it to make sure that our 1 percent gets wealthier? Or is there some other purpose?

We also need to look at inequality in terms of race, gender, sexuality and all other intersections of those identities. I don't have the numbers in terms of inequality, but we know that there are incredible levels of inequality both in the United States and around the world. The principle of non-discrimination and equality within the human rights framework is one of the really important aspects for trying to tackle these issues. The principles of non-discrimination and equality, unlike other rights that are progressively realized, are an immediate obligation. So we can really hold states to account when we can show that there are discriminatory policies in terms of the economic policy.

Going back to the question, "what is the economy for?", the economic policy that would come out of a human rights framework is one that is grounded in substantive freedoms and equality for realized outcomes, not just opportunities. A democratic economy also requires global coordination and governance. The economy is no longer just about the pursuit of economic growth, but really about a shared prosperity.

But it is also about institutions and faith in institutions. We can't overstate the importance of institutions, mechanisms and structures to hold policymaking accountable. Democratic economic policy makes requiring accountability, participation and transparency to allow people to exercise their civil and political rights in support of a more just economy. ■

FROM LAFF'S ARCHIVE: ENVIRONMENTAL ODYSSEY

The early issues of our newsletter, which was first published in 1991, contain a variety of fascinating articles, a trove of information on the people and programs in the early years of the Ford Foundation. We will offer some of them from time to time, beginning with this one, from the Winter 1993 edition.

In a 7,000-word article to be published in the magazine Environment, **Marshall Robinson** has described the Foundation's conservation and environmental programs for more than four decades since the early 1950s. Before he left the Foundation to become president of the Russell Sage Foundation, Robinson was vice president in charge of Resources and Environment.

Ford's involvement began with support of the Paley Commission, which was concerned with "the wise use of natural resources". Thereafter, major support went to Resources for the Future. Ford's next major step was grants in the 1960s to fund preservation organizations, e.g., the Nature Conservancy and Save-the-Redwoods.

The Resources and Environment unit began with research and the training of new scientists on the complexity and interactions of the human environment. The first director, **Gordon Harrison**, defined conservation "in a way that went beyond land and nature; now it was energy, water, air minerals, marine resources, wildlife, arable soil and, finally, space (land)", Robinson writes.

Before the environmental movement picked up full steam, the Foundation encouraged research "on the dark side of the environmental puzzle: the pollutants, wastes, effluent, contaminants, noise and trash". The program expanded to help governmental organizations and citizens to work out agreements on controversial environmental projects.

There followed environmental education grants and the Foundation's entry into the controversial area of assisting legal efforts on environmental issues, notably the Environmental Defense Fund and the new Natural Resources Defense Council. Finally, the Foundation tackled the energy issue principally through its own Energy Research Project, a highly visible and controversial effort.

"What, then, was the real role of the Ford Foundation in the wide-ranging, multidimensional, popular American environmental revolution?" Robinson asks.

The answer, he says, lies in Harrison's statement: "The extent to which there are now environmental research programs, and a general stirring of interest in the scientific community, is clearly due to the spreading recognition that people are in trouble. We know of no way in which to measure our own role, no sound reason to claim credit for what is now going on that promises social benefits or to take blame for not having got in sooner with more. The important point is certainly that progress in managing the environment is going to come when and as society is roused to the need."

What happened after all that? Robinson asks: "The environmental movement waxed during the 1970s. Then waned in the 1980s, which is a different tale, one with fewer heroes, more villains and a very different vision of tomorrow." ■

LAFFing Parade

Continued from page 1

vulnerable individuals and families, primarily in the United States and Israel".

MDRC was formed in 1974 by the Ford Foundation and a coalition of federal agencies as the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, designed as a "nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve programs and policies that affect the poor".

Initially focused on evaluating state welfare-to-work programs, it now studies public school reforms, employment programs for ex-prisoners and people with disabilities and programs to help low-income people succeed in college.

