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## ABSTRACT

Part of a larger study of women's participation in international scholarship and fellowship programs, this volume describes and profiles women's participation in nine programs: (1) the American Association of University Women International Fellows Program; (2) America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc. (AMIDEAST); (3) African Training for Leadership and Advanced Skills (ATLAS); (4) Caribbean and Latin American Scholarship Program (CLASP) of the U.S. Agency for International Development; (5) Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program; (6) Fulbright Graduate Fellowship Program; (7) Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program; (8) MacArthur/Ford/Hewlett-supported Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences for Mexicans and Central Americans; and (9) Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships. Each profile provides background information on the program, describes policy on women's participation, and makes observations on women's participation, including statistics. A concluding chapter summarizes salient findings of the study which include: access to information is fundamental to any meaningful attempt to increase women's participation; mandates do matter; fairness particularly in the selection process is essential, and the key to fairness is professionalism; terms and conditions of scholarship have an impact on women's decisions to apply for and/or accept such awards; and even as programs seek to facilitate the greater participation of women, they are not well equipped to help their alumnae build upon their achievements once they return home. Proceedings of a December 4, 1995 symposium on this topic are summarized in an appendix. (MSE)

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RONA KLUGER



Institute of International Education

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**increasing women's  
participation in  
international  
scholarship  
programs:  
an analysis of  
nine case studies**

**RONA KLUGER**

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The IIE gratefully acknowledges support from  
The Ford Foundation which made possible this study  
and related materials:

an updated edition of  
*Funding for U.S. Study: A Guide for Foreign Nationals,*

and a new booklet,  
*Study Abroad: You Can Get There From Here  
A Guide for Women (and Men)*



Institute of International Education

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New York, NY 10017

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although the number of women participating in international scholarship programs has increased considerably over the past two decades, it is generally recognized that they still are not participating in numbers commensurate with their population worldwide. Further, a cursory examination of a few programs indicates surprisingly wide variations in rates of women's participation from program to program, and within programs, country to country.

In 1993, the Ford Foundation provided support to the Institute of International Education (IIE) for a multifaceted exploration of how best to increase women's applications to and participation in such programs. One element of the Ford Foundation-supported project was the updating and re-publication of a highly regarded IIE reference work, *Funding for U.S. Study*. This directory provides extensive information on funding resources available to women (and men) worldwide to support academic and professional training in the United States, cross-indexed by field, level of study, and country of origin. A new addition to the indexes identifies donor agencies with special programs to encourage or fund women candidates in particular. Copies will be sent to several hundred educational advising offices throughout the world and also provided free of charge to the network of International Centers for Research on Women, as one way of bringing information on the field directly into the hands of as many women as possible who might benefit from it.

The other major element of the project was a set of nine case studies, including major international scholarship programs based in the United States and Canada. Through a review of existing written material and statistical data on male/female participation, augmented by new data gathered specifically for this project, the study sought to analyze why women fare as they do in these programs, and what makes some programs more successful than others in attracting and retaining women candidates. Emphasis was placed on women from developing countries studying in developed countries, mostly at the graduate and post-graduate level.

The programs surveyed were: AMIDEAST (America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.); ATLAS (African Training for Leadership and Advanced Skills) administered by the African-American Institute; the American Association of University Women (AAUW) International Fellows Program; the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program; the USAID-funded Caribbean and Latin American Scholarship Program (CLASP); the USIA-funded Fulbright

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Graduate Program (more specifically, the parts of the Program administered by IIE and AMIDEAST); the USIA-funded Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program; the MacArthur/Ford/Hewlett-supported Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences for Mexicans and Central Americans; and the Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships.

From the outset, the project had an action agenda—to identify specific factors that impede or facilitate the participation of women in the international scholarship field. These findings would then be used:

- to provide practical assistance to programs and donor agencies wishing to promote greater participation of women in the field; and
- more broadly, to bring fresh perspectives to the continuing dialog about whether, and how, to increase participation of any underrepresented group without sacrificing quality standards.

IIE used the draft case studies as the focus for a full-day conference with the donor community and implementing agencies to discuss the study's findings and implications. Following the conference, IIE published this report of the case studies, as well as a booklet, *Study Abroad: You Can Get There From Here*, providing practical information for women and men on a variety of issues facing those applying for international scholarship programs.

Some of the study's most significant findings are as follows:

■ **FUNDAMENTAL TO ANY MEANINGFUL ATTEMPT TO INCREASE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IS TO EXPAND THEIR ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FIELD.**

Access to information about international scholarship opportunities is still severely limited in many countries. Such knowledge is often held almost exclusively by a relative handful of influential individuals, or those well connected to influential individuals. Women traditionally have not been part of those networks. Thus, programs that seriously wish to see larger numbers of women applicants must take the initiative in expanding access to basic information about what they offer. This means aggressively promoting and publicizing their activities in as broad-based a way as possible, using wording that subtly or directly encourages previously underrepresented groups to enter the process.

In some African countries, the ATLAS Program makes extensive use of mass media including, in one case, disseminating not only program information but word of initial acceptances on the radio. This speeds word of the acceptances; it is also a subtle way of encouraging future women applicants by letting them know that women were among the initial awardees. Wider promotion of the Fulbright Program in Mexico was begun a full 18 months before applications were due, gathering data on all educational institutions within the country.

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Publicity materials on the Fulbright Program were eventually sent to some 450 institutions, many of which were contacted for the first time.

Some programs choose to state specifically in their written advertisements that “women are encouraged to apply.” Other programs seek to make the same point more indirectly, stating that “everyone (male/female, rural/urban, etc.) is encouraged to apply.”

It cannot be overstated that it is in this preliminary phase of work that programs seeking to increase women’s participation will produce the greatest return. Again and again, the case studies provide examples of programs in which increased expenditures of time and hard work up front have resulted in increased numbers of applicants overall, and increased diversity in the applicant pool—all without any diminution in quality standards.

■ **MANDATES DO MATTER WHEN IT COMES TO FACILITATING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, OR ANY OTHER UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS.**

Such mandates may take a variety of forms and still be effective; this study defines a mandate as a commitment which is explicitly articulated by the donor.

Programs included in this study run the gamut from those with strictly mandated numerical quotas for women to programs with no mandates at all. CLASP is an example of a program with explicit numerical quotas for women; the Commonwealth Scholarship Fellowship Plan and the Humphrey Fellowship Program have written mandates that encourage the greater participation of women but impose no numerical requirements. MacArthur and Ford Foundations staff strongly direct the administrators of the Regional Program in the Social Sciences for Mexicans and Central Americans to focus on activities to redress gender imbalance, but at the same time, have never altered gender-neutral written guidelines. The Rotary Foundation has no mandate, formal or informal, on women.

Results showed no direct correlation between a particular type of mandate and a program’s success in increasing women’s participation. Numerical quotas work well in some cases, such as CLASP, but not always.

There was one striking example of a program with no written mandates on women (the Rotary Scholarships) having more women participants overall than several programs with such mandates in place.

The difference between successful and unsuccessful mandates was that the former had the following elements in place:

- a commitment from the very top that is perceived as commitment by those in the field charged with implementing it;

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- repercussions for those charged with implementation (i.e., USAID representatives knew their job evaluations would suffer if they ignored the CLASP mandate; in the case of the Ford/MacArthur-supported program in Mexico and Central America, administrators knew the very existence of the program was at stake); and
  - regular monitoring to measure progress and allow for adjustments as needed.

■ FAIRNESS, PARTICULARLY IN THE SELECTION PROCESS, IS ESSENTIAL TO INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP. THE KEY TO FAIRNESS IS PROFESSIONALISM.

Much of the decision-making about applicants to international scholarship programs falls to in-country selection bodies. The composition of such bodies differs from place to place and program to program, but generally they are permitted to operate with considerable autonomy.

While the initial screening of written applications is a routine procedure to eliminate those who lack minimum qualifications, the next stage of the selection process, which often involves in-person interviews, has considerable potential for abuse.

Interviews conducted with women during the course of this study elicited wide variations in the conduct of in-person interviews, ranging from impressively objective and unbiased to clearly inappropriate. What was apparent was the correlation between professionalism and fairness. The most professionally conducted interviews were the ones women felt were the fairest, largely because there was no place for *ad hoc* personal questions.

Every program studied for this project has excellent resource material available on how to conduct selections; however, if and how in-country bodies make use of such material is largely their prerogative. Similarly, some programs have written guidelines encouraging in-country selection bodies to add women members, but whether or not they do so is their decision. (All-male selection committees are still common; in such cases, no matter how fairly such bodies may operate, the perception of fairness is severely compromised.)

If women in sufficient numbers have the qualifications to compete for international scholarships, as this study concludes, then ultimately such women will benefit more from fair and unbiased selection processes than from belated preferential treatment designed to redress past failures of information-dissemination and unprofessional selection panels.

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■ EVEN AS PROGRAMS SEEK TO FACILITATE GREATER PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN, THEY ARE NOT WELL-EQUIPPED TO HELP THEIR ALUMNAE UPON THEIR RETURN HOME.

Many female recipients of international scholarships have had to overcome enormous social, economic, and/or political obstacles to reach that level of achievement. By virtue of their talent, determination, and adaptability, they are among their countries' elites. Logically, such women should do very well returning home with their new knowledge and credentials. However, programs know relatively little about how such alumnae actually fare.

Many women scholarship recipients interviewed for this study were aware that exposure to new customs and different ways of life had changed them in some ways; some expressed concern about how they would fit into their home countries, and whether the changes would adversely affect them in their personal and professional lives back home. Others were equally concerned about how their new skills and attitudes could help change and improve the professional context to which they were now returning.

Such women clearly would benefit from ongoing support (programmatic if not financial) once they return to their home countries and face these personal and professional challenges. At the very least it seems advisable for international scholarship programs concerned with facilitating the greater participation of women to develop effective methods to keep in touch with and track over time the progress of their alumnae. How in fact do these women fare on their return home, immediately and over time?

## **Conclusion**

"THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH QUALIFIED WOMEN" is no longer a credible excuse when, year after year, programs in certain countries select virtually no women candidates, and other programs in the same countries achieve 50% or higher percentages of women awardees. Progress for women may be uneven and incremental, but women interviewed from every world region indicated that there has been progress, including expanded access to higher education and professional training. The pool of highly educated women may be small in some countries and particularly in certain fields of study, but the actual number of scholarships available in many of those countries is also small (e.g., where programs offer two scholarships per country annually, it is difficult to believe there is not one woman who could make the grade). If there is one key finding from this project, supported by example after example in the case studies, it is that when there is the will to recruit women, qualified candidates are identified in short order, even in the most unlikely places.

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# INTRODUCTION

The genesis of this project was a question posed by Alison Bernstein, then Director and now Vice President of Education, Arts and Culture at the Ford Foundation, to Peggy Blumenthal, Vice President of the Institute of International Education (IIE), and Charlotte Bunch, Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Douglass College of Rutgers University. "Why," she asked, "does women's participation in overseas scholarship and professional training programs still lag far behind that of men, in spite of progress made in recent years?"

At the time that question was asked, approximately 36% of grantees in at least two major U.S.-based international scholarship and professional training programs (i.e., Fulbright and Humphrey Programs) were women. Educated guesses about the rest of the international scholarship field (all that was possible, given the absence of collected data) suggested a similar rate of women's participation.\* On one hand, this represented considerable progress for women in the field over the past decade; on the other, it indicated that women were still not participating in the field in numbers commensurate with their population worldwide.

It was accepted as a given that women's underrepresentation in the field was a consequence of persistent social, economic and educational barriers faced by women in most societies. However, a cursory examination of a few scholarship programs uncovered surprisingly wide variations in the participation of women that could not be explained so neatly. In one African country, for example, two different programs aimed at the same population (the so-called "best and the brightest") produced rates of women's participation that differed by more than 30%. It was also discovered that some programs in

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*\*Interestingly, 37% of the total population of international students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities were also women, according to IIE's Open Doors 1993-94 data, and over 66% of these students were individuals coming without any outside sponsorship funds.*

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countries commonly thought of as hostile to educated women had rates of women's participation that equalled or exceeded that of programs in more "liberal" settings.

To what could such differences be attributed? Were women less aware of certain programs? Did they feel more or less welcome in some programs than others, and if so, why? Did field of study restrictions, if they existed, have an effect on women's participation? Did programs have mandates on recruitment of women, and if so, did they have an effect? Did programs change the qualifications required of applicants to increase their percentage of women participants? If so, was this necessary?

The Ford Foundation, as a major private supporter of overseas scholarship programs, and the Institute of International Education, as an organization which administers several such programs, believed that finding answers to the above questions would serve two important purposes:

- first, to provide practical assistance to programs and donor agencies wishing to facilitate greater participation of women in the field; and
- second, more broadly, to bring fresh perspectives to the continuing dialog about whether, and how, to increase participation of any underrepresented group without sacrificing quality standards.

Accordingly, the Ford Foundation provided support to IIE for a multifaceted project which would consider how to increase women's application to, selection for, and retention in international scholarship programs. Rona Kluger, a consultant to IIE for many years on projects related to international training, conducted the research. The project was under the supervision of IIE Vice President Peggy Blumenthal, and was actively assisted by IIE staff in New York, Washington, D.C., and around the world. USIS Posts and Fulbright Commissions worldwide also were generous in providing data, as were all the agencies studied.

One element of the Ford Foundation-supported project was the updating and re-publication of a highly regarded IIE reference work, *Funding for U.S. Study*. This directory provides extensive information on funding resources available to women (and men) worldwide to support academic and professional training in the United States. Cross-indexed by field, level of study, and country of origin, it identifies fellowships which place special emphasis on recruiting women. In addition to dissemination to several hundred educational advising offices throughout the world, copies will be provided free of charge to the network of International Centers for Research on Women, as one way of putting such information directly into the hands of as many women as possible who might benefit from it.

