



## ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE

**To help communities move toward positive social change and equitable development, the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program empowers leaders from excluded social groups.**

The Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP) was designed to broaden access to higher education for marginalized individuals from 21 countries and territories in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Russia, who are seeking to solve the most pressing development problems in their countries and/or communities. Launched in 2001, with a \$280 million grant from the Ford Foundation, IFP views education as a conduit to cultivating a population of socially committed leaders.

In April 2006, due to the overwhelming success of the program, the Ford Foundation announced an additional \$75 million grant, which will extend the life of the program to 2014. At the conclusion of the program, IFP will benefit approximately 4,300 Fellows. The program has already selected over 2,000 active Fellows.

IFP works with partner organizations in each of the target countries and territories to identify which marginalizing factors – including socioeconomic status, race, gender, caste, religion, etc. – present the most formidable barriers to education in each country’s context. However, “marginalization” is not the only criterion that qualifies one for an IFP Fellowship. Successful candidates must also demonstrate academic aptitude, leadership potential and a commitment to applying their skills towards addressing development challenges in their country.

**A Network of International Partners** | The International Fellowships Program Secretariat is housed at the Institute of International Education’s headquarters in New York. IIE collaborates closely with IFP to find the most appropriate university placements for Fellows who choose to study in the United States and Canada. IFP works with 21 international partner organizations that administer the program in their countries or regions. In Mexico, IIE helps place IFP Fellows at host universities, while IIE offices in China, Indonesia and Russia oversee Fellows’ selection in those countries. IIE also manages the financial and administrative arrangements for more than 1,000 current IFP Fellows studying at some 300 universities in 24 countries around the world.

Over 1,000 IFP alumni have completed their fellowships and are beginning to re-establish themselves professionally after up to three years of graduate study in Europe, North America, and in their home regions. Over 75% of alumni are in their home countries or regions tackling social justice issues, with nearly all other IFP graduates still abroad for additional academic and professional training.

IIE and IFP partners are instrumental in keeping alumni networks vital and connected, ensuring that they can individually and together become a powerful force for social change.



**IMPACT** > FORD FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT ADVOCATES FOR DISABLED IN VIETNAM. Vo Thi Hoang Yen grew up in a large farming family in rural Vietnam. Yen contracted polio at age 2, and it was feared she would never walk at all. She proved everyone wrong, and continues to defy the odds with her amazing personal and academic trajectory. The discrimination that Yen faces daily, as a disabled person, serves as her motivation to fight for social justice in Vietnam. After using her IFP Fellowship to earn a master’s degree in human development from Kansas University, Yen returned to Vietnam, where she founded Disabilities Resource and Development (DRD), an organization that advocates for the rights of the disabled at Ho Chi Minh City Open University, where she serves as a faculty member. Yen also consults with the Youth Association of People with Disabilities in Vietnam, and recently won the prestigious “Live for Community” prize awarded by one of Vietnam’s most popular newspapers. When asked about her extraordinary accomplishments, Yen Vo says, “I work with my mind, not my legs.”