"From welfare policy to high school reform," notes the organization, "MDRC's work has helped to shape legislation, program design and operational practices across the country."

Berlin went to work at MDRC in 1990 and became its president in 2004. He had worked at Ford for six years as a program officer and then deputy director of its Urban Poverty program, and was executive deputy administrator for management, budget and policy at New York City's Human Resources Administration.

Kavita Ramdas has been appointed director of the Women's Rights Program at the Open Society Foundations.

Ramdas joined Ford in 2012 as its representative in New Delhi, where she worked on issues of equity, inclusion, economic fairness, freedom of expression, human rights, sexuality and reproductive health and rights, transparency and accountable government, and sustainable development.

She left the Foundation earlier this year after serving as a senior adviser to its president, Darren Walker, helping "integrate our commitment to justice in all our policies and practices".

In making the announcement of her appointment, Patrick Gaspard, president of Open Society, said, "The work of our Women's Rights Program is more important than ever, especially in the face of an unprecedented wave of antiwoman attacks by nationalist and populist governments."

Said Ramdas, "Open and democratic societies are simply unachievable when half the population is structurally excluded from full and equal participation in most nations across the world.

"I see the current global crisis of increased intolerance, illiberalism and authoritarianism as deeply linked to patriarchy and misogyny, and I believe that fighting for a more democratic future will inherently require us to fight for a more feminist future."

Ramdas has a bachelor's degree in politics and international relations from Mount Holyoke College and a master's degree in public affairs with a focus on international development from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.

Akwasi Aidoo, who worked at the Ford Foundation for 13 years and throughout his career has promoted the cause of human rights, has been named to the Board of Governors of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

The center, in collaboration with funding partners at home and abroad, "helps build Southern research capacities to achieve cleaner environments, improved nutrition, higher incomes and greater health and gender equity in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East".

Aidoo, who was born in Ghana, worked at Ford from 1993 to 2006 in the Dakar and Lagos offices, and the Peace and Social Justice program. He earned a bachelor's degree with honors in sociology from the University of Cape Coast in his home country, and a doctorate in medical sociology from the University of Connecticut.

He has been the executive director of the grant-making organization TransAfrica, and in 2015 received the Africa Philanthropy Award, presented in Tanzania. He is now a senior fellow at the United States-based Humanity United, and a member of the board of Human Rights Watch and the Fund for Global Human Rights. ■

IN MEMORIAM

Fred Eugene Crossland, a program officer in higher education and research from 1964 to 1981, where he was described as being at the "forefront of almost every major movement in higher education", died August 3 in Gainesville, Va. He was 97.

He was most forceful in bringing attention to the under-representation of minorities in colleges and universities, and his book *Minority Access to College,* published in 1971, is credited with drawing national attention to the issue. As a program officer at Ford, he was responsible for many grants that helped equalize the balance.

At the time he left Ford, noting changes in structure and priorities, he said, "I believe the Foundation will continue to play a leadership role, but the resources are not as large in real dollars as they were in the 1960s. The higher education community must understand that the Ford Foundation is no longer a bankroll. We can no longer put gas in the tank, but maybe we can help lubricate the engine."

Fred was born in Snydertown, a small rural community in east central Pennsylvania, but the family moved to New York City and settled in Brooklyn when he was a toddler. He earned a bachelor's degree from Brooklyn College and both a master's degree and doctorate from New York University.

But before college came music when, at the age of 16, he played piano in a dance band he formed, calling it Den Raynor and his Orchestra and playing at hotels and resorts throughout the northeast.

And then there was military service during World War 11, as a cryptographer encoding and decoding communications and then as a crewman on a naval amphibious flagship, the U.S.S. Rocky Mount, taking part in nine Pacific invasions.

After the war he joined the political science department at New York University, rising to the rank of associate professor and then serving as an administrator, including dean of admissions, before leaving to join Ford.