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The other major element of the project was a set of nine case studies, including major international scholarship programs based in the United States and Canada. Through a review of existing written material and statistical data on male/female participation, augmented by new data gathered specifically for this project, the study sought to analyze why women fare as they do in these programs, and what makes some programs more successful than others in attracting and retaining women candidates.

Programs were selected on the basis of such criteria as prominence in the field, availability of data, and willingness of program management and staff to cooperate with the study. To make comparisons possible, programs had to have at least a few key elements in common. Emphasis was placed on women from developing countries studying in developed countries, largely at the graduate and post-graduate levels.

The programs surveyed were: AMIDEAST (America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.); ATLAS (African Training for Leadership and Advanced Skills), administered by the African-American Institute; the American Association of University Women (AAUW) International Fellows Program; the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program; CLASP (the Caribbean and Latin American Scholarship Program); the Fulbright Graduate Program (more specifically, the parts of the Program administered by IIE and AMIDEAST); the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program; the MacArthur/Ford/Hewlett-supported Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences for Mexicans and Central Americans; and the Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarships.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The project was divided roughly into four phases:

*Planning*, to select the programs to be studied and determine the intellectual framework to govern the study. A key element of this phase of work was the establishment of an Advisory Committee.

*Implementation* of a series of case studies of selected international scholarship/professional training programs, culminating in a written report on findings and implications.

*Final Conference*, to bring together government and private funders, program management staff, women scholarship participants, experts in women's issues and others to discuss how to turn study findings into practical steps to increase women's participation in individual programs.

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*Preparation* of a “studying abroad” guide to be disseminated on a worldwide basis, aimed at women who might be interested in pursuing international scholarship opportunities.

The report that follows covers the activities undertaken during the implementation phase of the case studies of individual programs, along with findings and the implications of such findings from the case studies. An appendix summarizes the December 1995 conference at which the findings were reviewed. As all the work described in the report was determined during the initial planning phase, a short review of that phase of work is in order.

The first and most important step of the planning phase was convening a distinguished group of advisors who would remain committed to the project over the long-term. Individuals with a range of expertise in international scholarship (from directing, to administering, to serving on selection committees, to being actual participants in such programs) were asked to serve on the Advisory Committee, along with experts in women’s development issues.

The Advisory Committee that was established exceeded all expectations when it came to giving generously of time and expertise. In addition to IIE staff who managed various scholarship programs, the Advisory Committee members include:

Charlotte Bunch, Director  
Center for Women’s Global Leadership  
Douglass College  
Rutgers University

Mariam Chamberlain, Founding President  
National Council for Research on Women

Janet Greenberg, Ph.D.  
Director, National Programs  
Girls Incorporated  
(formerly with the American Council of Learned Societies)

Asma Abdel Halim  
Attorney and former Humphrey Fellow from Sudan

Rounaq Jahan  
Southern Asian Institute  
Columbia University

Heather Monroe, Chief of Party  
AFGRAD/ATLAS  
African-American Institute

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Beth Osterlund, Manager  
Educational Programs  
The Rotary Foundation

Cynthia Taha, Program Manager  
Canadian Bureau of International Education  
(which formerly managed the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program)

Maria Eugenia Verdaguer, Manager  
International Programs  
American Association of University Women Educational Foundation

With the active assistance of Advisory Committee members, a choice of programs, time frame, and study design were approved during the winter of 1993/94. Although some modifications in the initial design proved necessary (notably, the addition—long after the process got underway—of two new case studies, CLASP and AMIDEAST, replacing the Rhodes Scholarship Program on which data was not available), the essential study design and time frame remained fundamentally unaltered from the initial planning design.

It was decided that the case studies should include as much first-hand information as possible from participants. Thus, a simple one-page document with a few basic questions was designed and used in seven of the nine case studies (with the exceptions of CLASP and AMIDEAST, which were added too late in the process to do such mailings). It was expected that the questionnaires would supplement in-person interviews with smaller numbers of women participants and would also be a way to establish possible commonalities among women in different programs.

Along with data from the participant questionnaires and comments from in-person interviews with female scholarship recipients, the case studies were developed after interviews with funders, program heads and program staff, and review of existing data and written material. In addition, most programs were very helpful in manipulating existing statistical data to provide the most relevant figures on male/female participation.

Another late addition to the study design that should be mentioned is the inclusion of a separate questionnaire aimed at an entirely different population—NON-PARTICIPANTS.

It was evident early on that this study focused on the success stories—women who had persevered and prevailed. Was it possible to find out something about women who had not gotten into this elite world of international scholarship? Would it provide some new perspective on the differences between participants and non-participants?

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It seemed a good idea to take a first cut at learning something about this universe of women—provided there was a relatively simple and cost-effective way to identify a discrete group of them. The search for a suitable group of “non-participant” women eventually culminated in identifying a list in the hands of the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

The AAUW Educational Foundation supports a range of scholarship and grant programs for women, including an International Fellows Program that is the subject of one of this report’s case studies. The Program awards approximately 44 scholarships annually. In a recent year, 2,778 women from every world region had written for information on the International Fellows Program. Since the Program gives only 44 awards annually, it was obvious that few (if any) of those 2,778 women were now AAUW scholarship recipients. While some may have succeeded in obtaining other scholarships, it seems more likely that most of them were still “non-participants,” and thus met our criteria.

A subsequent mailing to these 2,778 women in every world region included a specially designed questionnaire and a brief letter explaining the project and requesting cooperation. Expectations for a decent return rate were, frankly, not high, given such a widely dispersed group and no follow-up mailing. Instead, it was a pleasant surprise to receive 663 responses, for a 22% return rate.

While it is emphasized that this group in no way represents a scientific sampling of the vast universe of women who are interested in but do not currently receive international scholarships, the findings are of interest for what they suggest about this group, and for their contrast with findings from other data provided by AAUW on women who went through their scholarship selection process. These findings are contained in the AAUW case study.

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# **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN**

## **Background**

The American Association of University Women (AAUW), established in 1917, is an organization dedicated to promoting equity and education for women and girls. The AAUW Educational Foundation is particularly well known for producing thoughtful and provocative studies on issues relating to women's education: a recent AAUW study focusing on the different responses of classroom teachers toward girls and boys received widespread notice.

The AAUW Educational Foundation provides funds to "advance education, research, and self-development for women, and to foster equity and positive societal change." Toward that end, the Foundation supports a range of research initiatives, scholarships, and grant programs. Among them is an International Fellows Program, which brings outstanding women students from other countries to the United States to complete their degrees or continue their research. Candidates from both developed and developing countries are eligible. However, because the Program's emphasis is on "women helping women," preference is given to applicants who have demonstrated a commitment to women's advancement through civic, community, and/or professional work and who are doing work that will directly benefit women and girls in their home countries. All AAUW Fellows work at the Ph.D. or Master's level.

## **Policy on Women's Participation**

The AAUW Educational Foundation provides support to women only.

## **Observations on Women's Participation**

This case study made use of four years of statistics on AAUW's worldwide applicant and recipient pools plus responses from questionnaires sent to current AAUW Fellows.

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In addition, a separate survey was undertaken with data obtained from AAUW—a so-called “non-participant” survey, sent to a group of 2,778 women worldwide who had written to AAUW in 1994 for information on the Fellowship but had not necessarily followed up with an application.

The non-participant survey was not part of the original study design for this project but was authorized during the planning phase by the Advisory Committee. The idea was to gather information on women who were not participants in the field of international scholarship, as a way of gaining some needed perspective on the women who were the focus of the project—the “success stories.”

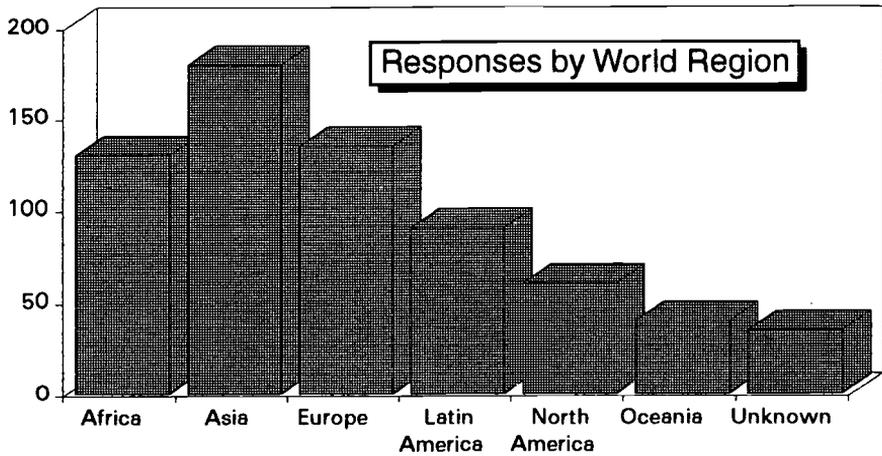
Accordingly, AAUW made available a list of 2,778 women, from every world region, who had sent written requests for information on the International Fellowship Program. A special questionnaire was designed and sent to all 2,778 women with a brief letter explaining the study and requesting their cooperation. This single mailing (cost constraints precluded any followup) produced 633 responses, for a return rate of 22%.

The non-participant survey has serious methodological limitations (there was, for example, no way to determine how many questionnaires reached their destinations, and clearly, only the most motivated women among those who received the questionnaires responded). Nevertheless, the survey served its purpose by providing a first glimpse of that immense pool of “non-participant” women who have some acquaintance with, and interest in, at least one important program. Some of the most salient information from this survey is provided in the series of accompanying charts and graphs on the following pages.

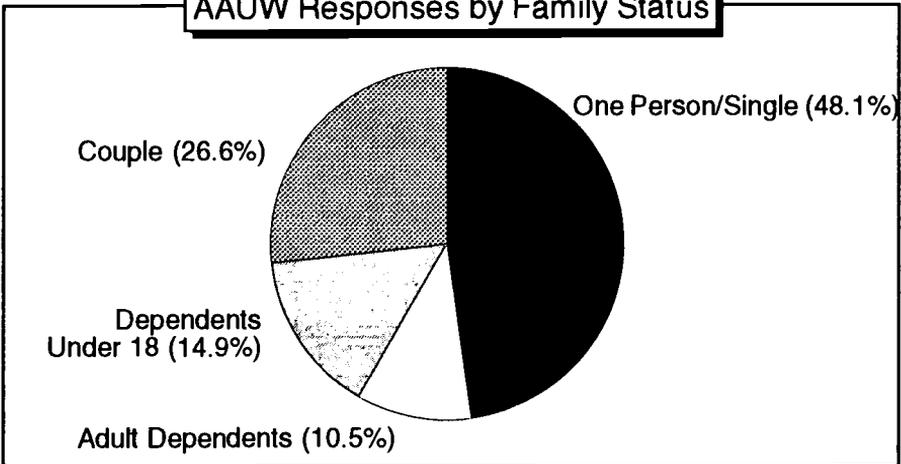
Of the 633 who responded to this survey (all of whom sought information on AAUW’s international scholarship program), only 25% had any dependents (children or adult) and fewer than 15% had dependents under age 18. Almost half were single, with the remaining 25% having a partner but no dependents.

Only a tiny fraction (2.4%) of those respondents who failed to receive the AAUW award were successful at obtaining other international grants, at least by the time of the survey (a year after their initial inquiry to AAUW).

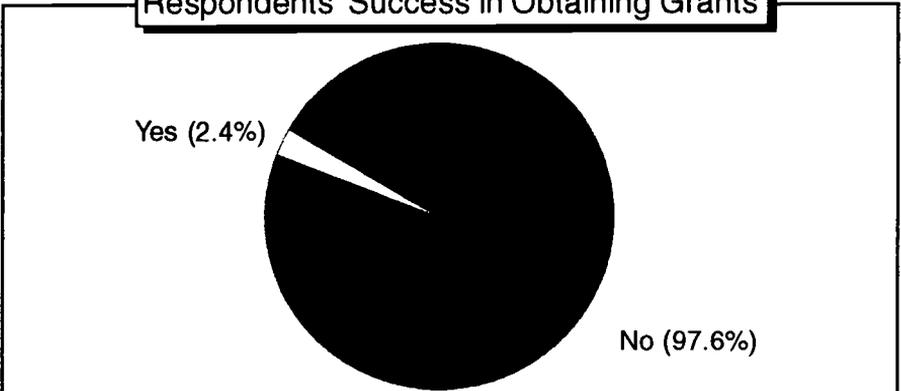
## AAUW Non-Participant Survey



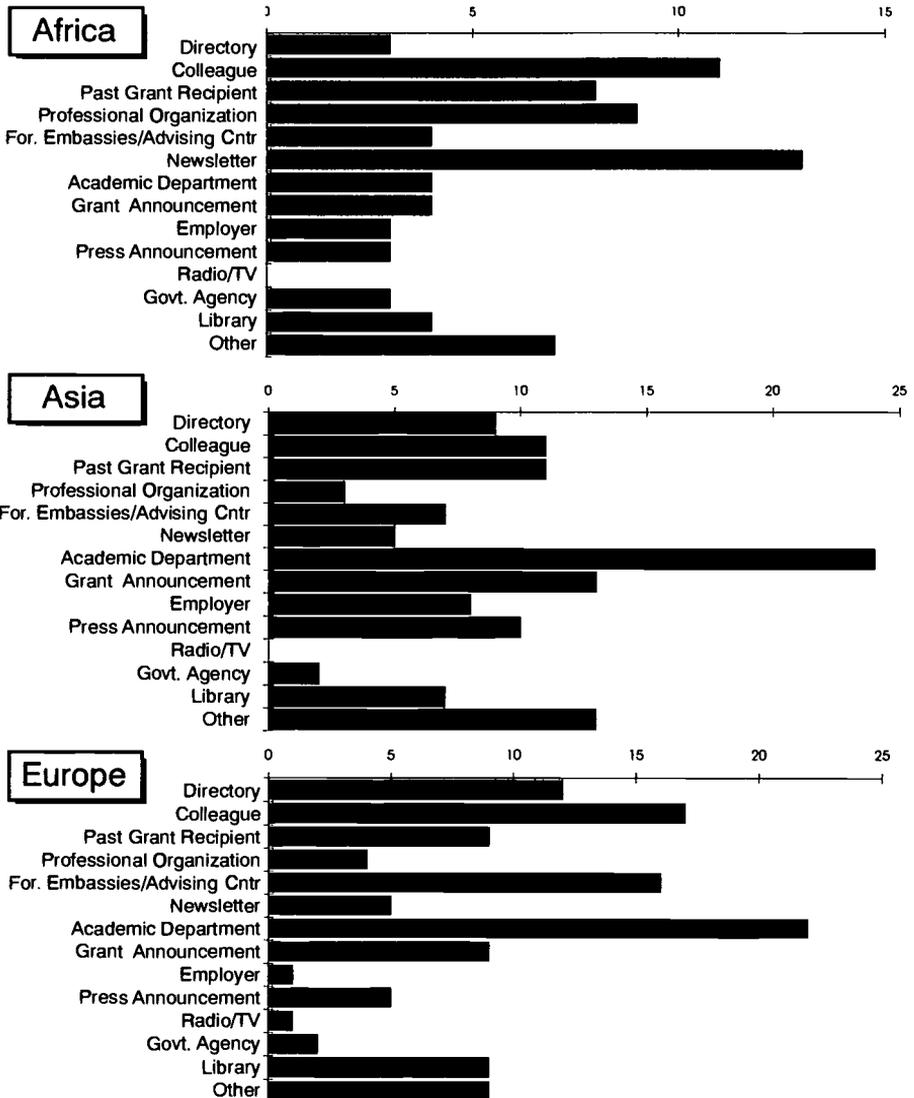
### AAUW Responses by Family Status



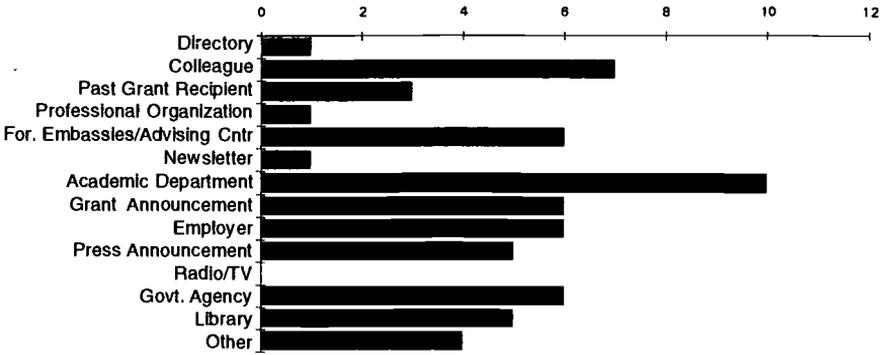
### Respondents' Success in Obtaining Grants



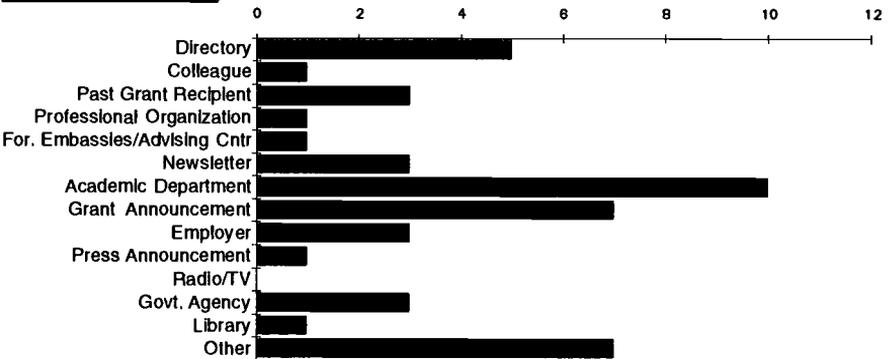
**How respondents learned about AAUW:** Worldwide, in the home (or potential host) country, academic departments were the most likely information source, except among African respondents. Other likely sources were colleagues, former grant recipients and embassies/advising centers (although the latter were more significant in Africa and Europe than elsewhere). Directories, grant announcements, employers and libraries were also frequently cited. In Latin America, government agencies were a major information source. It was disappointing to see how rarely radio/tv, professional associations or newsletters were mentioned, except in Africa where the latter played a key role.



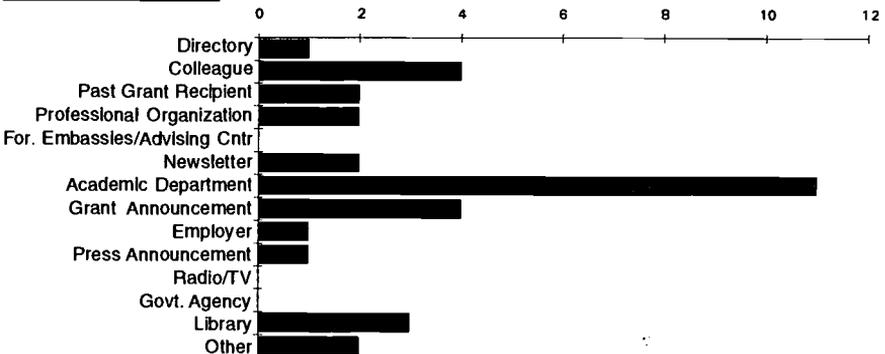
## Latin America

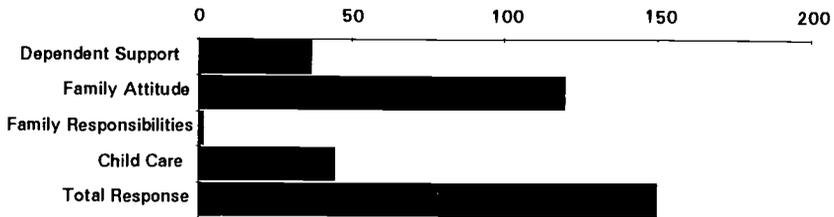


## North America

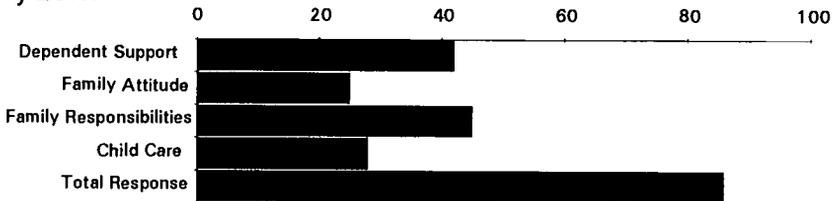


## Oceania

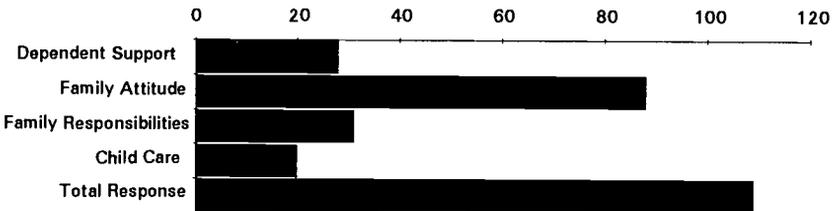




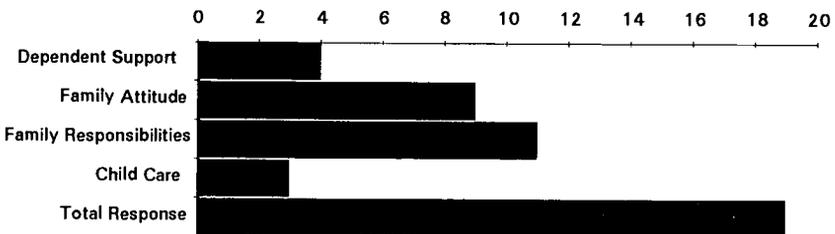
Of those deciding to apply (152), the vast majority (122) said family attitude strongly affected their decision. No other factor was cited even half as often. Availability of dependent support and family responsibilities were noted by 20%.



Of those citing factors which discouraged them from applying, over half cited family responsibilities and the need for dependent support. Over 25% also cited family attitudes and need for child care.



In the decision to accept, over 75% cited family attitude as a crucial factor. Other factors, such as availability of dependent support or child care, were cited by less than 20% of respondents.



Of the 19 respondents who decided not to accept an award, family responsibilities and family attitudes were the most important factors, with lack of dependent support or child care cited by some as well.

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Returning to the statistical data provided by AAUW on its applicant and recipient pools over the past four years, it should first be noted that the International Fellowship Program is small—42 Fellowships in 1992-93; 42 in 1993-94; and 44 in 1994-95—but the applicant pool for the Program is large, and continues to grow every year. In 1993-94, a total of 664 completed applications were received for the 42 places. The next year, applications for the same number of slots grew to 808, vying for 44 places. Most recently, the number of completed applications climbed again—to 977 (competing for 44 slots). And it must be emphasized that the 977 were *completed* applications; the number of *initial requests* for information in the same year was 3,475—again representing a substantial increase from the 2,778 of the previous year.

Breaking down the 808 applicants for 1994-95 on a geographic basis, the largest percentage of applications come from Asia (over one-third of the total); almost 15% came from Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean represented the fourth highest applicant pool, with 11% of the total.

In the group of 977 completed applications in the most recent cycle of 1995-96, Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean retained the same relative positions, but the percentages changed. Applications from Asia were down to below one-third, while applications from Africa rose to nearly 20%, and those from Latin America and the Caribbean rose a bit as well, to 15%.

The ratio of applications in the physical sciences was almost unchanged from the year before; applications in the social sciences rose sharply (from 40.2 to 48.3%) while applications in the arts and humanities dropped by almost the same percentage as the social sciences gained.

Once applications are received by AAUW, the selection process that follows is a rigorous one. A selection committee consisting of U.S. academic experts in the various fields of study first screens applications for ineligibility for reasons such as lack of academic credentials or equivalent levels of academic achievement; lack of materials such as transcripts, letters of recommendation, TOEFL scores, etc.; and failure to meet strict eligibility criteria on citizenship or permanent residence.

In the most recent cycle, a total of 150 applications (out of 977) were eliminated for one or more of the above reasons; this left selectors with the necessity of identifying the strongest 42 candidates from among 827 women from 116 countries in every world region. Statistically, each woman had a 0.05% chance of receiving an award.

It would seem, based on the high standards of the program and the rigor of the selection process, that many of the 785 women who did not make the final cut were highly qualified individuals who could conceivably be credible candidates for other international scholarship programs. It would be illuminating to

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know what happened to these women. Did some of them actually apply for other programs? Were they accepted? We are not aware of any other international scholarship program that sought to publicize its availability to this pool of AAUW non-awardees—a step perhaps worth consideration by programs seeking to expand rapidly their female applicant pool.

A survey of the 785 applicants who made it through the prescreening but who did not ultimately receive the awards would be an excellent way to add to the body of knowledge in this area, to learn if they had indeed applied for and received other scholarships in programs which were not confined (as AAUW is) to women applicants. The 2,778 women in the “preliminary inquiry” survey may or may not have had the credentials to compete for AAUW or any other high quality overseas program: the recent group of 785 women arguably may possess such credentials. In fact, according to the director of the AAUW Educational Foundation, at least 300 of these women were “stars” who would have been accepted had the program been large enough to accommodate them.

In the non-participant survey, only 15 women (2.4%) reported success in obtaining other international study awards. Many of them (over 100) accompanied their return questionnaires with requests for scholarships or scholarship information.

Many of the other case studies in this report document programs’ limitations in the areas of information dissemination and promotion; there is considerable anecdotal evidence that, for a variety of reasons, these limitations affect women more than men. In this context, it should be noted that AAUW has no staff anywhere in the world outside the United States; its information dissemination activities consist largely of an international mass mailing each year which goes to approximately 600 recipients, such as binational commissions and centers for research on women. For the most part, potential applicants have to find them.

It is therefore striking that the numbers of applicants to this program continue to increase every year. It is also notable that of the most recent group of 3,475 women requesting initial information, 28% opted to send completed applications and compete for one of the small number of available awards. This indicates that AAUW has managed in spite of its limited resources to become a known quantity to women worldwide. Clearly, women applicants to this program know their candidacy will get a fair review, and that they are competing on a level playing field. It may indicate as well that the AAUW pools of women—those seeking information as well as those entering the application process—represent the tip of the iceberg and that, in every country, there are large numbers of qualified women who would choose to enter the field if they had the knowledge, the confidence, or the opportunity.

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# **AFRICAN TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP AND ADVANCED SKILLS (ATLAS)**

## **Background**

The African Training for Leadership and Advanced Skills (ATLAS) Project is a cooperative effort of participating African governments, American colleges and universities, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the African-American Institute (AAI), which manages the ATLAS Project under a contract with USAID.

ATLAS is planned as a sixteen-year project. The first cycle began in 1990 and was scheduled to be completed October 1995; a second three-year cycle, recently approved by USAID, began immediately thereafter. The ATLAS Project is a successor program to the African Graduate Fellowship Program (AFGRAD), established in 1963, which brought nearly 3,000 Africans from 45 nations for academic training in the United States over its 27 year history.

The goal of ATLAS is to improve the ability of African institutions and organizations to plan and promote sustainable development. Its objective is to strengthen leadership and technical abilities, and enhance the professional excellence of individuals serving in both the public and private sectors, including universities, research centers, and other key development institutions.

ATLAS offers undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate fellowships for highly qualified Africans to undertake academic programs in the United States. ATLAS provides advanced studies in disciplines critical to development, which

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include economics, business administration, public health, agriculture, engineering, population studies, education, natural resource management and science and mathematics. USAID Missions, the principal funders of ATLAS, may also elect to include other fields deemed appropriate to specific in-country training strategies.

Primary funding for ATLAS comes from the budgets of the USAID Missions working on the ground in Africa. The Missions themselves make the decision whether or not to "buy into" ATLAS, and at what level (educational as well as financial). Under this system, the Mission's commitment to ATLAS is more than simply a funding decision; it represents a commitment to the idea of ATLAS, and a determination that it is worth supporting over other Mission programs. As these decisions are reviewed periodically, the ATLAS Project is, in effect, being constantly evaluated by its primary funders on its continued effectiveness.