When he left Ford he became a research professor and assistant to the provost at Duke University.

He had wide-ranging interests and numerous hobbies and in his later years, as recounted in a family eulogy, "His caregivers would marvel at his knowledge of their country's history and geography. During his final two years, while in an assisted living facility, he conducted more than 25 talks on myriad subjects, ranging from autobiographical observations to the Supreme Court and Russian history."

His wife of 68 years, Elizabeth, died in 2016. A son, Fred, Jr., also died. He is survived by another son, Robert, two grandchildren and a brother, Richard. ■

AN INITIATIVE TOWARDS A NEW ECOLOGY FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT

By Barbara Klugman and Denise Dora

In 2012, the Ford Foundation created the $54 million Strengthening Human Rights Worldwide global initiative (SHRW), which funded seven human rights groups from the Global South and seven International NGOs headquartered in the Global North.

It aimed to further catalyze efforts under way to strengthen the perceived legitimacy and influence of local movements on global agendas and strategies and thereby create a human rights ecosystem to meet the challenges of the changing global context.

Most notably, it was designed to deal with the growth in political importance of emerging powers and declining moral valence of the West, and increased geopolitical significance of regions. **Louis Bickford** was the primary program officer.

Four years later, in 2016, Ford commissioned a "Learning Review" of this initiative in order to generate insights for the field. The review team, comprising two ex-Ford Foundation staffers, Barbara Klugman, who lives in South Africa, and Denise Dora of Brazil, and Ravindran Daniel of India, Maimouna Jallow of Kenya and Marcelo Azambuja of Brazil, was tasked to assess if, and how well, SHRW contributed towards enhancing southern participation and shifting north-south power relations in the global human rights movement, and promoting shifts in debates, discourses, mechanisms, policies or practices of international or regional bodies or national mechanisms and legal systems.

The Review also asked what funding approaches best support the efforts of NGOs and networks in the Global South to influence the human rights movement and international NGOs.

It should be noted that this initiative did not include national groups in the Global North, except as members of international NGOs. But the team considers it likely that their findings may apply to national groups in other parts of the globe that usually are assumed to have only a national ambit, and are funded accordingly and relate similarly to international NGOs.

The following key lessons are discussed in detail in the introduction to the public report at https://bit.ly/2EK6ZGe

Conditions that enable international influence of Global South groups

The Learning Review of SHRW found that human rights groups from the Global South brought new understandings into the movement internationally, and sought new remedies. What enabled this?

Principally, independent core funding to use nationally or internationally is what gave them the stability, autonomy and flexibility to introduce new agendas to the movement.

These enabled them to:

create their own collaborations rather than wait to be invited into venues or processes;

initiate evidence-gathering and analysis on issues they consider critical with whichever partners in other countries or among international NGOs, academics or others that they believe will bring key insights or expertise;

shape their strategic arguments, based on this evidence, in ways and languages that resonate with those they are targeting, including, where needed, to articulate their issues in terms that are meaningful outside of their own context;

choose which individuals or institutions will be most strategic to target to address their own issues, whether at local, national, regional or international levels; and

identify what from their experiences could be useful for others globally, and at what venues or through what processes to engage others.

Roles of international NGOs that support an effective ecosystem

Despite the inequitable, hierarchical and inefficient resource distribution and dynamics of the human rights movement, some international NGOs in this initiative demonstrated effective ways to support the development of a more equitable and efficient movement ecology. They:

use their brands or platforms to support local and national initiatives;

limit their use of resources by structuring themselves to add value to existing local resources rather than duplicate local staff and infrastructure capacities;

operate as membership-based organizations with democratic governance so that members from all parts of the globe influence their framing of issues and priorities for action;

collaborate in conceptualizing potential forums, research agendas, publications, policy think tanks or other spaces so that their agendas and processes routinely and automatically include people from the national level; and

include Global South and national groups in governance of international NGOs and of any coalitions, campaigns or other initiatives aiming to address issues relevant to these groups.