In addition to primary support from USAID Missions, host institutions in the United States contribute tuition and scholarships or other equivalent support to ATLAS Fellows. Participating African countries have the principal responsibility for providing round-trip international travel costs.

Under the direction of the ATLAS Executive Committee of Graduate Deans, representing the CGS, the academic standards of ATLAS are effectively maintained. ATLAS Fellowships are highly competitive; all applicants must demonstrate superior academic ability in their previous secondary school or university studies to merit consideration for the award. All candidates must be nominated by their home governments, universities, private sector or other institutions, and be approved by USAID.

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## Policy on Women's Participation

ATLAS has a mandate of 30% women's participation "in order to increase [women's] ability to fill leadership and non-traditional roles in African development."

While most ATLAS awards are at the graduate level, the written program guidelines note that "in countries with no national university, the Mission may offer awards in undergraduate training. Missions may also choose to offer undergraduate training to women candidates in sciences, engineering and other non-traditional fields."

## Observations on Women's Participation

For a variety of reasons, ATLAS is an interesting program to include in a study of women's participation in international scholarship. It is, for example, a program with a numerical quota for women that has had a range of outcomes in different countries within the region. Thus, it provides some clues as to what makes mandates succeed or fail.

This case study is also an opportunity to determine why the rates of participation for African women are consistently so much lower in all the programs surveyed for this study. May this be attributed largely to lower rates of African women's participation in higher education? Or may the case be made that qualified women do exist in Africa in sufficient numbers but they do not have equal access to information about opportunities in the field? Further, how have some ATLAS programs been so successful in raising rates of women's participation in some African countries? Can other programs learn from them?

The following is an overview of women's participation in all 19 ATLAS countries over the period of the last five years:

	Men	Women	% of Women
Undergraduates	32	22	40
Graduates	322	132	29
Post-graduate (6 month short-term training)	12	6	33

In percentages, ATLAS women did best at the undergraduate level. However, in actual numbers, there were 132 ATLAS women at the graduate level, compared with just 22 women undergraduates. Exhibit A-1 provides a country-by-country breakdown of these figures.

**Exhibit A-1****ATLAS UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS**

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
Cape Verde	6	3	9
Cornoros	6	2	8
Equatorial G.	5	1	6
Guinea-Bissau	9	1	10
Madagascar	0	8	8
Namibia	0	4	4
Niger	0	1	1
Sao Tome	6	0	6
Tanzania	9	2	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>63</b>

**ATLAS GRADUATE AWARDS**

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
Benin	25	26	51
Cape Verde	13	4	17
Central African Rep.	10	1	11
Congo	14	3	17
Guinea	20	4	24
Guinea-Bissau	17	1	18
Madagascar	21	14	35
Malawi	9	6	15
Mali	14	8	22
Mozambique	34	15	49
Namibia	15	9	24
Niger	27	6	33
Nigeria	9	5	14
Rwanda	1	0	1
Senegal	21	7	28
Tanzania	33	13	46
Togo	8	2	10
Uganda	8	3	11
Zaire	13	2	15
Zambia	10	3	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>454</b>

**ATLAS POSTGRADUATE AWARDS**

	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>
Cameroon	1	2	3
Central African Rep.	1	0	1
Madagascar	3	1	4
Sierra Leone	3	3	6
Zambia	4	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>

Particularly germane is Exhibit A-2, a breakdown of female participation at all educational levels, in a sample 11 of the 19 ATLAS countries. Data is given as actual numbers and percentages for the period of the last five years. The countries are listed in order of women's participation, from highest to lowest.

## EXHIBIT A-2

ATLAS FELLOWS				
Country	# of Women	Total of All	% of Women	
Benin	26	51	51	
Madagascar	23	47	49	
Namibia	13	28	47	
Malawi	6	15	40	
Nigeria	5	14	36	
Tanzania	15	48	32	
Mozambique	5	49	31	
Uganda	3	11	28	
Senegal	7	28	25	
Niger	7	34	21	
Zambia	3	17	18	

What is there to be learned from the above data, supplemented by responses to questionnaires and personal interviews with ATLAS staff and female Fellows?

First, countries such as Benin, Madagascar, and Namibia either have extraordinarily different societies from the rest of Africa or the ATLAS programs there are doing something especially effective to attract such large numbers of women (who are studying, as noted in Exhibit A-1, mostly at the graduate level).

Second, mandates in and of themselves are not enough to account for success. In fact, four of the eleven countries listed in Exhibit A-2 did not meet the mandated 30% for women's participation. Other ATLAS countries not listed in Exhibit A-2 also failed to meet the mandate, in some cases doing worse than last-place Zambia's 18%. (Note, for example, Exhibit A-1 figures indicate rates of women's participation in Togo as 20%, Guinea, 16% and Zaire, 13%.)

Third, low rates of female participation in overseas scholarship programs in Africa cannot always be attributed neatly to low rates of African women in higher education. Consider Tanzania, which has one of the larger ATLAS programs, and was able to meet (and even to exceed) the 30% mandate. Women comprise only 19% of the higher education population in Tanzania, and this percentage encompasses undergraduates as well as women working at the graduate and post-graduate level, so it is likely that even lower

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percentages of women work at those advanced levels. Yet 32% of ATLAS Fellows from Tanzania were women, or in actual numbers 15 out of 48; and a full 13 of those women were at the graduate level. These are impressive numbers.

The ATLAS countries with the highest levels of female participation did not achieve them by accident; all developed and implemented sometimes innovative strategies which often ran through every level of the scholarship process, from initial information dissemination to recruitment to selections.

Information dissemination is particularly critical. In cases of "business as usual," Missions disseminate written information about a program to a limited universe consisting of a few key government ministries and university departments, which tend to keep such information relatively quiet. In the case of Madagascar, by contrast, staff went far beyond "business as usual" and actively solicited nominations for students from post-secondary institutions (other than the university) which were known to have a high proportion of women. They also actively solicited nominations from women who owned their own businesses, from companies where women made up the majority of employees, from an organization comprised of women entrepreneurs, and from AFGRAD alumnae who were teaching women university students.

In Benin, in addition to disseminating information via diplomatic notes to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation which coordinates international scholarship offers, the Ministry was asked to cooperate by disseminating the information to other ministries and the National University. At the same time, the Mission itself made extensive use of the mass media to get the word out to a far broader pool of potential applicants.

The USAID Mission in Benin also established contacts with women's organizations throughout the country, asking them to spread the word about ATLAS among their membership, and also, significantly, to become a part of the formal scholarship process. Specifically, the Mission placed representatives of these women's organizations on ATLAS' national committee, which is charged with preliminary screening of applications for later review by a selection committee.

In Benin, as in many other African settings, the national committee is composed of representatives from the public and private sectors (In some ATLAS countries, it may also include a representative of the U.S. government). Although the committee functions more as a "pre-selection body" than a selection body, it has national visibility and a measure of prestige. By placing representatives of women's organizations on the committee, the Mission achieved several different objectives simultaneously: it moved these groups from the margins of the process to the very center; it motivated these groups

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to identify women candidates for the program; and finally, it enabled ATLAS to make a very public point about its commitment to women.

Programs that were the most successful were the ones that developed strategies to overcome the continued dominance of the process by long entrenched networks of influential individuals who did not welcome any threat to their influence. These "usual channels" not only tended to control access to information, they also retained a measure of veto power over who could or could not apply. This is exemplified by the experience recounted by one female Namibian Fellow, who initially learned of ATLAS' existence almost by accident in the course of her work at the Home Affairs Ministry. Deciding she had the necessary qualifications, she had to ask her superior to "sign off" on the application so that she could formally enter the process. He told her the list was closed. She subsequently learned that, unknown to her, word of the Program had been leaked to a few favored individuals by the superior, and he had of course approved their applications. Only amazing persistence led this woman to continue her fight for the right to apply to the program. Eventually, she wore out her supervisor and obtained his approval to let her compete for the award. From then on, she assessed the process as fair and unbiased. And the result, ironically, was that she was the only person from that Ministry to be granted a fellowship.

Another female Fellow (from Tanzania) told of having heard, in a somewhat general way, about the ATLAS program, but in spite of repeated attempts, she was never able to get program information from any government source. It was only when the ATLAS Program in Tanzania began to advertise in the newspapers that she obtained the necessary information. Similar stories are not unknown in the international scholarship field in every world region, but (based on the findings of this study) they do seem to take place with the greatest frequency in Africa.

Among possible strategies to deal with this problem, there was some sentiment in favor of eliminating the requirement that superiors formally approve an initial application (and in fact, not all programs have that requirement). Others suggest that the requirement be retained, but with some latitude, such as allowing approval to come from either a superior at one's own agency, or failing that, from an individual with equivalent credentials from another institution or agency altogether. On the other hand, at least one person felt that in spite of the pain involved, ultimately women who fought their way through the "approval process" problem would benefit in the end, particularly in cases where they would be coming back to the same agencies.

It would make their re-entry easier to have these supervisors "on board" when they returned.

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While there may be some disagreement about whether or not to circumvent “the usual channels” when it comes to approval of applications, there is no disagreement on the need to circumvent or supplement these channels during initial outreach. But when program information is disseminated broadly, what should it say? Should it explicitly or implicitly encourage women (or any other group) to apply? If so, how should this message be stated?

How programs state this message varies considerably, from program to program, and from country to country; what is appropriate in one setting may be highly inappropriate in another. In some of the ATLAS programs, advertisements contained the words, “We encourage women to apply.” In Niger, it was stated even more bluntly as: “Some of these awards will be allotted to women.”

Many women interviewed from Africa (from ATLAS and other programs) credited such blunt language with giving them the impetus to enter a process that they would have otherwise assumed was closed to them. In the context of their societies, the words telegraphed not “affirmative action” or preferential treatment for women, but the message that these programs would not be “business as usual,” i.e., effectively closed to women.

Statements as explicit as “Women are encouraged to apply” are not always needed to make the point. Some programs were able to accomplish the same goal with far more inclusive statements, such as in one instance, “Men and women, urban and rural, are encouraged to apply.” In some societies, this statement would seem so inclusive as to be somewhat laughable. In the context of the society in which it appeared, the message served the intended purpose admirably.

In addition to mandates, enhanced information dissemination, and the content of the information, there is another critical element in any effort to increase women’s participation—to assure women fair and unbiased treatment in the selection phase of the process, particularly when it comes to in-person interviews. Such interviews generally are conducted by in-country committees, the composition of which differs from country to country. In most ATLAS countries, they include representatives from the public and private sectors, and usually from the U.S. government as well.

Outright examples of biases or abuses in the selection process were rare in the course of this entire study, with the ATLAS program no exception. However, it is more difficult to ascertain if unconscious biases on the part of selectors enter into their thinking. To combat even the possibility of such biases, ATLAS provides sample questions to all its selection committees to be used the same way for all applicants.

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Once again, the approach of the ATLAS Program in Benin serves as a model of innovation and initiative. Specifically, Benin has begun to make use of an interview preparation program that identifies mentors among American-trained Beninese to provide guidance to applicants in dossier and interview preparation. The program also holds a group session prior to the interviews to review the ATLAS program and interview structure, and to answer any final questions. While open to both men and women, these sessions help give women the experience and confidence they might otherwise lack to compete successfully in the committee interview process.

The aim of revamping the selection process was to create a system that is open, transparent, and democratic. In this regard, it is important to note that the new approach will not just benefit women, but in its elimination of an old convoluted system, will serve a purpose for male applicants as well.

The ATLAS case study is an appropriate place to begin discussion of an issue that will come up repeatedly in the course of this report (and one that is being debated in the United States at very high decibel levels); namely, how many adjustments to guidelines do programs need to make in order to attract greater numbers of women? Do these adjustments represent flexible approaches that do not affect quality standards or criteria, or conversely, do they constitute the “special treatment” of one group?

The ATLAS mandate states that, in certain specific circumstances, Missions may opt to “offer undergraduate training to women candidates in sciences, engineering, and other non-traditional roles” (as well as to “offer awards in undergraduate training” in countries with no national university), a waiver intended to benefit women. Exhibit A-1 data indicate that, in fact, the undergraduate waiver was seldom used. Most of the women ATLAS Fellows studied at the graduate level, even in countries with the highest rates of female participation.

In the country with the highest level of female participation—Benin—it appears that initially, in order to attract a larger pool of women candidates, the Mission was prepared to relax the requirement that applicants have full four-year undergraduate degrees. This approach was intended to be a realistic response to a real problem, since in Benin a fourth and final year of undergraduate study had been generally unavailable. Rather than permit the entry of less qualified applicants, the approach required those chosen to complete the fourth “top off” year of U.S. undergraduate training first and then be admitted to an appropriate U.S. graduate program. Interestingly, the Mission never used these waivers, since their other innovations attracted sufficient numbers of graduate-level women candidates.

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However, Benin did make use of another approach intended to attract women, which allowed the Mission to amend the award's "professional experience" requirements so that candidates with the educational but not the professional experience could apply. These individuals' applications had to include appropriate "training objectives" that related directly to that individual's future employment. This approach recognized that, in Benin, most women with the requisite professional experience were older, and likely had heavy family responsibilities that precluded them from going abroad for extended periods. The newer approach allowed younger women, who might lack the professional experience but also the family responsibilities, to be considered. This approach proved to be quite effective.

In the above examples, and in others scattered throughout this report, we see that programs may be flexible and imaginative in developing strategies to attract more women while keeping guidelines fundamentally unaltered, and standards consistently high. By contrast, where there are reports of preferential treatment of women, they generally come from programs that have either not made good faith efforts to attract women early in the process or have failed in such efforts and are anxious to appear to have made more progress than they actually have.

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# **AMERICA-MIDEAST EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING SERVICES, INC. (AMIDEAST)**

## **Background**

AMIDEAST was founded in 1951 to encourage understanding and friendship between Americans and the people of the Middle East and North Africa. Since its founding, AMIDEAST has grown from a small organization active in public affairs and cultural exchange programs to an international organization respected for its work in the fields of international education, training for development, and public outreach programs. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., AMIDEAST is the only private American nonprofit organization with permanent representation in the Middle East and North Africa through a network of field offices located in Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, the West Bank/Gaza Strip, and Yemen. Over the years, more than 1.9 million students have benefitted from AMIDEAST's educational advising services overseas, and more than 50,000 individuals have participated in AMIDEAST-administered study, training and exchange programs.

AMIDEAST first began working on the Fulbright Program in 1969 when the Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (later part of the United States Information Agency, or USIA) awarded it the administrative component of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program in the region. It has continued ever since to administer the Program in the Middle East and North Africa, helping over 900 individuals from the region to become Fulbright Fellows.

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AMIDEAST also administers other programs for USIA and for USAID, one of the most important being Partners for International Education and Training (PIET), a joint venture among AMIDEAST, the Asia Foundation, the African-American Institute, and World Learning, Inc. that has brought 1,600 participants to the United States, usually for short-term technical training in fields ranging from water resources to tourism to hospital administration.

## **Policy on Women's Participation**

This case study focuses on AMIDEAST's administration of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. As noted in the case study on the IIE-administered component of the Fulbright Program, policy directives for the entire Program are promulgated by the Foreign Scholarship Board, based in the United States, and they are gender-neutral.

However, it should be noted that Fulbright activities abroad are conducted by binational Fulbright commissions and foundations in countries that have executive agreements with the United States for continuing exchange programs or, failing that, by U.S. Embassies. Although the actions of these bodies are expected to conform to the general guidelines put forward by the Foreign Scholarship Board, in practice they possess considerable latitude to act as policymakers. Such bodies are within their authority to take on issues they view as critical and to shape guidelines in response to those issues facing the country in question. Thus, in many countries, including some in the Arab world, it is not unusual to find women's participation, or lack of participation, an issue of some importance.

## **Observations on Women's Participation**

A case study focusing on women from the Middle East and North Africa was not included in the original design of this study, based on the assumption that there were few women from that region participating in international scholarship programs, particularly at the graduate and post-graduate levels. Given that assumption, it seemed reasonable that data from other African countries and from Indonesia, surveyed in a number of different case studies, would provide enough coverage of Muslim women.

As with many assumptions related to women from developing countries, this one was mistaken. The more this project proceeded, the more it became apparent that initial notions about Arab women in the field of international scholarship were more stereotypical than accurate. Conversations with individuals familiar with the region indicated that women in the Middle East and North Africa were making progress in obtaining higher education, and increasingly, in entering the world of overseas study in long-term academic as well as short-term training programs.

At a meeting of the project's Advisory Committee in Summer 1995 to review the study, Advisory Committee members were unanimous in agreeing that there was much to be learned from even a limited study of how Middle Eastern women fared in the world of international scholarship. Thus, at a late stage in the project, a case study on the AMIDEAST-administered component of the Fulbright Program was initiated. Because of time constraints, no questionnaire was sent out to women participants, nor were there any interviews with participants.

However, in-person and telephone interviews were conducted with AMIDEAST staff, and a range of statistical data and written material was provided by AMIDEAST.

The statistical data referred to above included information on male/female participation in long and short-term programs (notably Fulbright and PIET), and some privately-supported programs. To allow comparisons with other programs in this study, which are primarily long-term academic programs, this case study makes use only of the data provided on participants in the long-term academic Fulbright Program.

The AMIDEAST Fulbright Foreign Student Program statistics that follow are for the cumulative five year period, 1991-1995. The total number of long-term academic Fulbright recipients over that five year period was 242.

Note that Egypt, an important country in the region, was not included below because its grantees are not managed by AMIDEAST; another significant omission is Cyprus, which has one of the largest cohorts of scholarship recipients (353 over the five year period surveyed), but makes its awards under a separate program and thus is not included here.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Total Awards</b>	<b># of Men</b>	<b># of Women</b>	<b>% Female Participation</b>
Algeria	14	10	4	30.8%
Gaza	17	14	3	17.6%
Jordan	26	20	6	23%
Mauritania	1	1	0	0
Morocco	65	51	14	21.5%
Sudan	11	8	3	27%
Syria	17	8	9	52.9%
Tunisia	26	12	14	53%
West Bank	37	18	19	51%
Yemen	11	8	3	27%

It is clear from the above that several countries, including Algeria, Tunisia and the West Bank have rates of female participation that are equal to, or better than, figures from many other countries, including countries of the developed world.

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The 52.9% rate of women's participation recorded for Syria is particularly striking because outsiders tend not to think of Syria as progressive in terms of women's issues.

Two factors may account for the Syrian figures: first, the Syrian government at the highest levels is interested in promoting equal opportunity for women in many fields, including international scholarship, and second, representatives of the U.S. Government (in this instance, USIS) are committed to the same end.

Syrian government efforts to encourage the participation of women in the Fulbright Program are not overt; written material on the Program, for example, contains no explicit mention of women. Instead, USIS sends word about the Fulbright Program initially to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which passes information along to the Ministry of Higher Education (currently headed by a woman), which in turn sends letters to the four Syrian universities about the opportunities during a given year. The university heads then pass word along to the heads of faculties in the appropriate disciplines, and in the final step in the process, the heads of departments are charged with responsibility for nominating students in their departments. It is from this pool that USIS representatives select the initial group of nominees.

This "closed" approach is not dissimilar to the way information dissemination takes place in many other settings, as described in other case studies. The difference in those cases was that few if any women ended up getting into the applicant pool. In Syria, by contrast, the closed process has not kept significant numbers of women from entering the process.

Final selection is the province of USIS, which is committed to increasing women's participation to at least 50%, and is thus aggressive in selecting as many women as possible.

None of the above can guarantee that all the women offered scholarships will accept them. In Syria, a conservative country with traditional views on the roles of women, families of women candidates often prove initially reluctant to allow them to accept the scholarship opportunities. To deal with this, Program directors in Syria have learned that it is necessary to take on very active roles in the provision of a range of back-up and support services for women candidates (for example, meeting with male family members to discuss their concerns and consider ways to allay them that will allow women to accept the awards). This approach has proved consistently successful.

The case of Syria may in some ways be exceptional, but it also proves the rule when it comes to facilitating the participation of women in an international scholarship program: no matter what the program or the setting, genuine commitment to women's participation tends eventually to produce the desired result.

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# **CARIBBEAN AND LATIN AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (CLASP)**

## **Background**

The Caribbean and Latin American Scholarship Program (CLASP) is a project of the U.S. Agency for International Development, initiated in 1985. The program's two specific goals are: first, to strengthen the human resource base of Latin America through training in skills essential for social, economic, and political development; and second, to strengthen ties of friendship and understanding between countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and the United States.

The Education and Human Resource Division of the Latin American Bureau of USAID, plus 16 field Missions, administer CLASP in 23 countries, assisted by 12 U.S.-based contractors. Since 1985, the various programs grouped under the CLASP umbrella have trained more than 22,000 individuals from six Central American countries, four Andean countries of South America, and the Caribbean region. Training has been short-term as well as long, academic as well as technical.

## **Policy on Women's Participation**

The CLASP Program has specific numerical mandates that AID Missions know they are expected to meet:

- 70% of all participants have to be from disadvantaged populations and/or be rural residents who possess qualities of leadership or leadership potential, and who would otherwise be overlooked for USAID scholarships.
- 40% of the scholarships have to go to women.

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## Observations on Women's Participation

USAID Missions were doubtful when CLASP began that they could reach the numerical goals, particularly with regard to women. In the Program's first year, only 29.5% of the scholarships went to women, far below the 40% minimum target. In 1986, the percentage of women climbed to 32.1%. In 1987 and subsequent years, the percentage of women reached and then exceeded the minimum target, reaching a high point of 49.2% in 1990. For the first nine years of the Program, through 1994, women's participation averaged 45%, or a full 5% above the specified goal.

Aguirre International, a consulting firm that monitors and evaluates the CLASP Program regularly under a contract with USAID, makes the following point about women's participation in its March 1995 report:

When considering women as a target group, it is important to examine both the quantity and quality (length and type of training) of awards to determine whether the awards are distributed equitably among men and women. Certain factors may limit the number of female candidates for long-term programs, e.g., societal stereotypes, lack of equal educational opportunity, family obligations, etc., but selection policies established by project managers should be designed to overcome these barriers.

If the focus on women in CLASP was based on the letter rather than the spirit of the law, we would expect the numbers to break down upon closer scrutiny. Given that it is far easier to recruit large cohorts of applicants for short-term training, we would have expected to see a significant differential between the numbers of women in short- and long-term programs. Instead, the percentage of women with long-term awards was 44% through 1994; the percentage of women with academic awards (a sub-set of those selected for long-term training) was 45%—almost precisely the same as the percentage of women in the program overall.

These are very impressive figures, and they are given added weight by reports from the women trainees themselves that the training has been helpful upon their return home. This sort of information is not easily come by in scholarship programs, which usually lack the financial resources to track their alumni, or to track them in more than the most superficial way. Certainly, it is highly unusual for a program to have had the benefit of year-by-year intensive monitoring and evaluation, as is the case with CLASP. Since 1986, Aguirre International has gathered data on the program through self-administered questionnaires; interviews with trainees, project managers, and contractors; focus groups; and case studies. This data is stored in a large computerized data bank. In addition, Aguirre has done impact studies on

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CLASP for each of the participating countries.

The evaluations have enabled us to learn the following about women alumni in the CLASP program:

- The training helped in their professional advancement and raised their visibility in the community.
- The training raised their confidence level and helped them overcome their fear of the unknown.
- Women were more likely to receive training in educational areas, and less in practical skill areas, such as agriculture, applied technology, economics, engineering, or environmental studies. (The greatest percentage of CLASP women who received long-term, academic awards were selected from the field of education.)
- Women slightly exceed CLASP percentages in terms of being prepared for training, fulfilling their training expectations, and rating highly the applicability of their training. Women trainees rated their satisfaction with the program higher than the overall CLASP percentages.
- The percentage of employed returned women is lower than that of returned men. A higher percentage of women than men returned to the same job, and an even higher percentage reported receiving salary increases.
- A higher percentage of returned women than men are enrolled in education programs.
- The Andean Region (comprising Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Columbia) enrolled the highest percentage of women, the highest percentage of women in long-term programs, the highest percentage of women from rural areas, and the highest percentage of married women.
- Women from the Andean Region were, on average, older than women participants from other regions. A higher percentage of women professionals were in the Andean Program.
- The Andean Region selection of women from employment sectors was evenly distributed among private for-profit, private nonprofit, and public sectors. Central America enrolled the most women from the private for-profit sector; the highest percentage of Caribbean women came from the public sector.

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Some of the Andean achievement may be related to the fact that this program was the last one of the three to be implemented and it therefore benefitted from lessons learned in Central America and the Caribbean. Further, management of the Andean program was undertaken by a single contractor which promoted consistency throughout the program's regional administration.

Some of the lessons learned from this Program's success:

- First, a firm mandate from the top is a necessity. Whether it need be a numerical mandate is an open question. Some Aguirre staffers and the USAID staff member who works on the CLASP program believe the numerical requirement served as a "stick" to focus the Missions on taking the mandate seriously. However, other programs have had equally impressive results without numerical quotas, and indeed, with gender-neutral policies. What they have in common is that they all have strict directives that make it clear that women's participation is to be taken seriously. In the case of CLASP, what brought home the seriousness of this directive to Mission personnel was AID's decision to include the success in fulfilling this mandate as a criterion in staff members' job evaluations.
- Second, the administrators of the program (in this case, the USAID Missions and the contractors) have to respond to the spirit as well as the letter of the directive and recruit vigorously in the field to identify enough qualified women. In CLASP, staff initially expressed doubt that they would be able to fulfill the mandate. It may have helped that the FSNs (locally hired Foreign Service Nationals who assist the U.S. Foreign Service Officers) in many of these countries were women, thus they had personal incentive and personal knowledge of the terrain.
- Third, to recruit women or other underrepresented groups, the promotional information, explicitly or implicitly, has to be worded in an encouraging, welcoming way. In this case, the wording of the written promotional material ("Rural and urban men and women are encouraged to apply") was deliberately inclusive; however, it made the clear point that women were welcome.

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# **CANADIAN COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM OF THE COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP PLAN**

## **Background**

The establishment of a Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) was first proposed at a Commonwealth Trade and Economic Conference held in Montreal in 1958. The Conference proposed an annual total of 1,000 university scholarships, of which the United Kingdom undertook to provide one-half and Canada one-quarter. Details were worked out at a Commonwealth Education Conference in 1959, and the Plan came into operation the following year.

The Plan enables Commonwealth students of high intellectual promise to pursue advanced studies and research in Commonwealth countries other than their own so that, on their return home, they may make a distinctive contribution in their own countries while fostering mutual understanding within the Commonwealth.

The award allows for study periods of no less than one academic year, and not more than four calendar years. Fields of study are inclusive, incorporating fine arts and humanities along with the social and physical sciences. The annual number of Scholars who come into the program is approximately 1,000

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per year (for all participating countries combined).

Overall policy guidance and supervisory responsibility for the CSFP resides with the Commonwealth Secretariat, headquartered in London. However, each participating Commonwealth country has great autonomy in running its own program and adjusting its own priorities in conformance with perceived national needs.

Policy direction and financing for the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CCSFP), also known as the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program, are provided by the Canadian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade; the academic component is overseen by a Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Committee, composed of faculty members from universities across Canada, and headed by a chairperson appointed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Committee is responsible for selecting winners of Canadian Commonwealth Scholarships from among the nominations submitted by foreign CSFP agencies. The Committee also selects Canadian nominees for awards offered by other Commonwealth countries.