The review found that supporting constituencies in self-organizing so that they become independent financially and can use their voices independently, and routinely establishing alliances and other forms of collaboration, are important roles that both Global South and international NGOs are playing to maximize the power of the movement.

The Learning Review found that some international NGOs in this initiative had found ways to add value to the work of national groups without removing the agency of those groups in shaping agendas and strategies. However, in the perspectives and experience of the international experts interviewed and surveyed for this review, international NGOs in general continue to control agendas and spaces of the human rights movement despite the urgent need for stronger and demonstrably independent southern and national participants who are perceived as more legitimate players, particularly in countries and regions that are arguing that human rights are a western construct.

This view is supported by evidence that the vast majority of funding for human rights advocacy goes to international NGOs in the West, and by a network analysis showing that, while groups from the Global South had significantly increased their importance in the network surveyed, large INGOs, in particular Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, remain entirely dominant in the space.

Funding a more effective and equitable human rights movement

The review team concluded that funders can translate these lessons directly into how they think about and support national as well as regional and international advocacy. In addition, in planning new funding initiatives, funders should ensure that:

their own regional offices or staff are co-producers of any initiative that will involve grantees in their regions;

Continued on next page

The LAFF Society
c/o Nellie Toma
PO Box 701107
East Elmhurst, NY 11370

New Ecology

Continued from page 7

intended grantees participate in framing the theory of change and markers of progress that will be used to evaluate success;

substantial time is allocated for building trust among any groups that may be working together for the first time, and any intended outcomes are realistic to the time-frame of the initiative;

the mix of grantees ensures diverse capacities and relationships in order to maximize impact;

collaborations between a grantee and others in the field are rewarded rather than anoint an individual grantee with a role or funds that may undermine existing or potential collaborations, or that may reward grantees who attribute changes to themselves rather than recognize contributions of multiple groups;

all grantees take initiative rather than vest power in traditional relationships between INGOs and local groups;

national groups can use their funds to target any level of the system, as opportunities are lost when funders separate "national" from "international" work and limit national groups' funding to national borders. This approach prevents national groups from using whatever platforms are most strategic at any moment in time, and enables them to share their expertise with groups in other countries facing similar challenges;

ethics and transparency are the basis of any collective engagement the initiative requires among grantees, and between grantees and funders; and

a developmental evaluation approach is implemented from the start, so that grantees and the funder are in an ongoing and collective process of sense-making, learning and strengthening the work.

Where an initiative aims to shift dynamics in a field or movement, the funder will need to include engagement with other funders as a key dimension of its strategy, since field-building and field-shifting take a long time and substantial resources.

In addition to the public report, findings are summarized in three short articles, in English and Spanish, focusing on the human rights system, movement and funding: The Value of Diversity in Creating Systemic Change for Human Rights; Finding Equity—Shifting Power Structures in Human Rights; and Addressing Systemic Inequality in Human Rights Funding.

These are supported by three videos: The Human Rights System is Under Attack—Can it Survive Current Global Challenges?; The Changing Ecology of the Human Rights Movement; and Funding an Effective Human Rights Movement.

Findings have also been published as "The South in Transition: towards a new ecology of the human rights movement in the context of closing civic space", in the December 2017 issue of SUR, at http://sur.conectas.org/en/the-south-in-transition/ ■

Barbara Klugman *worked in the Sexuality program at the Ford Foundation from 2003 to 2009. She has just completed her term as chair of the board of the Urgent Action Fund for Women's Rights-Africa, and has joined the board of the Global Fund for Community Foundations. She works as a freelance strategy and evaluation practitioner.*

Denise Dora *worked in the Human Rights program at the Ford Foundation's Brazil office from 2000 to 2011. She is on the board of the Brazil Human Rights Fund, and works as a lawyer and consultant for social justice philanthropy.*