Since 1960, the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program has been administered by three different non-governmental organizations. In April 1995, the International Council for International Studies began its functions as the administering agency for the program. These functions include the day-to-day management of the Program as well as financial and academic monitoring.

## **Policy on Women's Participation**

A policy of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan is to encourage greater participation by women. As stated in a 1993 Report of the Third Ten-Year Review Committee of the Commonwealth Secretariat distributed to all Commonwealth countries participating in CSFP:

"We urge all countries to uphold the principle of gender equity both in making nominations and awards and also in the composition of CSFP commissions and selection committees."

CSFP promotional material distributed in Canada is gender-neutral; however, for reasons that include the Program's relatively high visibility in Canada, Canadian men and women have applied to and been accepted by CCSFP program in virtually equal numbers over the years.

The story for Commonwealth Scholars coming from other countries who study in Canada is quite different. Figures for 1993/94, the most recent data available at the time of this case study, show that women comprise only 29% of all Commonwealth Scholars studying in Canada. This figure appears to be

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consistent with figures from other years, as well as with female participation rates in the Commonwealth-wide Plan.

The Canadian Government has long enthusiastically supported efforts to increase the number of women participating in programs sponsored by the Canadian Agency for International Development (and has in fact instituted a numerical mandate on women for some Government-sponsored programs). In the case of the Commonwealth Scholarships, however, the Canadian Scholarship and Fellowship Committee can only review the candidates nominated by the in-country commissions; Canada and other countries have little ability to influence the decisions and practices of those commissions.

Within Canada, the Government did undertake one effort that it hoped would increase the number of female Commonwealth Scholars—it liberalized its rules governing financial allowances for Commonwealth Scholars with dependents. What was a “Marriage Allowance” to support accompanying spouses of Scholars was amended to include an “Equivalent to Married Allowance” that could be used for a child in lieu of a spouse. The rule change was gender-neutral; however, the expectation was that the main beneficiaries would be women who would not otherwise be able to accept the awards.

The rule change was significant because it was so unusual; this study identified only one other program that made such support available for graduate-level candidates—the Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences for Scholars supported by the Ford, Hewlett and MacArthur foundations for academics from Mexico and Central America.

Dependent support was undoubtedly a benefit to Commonwealth Scholars, but statistics from 1993/94 indicate that men benefitted as much or more than women from its availability. 1993/94 statistics show a total of 348 Commonwealth Scholars in Canada; 246 men and 102 women. Of that group, six single women and two single men with dependents made use of this benefit, as did 88 married men and 18 married women (who came with their spouses as well as their dependents). In percentage terms, 23% of the women made use of this support, compared with 36% of the men.

It is impossible to know how many of the Scholars would have opted to turn down the award without the availability of dependent support, or whether the number of female Scholars would have been even lower without that provision. Unfortunately, changes in government policy may provide answers to the above in the future. As of 1995, budgetary constraints forced the Canadian government to end all dependent allowances for new award holders. Scholars already in Canada maintained this allowance, including single women with dependent children.

## Observations on Women's Participation

Initially, the sole focus of this case study was expected to be the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Program, headquartered in Ottawa. However, in the course of the work, it became clear that many crucial aspects of the scholarship process, beginning with information-dissemination and recruitment and continuing with selection, were the responsibility of the commissions in the Scholars' countries of origin. Thus, it made sense to incorporate into this case study whatever data could be obtained on the Commonwealth-wide Plan, but with an emphasis on the Canadian program.

The data on the Commonwealth-wide Plan in this case study is limited and drawn almost entirely from the aforementioned Third Ten Year Review. A key element of data is the country-by-country breakdown of Commonwealth Scholars by gender for one year—1992-93 (see Exhibit C-1).

### Exhibit C-1: Commonwealth Scholars Worldwide

<u>Nominating Country</u>	<u>Under 26</u>	<u>26-28</u>	<u>Over 28</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Anguilla	-	-	-	-	-	-
Antigua	1	1	2	2	2	4
Australia	37*	18*	31*	53	34	87
Bahamas	-	2	4	3	3	6
Bangladesh	-	20*	117*	103	35	138
Barbados	2	2	12	9	7	16
Belize	-	-	2	-	-	2
Bermuda	1	1	-	1	1	2
Botswana	-	2	4	4	2	6
Britain	31	30	13	48	26	74
British Virgin Isles	2	-	-	-	2	2
Brunei	-	-	-	-	-	-
Canada	47*	29*	42*	69	50	119
Cayman Is.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cook Is.	-	-	1	-	1	1
Cyprus	19	-	4	19	4	23
Dominica	1	-	1	1	1	2
Falkland Is	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fiji	-	-	1	1	-	1
Gambia	8	-	4	8	4	12
Ghana	-	3*	50*	46	9	55
Gibraltar	1	-	1	1	1	2
Grenada	-	-	7	5	2	7
Guyana	12	2	10	16	8	24
Hong Kong	6	7	10	14	9	23

Nominating Country	Under		Over		Male	Female	Total
	26	26-28	28				
India	4	16	185		159	46	205
Jamaica	9	5	15		21	8	29
Kenya	1	-	55		35	21	56
Kiribati	-	-	1		1	-	1
Lesotho	-	1	4		4	1	5
Malawi	1	2	17		15	5	20
Malaysia	-	-	25		16	9	25
Maldives	2	-	2		4	-	4
Malta	1	10	12		16	7	23
Mauritius	15	5	4		16	8	24
Montserrat	-	2	1		3	-	3
Namibia	-	-	-		-	-	-
Nauru	-	-	-		-	-	-
New Zealand	35	18	10		42	21	63
Nigeria	5*	9*	127*		115	36	151
Pakistan	-	-	33		25	8	33
Papua N. G.	-	-	6		6	-	6
St Helena	1	-	6		7	-	7
St Kitts & Nevis	-	-	2		1	1	2
St Lucia	-	1	5		2	4	6
St Vincent	-	2	5		6	1	7
Seychelles	4	-	-		4	-	4
Sierra Leone	1	3	23		23	4	27
Singapore	-	-	6		3	3	6
Solomon Is.	-	-	-		-	-	-
Sri Lanka	-	8	59		39	28	67
Swaziland	-	1	3		2	2	4
Tanzania	-	1	51		40	12	52
Tonga	-	-	4		1	3	4
Trinidad	7	5	13		18	7	25
Turks & Caicos	1	-	-		-	1	1
Tuvalu	2	-	1		3	-	3
Uganda	5	3	22		23	7	30
Vanatu	-	-	1		-	1	1
W. Samoa	-	-	3		2	1	3
Zambia	1	-	27		26	2	28
Zimbabwe	3*	6*	31*		33	8	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>1075</b>		<b>1113</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>1569</b>

\*The total includes students for whom data on age, alone, was not reported.

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The data in Exhibit C-1 show a rate of women's participation overall as 29%. Developed countries had the highest rates for women that year; Canada, with 42% female participation, headed the list, even in a year when it had one of its lowest complements of women (Canada usually selects approximately 50% female Commonwealth Scholars).

Canada was followed by Australia and Britain, with rates of female participation of 39% and 35%, respectively. Among less developed countries, Bangladesh and Nigeria have large complements of Commonwealth Scholars (138 and 151, respectively) but low rates of female participation (25% and 24%, respectively). Some countries that stand out for even lower rates of women participants in the same survey include Zimbabwe (19%), Ghana (16%), and India (15%).

According to the Third Ten Year Review, the 29% average for women's participation in 1992/93 is actually somewhat lower than the average for the entire period studied—that figure is given as 33% (with no country-by-country breakdown provided). It also notes that 25% of all applications during that ten year period came from women; 31% of all nominations went to women applicants, and finally, 33% of all those who chose to accept the awards were women.

Lacking country-by-country data for any year other than 1992/93 over the ten year period covered by the Review, it is not possible to judge whether there were significant changes in the number of women in any country over the ten years, or if any pattern was evident.

The Review does make the following points about its data related to women's participation in the Plan:

One may infer that a modest degree of affirmative action is occurring, in that 25% of the applications generate 31% of the nominations and 33% of award recipients. Yet the 25% figure remains disturbingly low and, because it is a Commonwealth average, it means that the actual percentage in certain countries is even lower.

Further,

Many countries report that special efforts are taken to increase the number of women holding CSFP awards. For example, some awarding countries have implemented quotas in order to increase the number of awards to women; however, responses...show that there is no consensus among countries on the desirability of extending the use of quotas for the purpose of developing a better gender balance.

Lacking Commonwealth-wide country-by-country data from years other than 1992/93 for comparison purposes, the next best thing was to compare the figures in Exhibit C-1 with data that could be obtained—figures on male/female participation, country-by-country, of the 348 Commonwealth Scholars in the *Canadian Program* for the year 1993/94 (see Exhibit C-2 for this data in its entirety).

### Exhibit C-2: Commonwealth Scholars Studying in Canada

Home Country	Women	Men	% Women	Home Country	Women	Men	% Women
Anguilla	0	1	0.00	Mauritius	1	3	25.00
Antigua/				N Zealand	6	1	85.71
Barbados	3	0	100.00	Nigeria	3	22	12.00
Australia	7	9	43.75	Pakistan	1	8	11.11
Bahamas	1	1	50.00	Papua NG	0	2	0.00
Bangladesh	8	16	33.33	St Kitts &			
Bermuda	0	1	0.00	Nevis	0	1	0.00
Botswana	0	2	0.00	St Lucia	0	2	0.00
British VI	2	1	66.67	St Vincent &			
Cyprus	1	3	25.00	Grenadines	1	1	50.00
Dominica	0	1	0.00	Seychelles	0	2	0.00
Gambia	1	2	33.33	Sierra Leone	1	4	20.00
Ghana	1	15	6.25	Solomons	0	1	0.00
Grenada	0	1	0.00	Sri Lanka	6	10	37.50
Guyana	0	5	0.00	Swaziland	1	1	50.00
Hong Kong	3	5	37.50	Tanzania	4	14	22.22
India	12	44	21.43	Trinidad &			
Jamaica	2	7	22.22	Tobago	3	2	60.00
Kenya	2	12	14.29	Turks/Caicos	1	0	100.00
Lesotho	1	2	33.33	Uganda	2	8	20.00
Malawi	2	4	33.33	UK	18	11	62.27
Maldives	0	2	0.00	Zambia	0	4	0.00
Malta	1	3	25.00	Zimbabwe	4	11	26.67

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Comparison of Commonwealth-wide data with Canada-only data is less than perfect, and should not be used as the basis for definite conclusions; nevertheless it does provide some food for thought.

The 348 Commonwealth Scholars in Canada break down to 246 men and 102 women, or a rate of women's participation of 29%. This is the same rate of women as in the 1992/93 data for Commonwealth-wide participants, but it is achieved without the benefit of Canada's 42% participation rate in the latter. This would seem to indicate that somewhere in the process, modest increases in the numbers of women Scholars coming to Canada have taken place. India, for example, goes from 15% female Scholars in the Commonwealth-wide data to 21% in the Canadian survey; Bangladesh from 25% to 33%. On the other hand, Ghana went from a low 16% female participation in the 92/93 study to a dismal 6% in the Canadian data from the next year; Nigeria skidded from 24% in the broader study to just 12%.

It would be fair to say that the Exhibit C-2 numbers give advocates for women little to cheer about. They do not seem to indicate an overall trend toward greater participation of women (33% average over a ten year period; 29% in 1992/93; 29% in the Canadian program in 1993/94) nor do they show one or two countries standing out as places where dramatic increases in the number of women have taken place.

Why is this the case? Anecdotal evidence amassed from completed questionnaires and personal interviews with female Commonwealth Scholars from a range of countries studying in Canada provide some clues.

First, information-dissemination and outreach efforts in many countries appear to be less than aggressive. Ironically, the CSFP does seem to have a public profile in many Commonwealth countries (most similar, perhaps, to public perception of the Fulbright program in the United States). In most cases, however, women told us that they lacked the means to translate that general knowledge into practical information that would lead them to apply; that is, deadlines, eligibility requirements, and application procedures.

In-country CSFP commissions have great latitude in disseminating information. The Commonwealth Secretariat has available detailed information for commissions on ways to promote the Plan, but there is no requirement that commissions follow these precepts. In practice then, outreach efforts differ widely from setting to setting. The most common way female Scholars told us they learned about the application process was from other individuals, usually returned Scholars or university mentors. By contrast, a few women cited examples of aggressive outreach (which they credited for alerting them to the Plan). For example, one Zimbabwean woman learned of the award's

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existence through a newspaper advertisement, which also contained concise information on application procedures.

The same Zimbabwean woman noted that while the advertisement was the mechanism that let her know of the Program's existence, it was the wording of the advertisement that was key in getting her to follow through with an application. The wording in question contained the key sentence: "Women are encouraged to apply." In the context of her society, these words sent her a message that the program was genuinely interested in recruiting women.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the content of informational material, as well as its availability, as a factor in encouraging (or discouraging) individuals from underrepresented populations to apply to international scholarship programs. Women in every program studied for this project had anecdotes about how the content of a program's informational material affected their decisions to apply. Interestingly, even in cases where programs did not encourage women as explicitly as in the Zimbabwean example above (for example, some programs encouraged "Men and women" to apply) the end result was the same—women got the intended message.

Second, a significant number of women Scholars studying in Canada singled out as problematical their face-to-face interviews with the in-country commissions, even though they eventually proved successful.

In discussing the interview phase of the process, it should be noted that the Ten Year Review cited the 33% average of female Scholars versus the 25% rate of female applicants as cause to believe that some sort of "affirmative action" for women was occurring at the selection level in some countries. This conclusion is probably correct, but on the basis of anecdotes related by female Commonwealth Scholars in Canada, it is difficult to pinpoint in which countries such affirmative action takes place.

On the contrary, some women spoke of being asked overly intrusive questions about their lives, and a few told of selectors who used the interview process to vent their own views on certain subjects. Some women complained that there was no one on their selection committees who knew anything about their field of study. And in common with the experiences of women in most of the other programs, we heard complaints about being asked variations on the old standby "Will you miss your family terribly if you are away for years?" (As several women pointed out, this is a trick question to which either "yes" or "no" is a bad answer. They doubted if many male applicants were asked this question in their interviews.)

Moreover, although the Commonwealth-wide Plan specifically endorses gender equity in "the composition of CSFP commissions and selection

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committees," it does not enforce such a policy. Consequently, it is not surprising that many women reported appearing before all-male selection bodies. Whether these bodies were fair and unbiased (and in truth, most appear to have been), the *appearance* of fairness was severely compromised.

As for the reality, the experiences recounted by some of the women are discomfoting, but the number of women surveyed is small compared to the overall number of women in the Plan, and it is not possible for this study to ascertain how widespread such practices are, or discover the intent of questions like the one cited above on the part of the selectors. (Some selectors may have been more naive than biased, and in the absence of women selectors, received no feedback from colleagues to help correct their behavior.)

What is clear is that the more professional the selection and interview process, the less opportunity there is for such incidents to occur. In this regard, the Commonwealth Secretariat has available excellent resource materials to help in-country selection bodies design standardized questions to be asked of all applicants, and to train selectors in how to conduct interviews. However, the Commonwealth Secretariat has no mandate that requires in-country selection bodies to use these materials.

Unprofessional selection practices and procedures affect male as well as female applicants, but it is still true that in many countries, women seeking to join the rarified world of international scholarship face more and greater obstacles than their male counterparts. Under such circumstances, professionalizing selections and minimizing abuses has the effect of "leveling the playing field" for women, giving them the opportunity to compete fairly. And competing fairly is, in the long run, a more effective way to increase the participation of women in the Commonwealth Plan than belated or half-hearted attempts at affirmative action.

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# FULBRIGHT GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

## Background

The Fulbright Program is one of the largest and best known international scholarship programs in the world. It grew out of discussions between U.S. government foreign affairs officials and the private sector during World War II, and was initiated in 1946 by the U.S. Congress to foster mutual understanding through educational and cultural exchanges. The original sponsor of the legislation was Senator J. William Fulbright, and the Program has ever since borne his name.

The Fulbright Program encompasses a range of academic scholarships, exchange programs and professional training opportunities. These include full-year study grants, pre-doctoral fellowships, travel grants (available only in selected countries), a range of teaching opportunities and teacher exchanges, senior and junior faculty grants, and a number of specific grants offered by governments, universities, and private donors that can sometimes be supplemented by Fulbright funds. Field of study guidelines are similarly broadbased in most Fulbright countries, encompassing the arts and humanities as well as science and technology. The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program, treated for the purposes of this study as a separate program, is, in fact, operated under the authority of the Fulbright Program.

The bulk of support for the Fulbright Program, both for U.S. and foreign participants, still comes from an annual appropriation from the U.S. Congress supplemented by other sources, primarily foreign governments. For 1994-95, 18% of the non-private sector support for the Fulbright program came from foreign governments (\$23 million according to the 31st annual report of the Fulbright Program).

The U.S. Government agency charged with responsibility for the Fulbright Program is the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), with overall policy guidance

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provided by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, composed of 12 educational leaders appointed by the President of the United States. The Board is also charged with final approval of all nominated candidates.

Each year, the U.S. Student Fulbright Program enables more than 800 U.S. participants to study or conduct research in over 100 countries. The U.S. Student Program is open to recent B.A./B.S. graduates, master's and doctoral candidates, and young professionals and artists, all of whom are allowed to plan their own programs.

The Institute of International Education (IIE), a private non-profit U.S. organization formed in 1919, has implemented the Student Fulbright Program since the Program's inception in 1946. The IIE also annually administers programs for 250 other sponsors, public and private, providing services to nearly 10,000 program participants. It also reaches over 250,000 individuals worldwide with information services through its publications and overseas advising offices.

Under contract to USIA, IIE organizes publicity, receives and processes applications and, through its National Screening Committee, makes merit-based recommendations to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB) for U.S. Fulbright graduate study fellowships.

The Foreign Student Fulbright Program currently operates in more than 130 countries. In 1994-95, there were 3,470 Foreign Fulbright Fellows studying in the United States under this program. As in the case of the U.S. Fulbright Program, USIA is responsible for the overall working of the program, with the policy guidance of the Foreign Scholarship Board. In addition, USIA is responsible for the nomination of candidates. Further, the agency brokers policy input from binational education commissions and foundations in the more than 50 countries that have executive agreements with the United States for continuing exchange programs, or from U.S. Embassies (the US Information Service element) in more than 80 other countries. Three major cooperating agencies in the United States assist these entities. These include IIE, which administers three-quarters of the worldwide Foreign Fulbright Graduate Student Fellows, plus the America-Mideast Educational Training Services, Inc. (AMIDEAST), serving North Africa and the Near East except Israel, and the Latin American Scholarship Program of American Universities, Inc. (LASPAU), which supports junior faculty development in Latin America. A separate organization, Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), administers the Senior Fulbright Program for faculty exchanges. AMIDEAST's administration of the Fulbright Program in the Middle East and North Africa is reviewed in some detail in a separate case study of this report.

The 50 binational commissions and foundations are made up of representatives from a country's government and academia, and on the U.S. side, of the

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U.S. Ambassador or a USIS official deputized by the Ambassador, plus at least one U.S. academic. In the 80 or so countries that do not have commissions or foundations, a USIS official (often the Public Affairs Officer but generally a Cultural Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy) works with representatives of the host government.

In theory, and often in practice, the binational Fulbright commissions and foundations possess considerable latitude to act as policymakers. Although their actions are expected to conform with the general policy guidelines put forward by the Foreign Scholarship Board, they also possess the authority to establish and carry out their own priorities, based on the perceived needs of the two countries. In a number of cases, for example, commissions have chosen to restrict fields of study requirements to a few specific fields, as a way of responding to what they regard as key national priorities.

### **Policy on Women's Participation**

Both the U.S. and Foreign Student Fulbright Programs are gender-neutral; there are no overt references to women's participation in the overall policy directives of the Foreign Scholarship Board.

However, as noted above, binational commissions and foundations as well as U.S. Information Service Posts, possess the authority to shape their programs as they think advisable, as long as the changes made are in general compliance with overall policy directives promulgated by the FSB to comply with USIA diversity guidelines. All Fulbright partners in the U.S. and overseas have been encouraged to recruit women. In that connection, some of these bodies have developed strategies to increase the level of women's participation.

### **Observations on Women's Participation**

The following male/female breakdown by world region for 1993-94 was provided by the Foreign Fulbright Program Division at IIE:

<b>Grantees' Country of Origin</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>% Women</b>
Africa	279	74	21%
Near East/South Asia*	56	41	42%
East Asia/Pacific	278	190	41%
Eastern Europe	89	54	38%
Western Europe	837	539	39%
Latin America	399	173	30%
Central America	90	66	42%
<b>WORLDWIDE (excluding U.S.)</b>	<b>2,028</b>	<b>1,137</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>US</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>50%</b>

\* These figures are for IIE-administered students, primarily from South Asia. They do not include students served by AMIDEAST.

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The aggregate figure for women in the Foreign Student Fulbright Program, 36% for 1993-94, is almost identical to the percentage of all international women (sponsored and unsponsored) studying in U.S. colleges and universities. In one sense, this figure is more than respectable, given the worldwide scope of the program and the absence of any overarching mandate on women's participation, coupled with the autonomy of in-country governing bodies. However, given the very broad offerings of scholarship opportunities—at many levels of academic and professional achievement and in virtually every field of study—it might be expected that women would participate in the Fulbright Program in greater numbers than they do.

In fact, as the breakdown by world region indicates, there is considerable variation by region in the number of female Fulbrighters. The lowest percentage of women in the Foreign Student Program is from Africa—a 21% figure that drags down the aggregate figure considerably. The percentage of African women Fulbrighters is far from unusual; on the contrary, only the ATLAS Program can point to conspicuous success in attracting large numbers of African women and even in the ATLAS Program, not every country met the mandated 30% figure for women's participation.

There are no currently active binational Fulbright commissions or foundations in any of the Sub-Saharan African countries. The Cultural Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy in each country works with designated individuals from ministries of the host government (usually the Foreign Ministry), as well as the Chancellor or Vice Rector of the leading (or sometimes only) university.

Telephone interviews with USIS Cultural Affairs Officers working in Africa indicated that these officials recognize that the levels of women's participation are too low, and that they are trying to deal with the problem, generally by conveying their displeasure to the host government, and making it clear that they expect to see more applications from women (one official referred to this strategy as "endless jawboning").

The problem with this approach is twofold: it is passive rather than active, and it does not have consequences for failure. Thus, it is not surprising that in many cases, jawboning does not seem to have led to many changes. One USIS Cultural Affairs Officer noted, for example, that after all the talking, "80% of those who applied still heard about the program from alumni or someone else in the know." And not surprisingly, few of those applicants were women.

What this means for USIS officials anxious to see more women in the program is that they seek, as much as possible, to make up the gender imbalance during the selection phase of the process by choosing as many women from the pool of qualified applicants as they can.

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In one sense, since these women are sufficiently qualified, this approach is fair. However, there is something ironic in the fact that these women are the beneficiaries of preferential treatment at the selection stage largely as a remedy for the inadequacies of the information dissemination and promotion stage of the process.

It is probably the case that programs find it easier to be activist at the selection level of the scholarship process than at the initial information dissemination and promotion stage, which can be expensive, time-consuming, and harder to control. On the other hand, every case study in this report indicates that the fairest and most effective way to increase pools of qualified applicants (whether women or any other group) is to focus efforts on information and promotion (IIE-arranged and USIA-supported Fulbright Program recruitment for U.S. candidates, which has broad outreach and a strong mix of applicants, confirms this). A few programs working in African countries have been able to make considerable headway using this approach, sometimes in very simple ways. Note for example that both the ATLAS and Commonwealth programs advertise in the newspapers in some African countries; by contrast, the Fulbright Program (which is concentrating on junior faculty development) recruits primarily from colleges and universities. Only the South African Fulbright Student program, currently open to all fields and professions, reported making use of newspaper advertising.

USIS Cultural Affairs Officers in Africa noted that in some cases, in-country staffers (Foreign Service Nationals) working with them at the U.S. Embassy (usually female) were sometimes so personally committed to increasing pools of applicants for the program (particularly women) that they willingly took on additional work burdens to get word of the program out to a range of organizations. Often, these efforts were successful in supplementing (or sometimes circumventing) the limited information dissemination efforts of host institutions.

Given the range of efforts at the information dissemination and selection phases of the program noted above, it is not surprising that the 21% rate of females participation for the region overall conceals wide variations in rates of female participation from country to country. Note for example, some of the figures in Exhibit F-1, which provides breakdowns of male/female participants in the Fulbright Program for a selected number of specific countries in each of the world regions for 1993-94.

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**Exhibit F-1****Fulbright**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>% Women</b>
Argentina	8	17	32.00
Benin	1	8	11.11
Brazil	1	13	7.14
Ghana	6	11	35.29
Ivory Coast	10	13	43.48
Japan	49	50	49.49
Korea	13	23	36.11
Mexico	75	264	22.12
Romania	11	11	50.00
Thailand	26	14	65.00

In Africa, the Fulbright Program in the Ivory Coast achieved an impressive 43% rate for female participation. By contrast, the rate in Benin was only 11% (compared to 51% achieved by the ATLAS program after an ongoing and aggressive campaign of information dissemination).

The variations in rates of female participation in Africa (and in other world regions as well) are not unique to the Fulbright program. On the contrary, they show up in every case study in this report.

Two world regions that achieved the highest rates of female participation in the Fulbright program for 1993-94 were Central America and the Asian and Pacific regions. Fulbright staffers consider the Central American figures particularly meaningful as an indication of progress for women for two reasons: first, because these figures are largely the results of implementing specific strategies designed to expand the pool of qualified applicants in the countries of the region, and second, because a number of Central American Fulbright Programs restrict fields of study to hard sciences and technology, fields where there are generally fewer women than men.

According to figures provided by the IIE staff, the percentage of females participating in the Central American region for 1994-95 should actually be modestly higher than in 1993-94. Note for example results as of Spring 1995 that include: Costa Rica, 5 women out of 11 Fellows (45%); Guatemala, 4 women out of 9 Fellows (44%); Honduras, 6 women out 10 Fellows (60%); and Panama, 6 women out of 11 Fellows (54%).

As Exhibit F-1 figures show, every world region has its "stars" when it comes to women's participation; that is, certain locales that produce large numbers of female Fulbrighters. Examination of these locales usually provides a

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reason for these results. Sometimes, as noted in this and other case studies, the key factor in the rate of female participation is the work of the bilateral commission or USIS. In other cases, the reason may be found in the national characteristics of the host country. Nowhere is this truer than in Thailand and Japan.

For the Student Fulbright Program, Thailand and Japan have rates of women's participation of 65% and 50%, respectively. According to interviews with the Commission Directors from both countries, these numbers were not the result of special initiatives on the part of Fulbright Commissions in either country; rather, they relate to national characteristics, or more accurately, characteristics of the educated female elites in both countries.

In every case study of a scholarship program that includes Thailand (which in this report includes Fulbright, Humphrey and the Rotary Scholarship Programs), Thailand always produces the highest rate of female participation, usually by a wide margin. Thai society, it appears, has a large number of well-educated, highly confident women, many of whom have achieved well publicized success in business and other endeavors. Many of these women also appear to recognize the utility of overseas study.

The reasons why Japanese women participate in the Fulbright Program in such large numbers are quite different from the reasons for Thai women's participation. According to data provided by the Japan-United States Educational Commission (the official designation of the binational commission) in 1990-91, the number of Japanese female students enrolled in U.S. higher education surpassed that of male students for the first time in history, beginning a trend that has continued to the present. (Japanese women made up 60% of the Japanese student population in U.S. educational institutions in 1994-95, compared to 57% U.S. women in the U.S. tertiary-level student population, and the 36% women among all foreign students enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher learning.)

The Commission also reports that more female than male clients use its information service to learn about overseas study opportunities in the United States. "As there is no direct 'affirmative action' for females in recruitment of applicants or the selection process,...it just reflects the overall trend that women are getting more active these days" (especially at the graduate student level). This is the "good news." The other side of the equation is that there are fewer career paths at home for Japanese women, and hence, less incentive to stay home and "on track," which men at top universities must do. Given the lack of opportunities at home, overseas study looks even more attractive. In this connection, note that the Rotary Scholarship Program is, along with the Fulbright Program, the other largest overseas study

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opportunity in Japan, and their statistics on women's participation (provided in the Rotary case study) are almost identical to the Fulbright data, hovering at or above the 50% mark.

While not every Fulbright country could be examined in depth in this case study, one objective was to focus as much as possible on countries and/or regions already examined in other case studies. Because an entire case study was devoted to the Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences for Scholars from Mexico and Central America, the work of the Mexican Fulbright program was also made a focus of this case study.

While exact data for years prior to 1993 were not available in Mexico, indications are that women participated in the program at levels similar to the 22% figure shown in Exhibit F-1. In 1994, staff of the Mexican Fulbright Commission began a rigorous self-evaluation of all of its procedures, with the goal not specifically to increase the number of women or any other single group, but to take steps to expand the pool of qualified applicants overall, and to assure the fairness and professionalism of every aspect of the scholarship process. However, as in other cases where the focus was not to increase the number of women, women seem to have benefitted disproportionately from the efforts.

After the self-evaluation, the first major step taken by the Commission was to change its recruitment timetable so that there was sufficient lead time to accomplish the increased outreach efforts it saw as necessary. In this case, the Commission began its activities a full 18 months before applications were due for the 1995 selection.

The Commission used that time to accumulate a database of the largest possible group of educational institutions in Mexico that staff thought should receive information about the Fulbright program. The final database contained information about 450 institutions, from teacher training institutions to technikons to public and private universities.

In a major promotional mailing effort, all 450 institutions received written material on the Fulbright program, many for the very first time. These mail efforts were complemented with in-person staff visits to various institutions throughout Mexico to promote the program (some were made jointly with IIE staff promoting other privately-funded scholarship programs). In some cases, Fulbright staff held press conferences in states outside the Federal District, resulting (somewhat to their surprise) in coverage in local newspapers and on television. This brought information on the Fulbright Program to a far wider audience than ever before, and also helped make the point that the program was serious about encouraging new groups of applicants to enter the process.

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These efforts resulted in an application pool of over 300 initial applications, or 175 applications after minimum standards were applied. Of the initial 300, 107, or more than 33%, were from women, representing a fairly large increase over past years. After rigorous selection procedures, including in-person interviews, 20 principals and 8 alternates were chosen for 1995 Mexican Fulbright awards; of the 20 principals, 12 were women; 5 of the alternates were also women. In percentage terms, this indicated tremendous gains for female Fulbrighters in Mexico. On the other hand, it should be noted that even with the greatly expanded promotional mailings of 1994, initial applicants for the 1995 awards were overwhelmingly from the Federal District of Mexico (69%) and not the provinces. That the final selections emerged with 9 principals and 4 alternates from the provinces indicates strongly that affirmative action took place at the selection level to include qualified provincial grantees.

The gains made by the Mexican Fulbright Commission in connection with the FY 1995 selections were further consolidated in the following year. For FY 1996, initial applications were received from a total of 286 applicants, a small decrease from the preceding year. Of these applicants, 120 (or 42%) came from women, a large increase over the 33% figure of the year before (and contrasting even more strongly with the 22% figures common in earlier years). In terms of the impact of expanded outreach, the most dramatic change from earlier years is the percentage of initial applications received from the provinces compared to those from the Federal District: for the first time, 52% of the initial applicants were from provincial districts, compared with 28% the year before.

In other words, while the first response from the Mexican provinces to the greatly expanded outreach efforts that began in 1993 was relatively modest (just 28% of initial applicants for FY 1995), the effects of those efforts continue to gain strength over the next twelve months. Interestingly, of the 37 individuals who were selected for 1996 Mexican Fulbrights, 14 are from the provinces (compared with 9 of the final 20 from the previous year). This appears to indicate that with a greater applicant pool from the provinces upon which to draw initially, less affirmative action related to geography took place during subsequent levels of the selection process.

One further point should be noted about the work of the Mexican Fulbright Commission that is germane to most other programs studied for this project. To assure the fairest and most unbiased interview procedures, the Mexican Fulbright program designed a new evaluation sheet for selectors to use during interviews, as well as a series of questions carefully designed to be fair to all, and intended to be asked in the same way of all candidates.

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Because the Fulbright program is so large and diversified, for every Mexican Commission that chooses to open its process, a counterpart in another country may appear to go in an opposite direction. Some Commissions (like Brazil) restrict the fields of study to areas like the hard sciences, where women still do not participate in large numbers. In some cases, activities to disseminate information about the program appear to be rather low-key. In other cases, however, there is substantial success in recruiting women, such as in Argentina, which in 1994-95 had a rate of women's participation of 49%, or the Ivory Coast with 43%, or even Syria, which was able to achieve a rate of women's participation of 39% over the five years from 1990-1995.

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# **HUBERT H. HUMPHREY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

## **Background**

The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program, begun in 1978, is a United States Government-funded program, sponsored by the United States Information Agency (USIA) as one of several Fulbright Exchange Activities. At USIA, it is coordinated by the Advising, Teaching, and Specialized Programs Division of the Office of Academic Programs. It is administered by IIE's Washington, D.C. office, through a contract from USIA. The William J. Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board has oversight responsibility for the program and awards the Fellowship grants.

The Humphrey Fellowships are mid-career fellowships that bring accomplished individuals from most developing countries and from selected countries in Central/Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to the United States for one year of study and related practical professional experiences. Candidates are nominated in their home countries by United States Information Service (USIS) Posts or Binational Fulbright Commissions/Foundation.

The application process is a competitive one, with candidates expected to demonstrate a commitment to public service in either the public or private sectors (including non-governmental agencies), and either a record of, or strong potential for, playing a leadership role. The key criterion for selection is "demonstrated ability to achieve positions of significant responsibility and...the promise of assuming future leadership roles." Candidates' "professional experience should indicate a more than ordinary career pattern for someone of their age and circumstances. There should be clear indication

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that the nominated candidate has the promise of becoming a prominent figure in his/her field who will most likely hold a position where he/she can influence the policy and development of his/her country.”

The goal of the program is to give these individuals an in-depth professional and academic experience of U.S. society and culture, and of current U.S. approaches to the fields in which they work. Nominees range in age from late 20s to early 50s; they are expected to be at a point in their careers when they will be able to benefit most from a sabbatical year in the United States.

The Humphrey Program is designed to meet the requirements of policymakers, planners, administrators, and managers who have a public service orientation. Fields of study include economics, agricultural development, communications, finance, human resource management, environmental management, public health (including a sub-specialty in substance abuse), urban and regional planning, and public policy management. The Humphrey Program is not geared to the humanities; it does not have a technical nor scientific orientation nor can it be used for faculty development.

Other criteria include at least five years of professional experience, a first university degree (equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree), plus evidence that the individual is capable of graduate level study (although pursuit of a degree during the year in the United States is not normally permitted).

The program does not offer dependent support; thus, those Fellows who obtain leave with pay are more able to provide for dependents who remain at home or accompany the Fellow to the United States. Some anecdotal evidence gathered in the course of this study suggests that it is more difficult for women to obtain paid leaves of absence than men; however, this cannot be taken as fact without more research.

## **Policy on Women's Participation**

The Humphrey Program's policy on women's participation is stated as follows in its written selection guidelines:

Recruitment of qualified women should be made a priority of the Post. Over the years, the percentage of women in the program has increased, but it still remains low. Posts may want to advertise the program in women's publications and organizations. [USIS] posts should make sure that women serve on local selection committees and that alumnae are involved in recruitment and pre-departure orientation.

## Observations on Women's Participation

Over the past five years, the percentage of women in the Humphrey Program has fluctuated slightly, but averages out to approximately 35%, as indicated by the following:

	<u>% Nominees</u>	<u>% Grantees</u>
92/93	Male 70.0 Female 30.0	Male 62.4 Female 36.6
93/94	Male 71.0 Female 29.0	Male 66.5 Female 33.5
94/95	Male 69.0 Female 31.0	Male 64.5 Female 35.5
95/96	Male 70.0 Female 30.0	Male 65.0 Female 35.0

The 35% average for women's participation is in line with other programs studied; however, the Humphrey Program's record on women may in fact be somewhat better than the bare percentages indicate, considering that the program focuses on developing countries, and on disciplines that in those countries are heavily male-dominated, and that it excludes completely the arts and humanities, fields in which women often outnumber men.

The Humphrey Program provided a breakdown of male/female participation by world region for 1993-94, the year in which female participation was the lowest in recent years (33.5%):

<u>Grantees'</u> <u>Country of Origin</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>% Women</u>
Africa	48	20	29%
N. Africa/Mideast/S. Asia	23	11	32%
East Asia/Pacific	13	12	48%
Europe/NIS (Newly Independent States)	19	10	34%
American Republics	23	10	30%
<b>WORLDWIDE</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>33%</b>

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With the conspicuous exception of the East Asia/Pacific region, these figures show that women's participation that year varied little by world region. According to Humphrey staff, the high level of women's participation in the Asia-Pacific region is not a one-year phenomenon; one reason it consistently does so well is that the region includes Thailand which, year after year, has very high levels of women participants in the Humphrey Program (and in every other program surveyed as well). Humphrey staff also cite the Philippines as another bright spot for women in the region. Not only is there a large pool of well-educated and high achieving women from which to recruit, but a very strong HHH Alumni/ae Association in the Philippines includes women (and men) officers who are committed to promoting the program widely and fairly throughout the country.

Africa's percentage of women that year was 29%, which is in line with data from other programs. Although African women generally fare badly in the world of international scholarships, what bears notice in this instance is that in actual numbers rather than percentages, African women fared rather well. This is because the Humphrey Program had so many African Fellows (48 out of 126 in 1993-94), that the 29% figure for women's participation translated into a group of 20 women, larger than the number of women from the Europe/NIS and American Republic combined, and more than the number of male Humphrey Fellows from most of the other regions.

This suggests that bare percentages are not enough to provide a full picture of how women fare in international scholarship programs. This is reinforced by the data in Exhibit H-1, which is a breakdown of male/female participation in 18 countries, from every world region, over a period of the last three years.

Exhibit H-1

HUMPHREY FELLOWS

Country	1993/94				1994/95				1995/96						
	Nominees		Fellows		Nominees		Fellows		Nominees		Fellows		Percent		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Argentina	0	3	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	50.00%	1	3	0	0	0.00%
Benin	0	3	0	1	0	4	0	2	0	0.00%	0	3	0	2	0.00%
Brazil	1	9	1	4	1	12	1	4	2	20.00%	2	6	0	3	0.00%
Egypt	2	7	0	3	1	4	0	2	2	0.00%	2	3	2	1	66.67%
Ghana	1	8	1	3	2	7	1	4	3	20.00%	3	9	1	4	20.00%
India	4	4	3	2	4	4	2	4	2	33.33%	2	6	2	2	50.00%
Ivory Coast	0	3	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	0.00%	0	1	0	1	0.00%
Jordan	2	3	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	0.00%	1	1	1	1	50.00%
Mexico	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	ERR	2	1	1	1	50.00%
Mozambique	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	50.00%	1	2	0	0	0.00%
Pakistan	1	8	1	2	2	6	1	0	4	100.00%	4	4	1	2	33.33%
Romania	5	4	3	1	3	4	3	0	1	100.00%	1	2	1	1	50.00%
Sudan	0	3	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	100.00%	0	1	0	1	0.00%
Syria	0	2	0	2	0	3	0	2	0	0.00%	0	3	0	3	0.00%
Thailand	3	1	2	1	4	1	2	1	66.67%	4	1	3	0	100.00%	
Zimbabwe	0	5	0	2	0	5	0	3	0	0.00%	1	4	1	1	50.00%

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As may be seen in Exhibit H-1, the presence or absence of one woman in a country that has only one or two awards annually can change the percentage of women's participation in that country from 0% to 100%—a drastic swing in percentage terms, but a modest one in actual numbers. What this means for researchers is not that percentages are invalid, but that they must be considered in a broader context.

To provide some context for the Humphrey case study, extensive interviews were conducted with Fellows (as follow-up to completed questionnaires), Humphrey staffers and USIS representatives from selected countries. Among the questions asked of USIS representatives were inquiries about how familiar they were with the mandate on women's participation, how seriously they took it, and how they were working to implement it.

All were familiar with the mandate. Almost unanimously, they viewed it seriously as a key component of their work. In a few cases, the mandate reinforced strong personal commitments.

Where representatives diverged was on their actual efforts to put the mandate into action and on how successful they thought they had been.

For example, some representatives confessed that the press of their many responsibilities beyond the Humphrey Program meant that they took few steps to expand their outreach efforts much beyond "the usual channels"; that is, beyond the government ministries and universities with which they traditionally worked. Others reported initiating modest efforts to expand outreach, such as sending notices to other ministries and a few large institutions. In a few cases, representatives spoke of aggressive outreach efforts, involving expanded advertising in newspapers contacting non-profit organizations and professional associations.

While some representatives were satisfied with the results of their work, most felt there was considerable room for improvement. What seems a common problem is how entrenched the so-called "usual channels" actually are, and how resistant they proved to be to the dilution of their influence. As one USIS representative noted, even after redoubled outreach efforts, he found that the Post continued to receive approximately 80% of all applications from the same government ministries as in previous years; and unsurprisingly, few of them were from women.

Interestingly, not all the reports of problems came from countries with low percentages of women Fellows. In one case, a Washington, D.C.-based selection panel member told of her dismay when she reviewed applications from a country that on the surface (based on Exhibit H-1 for instance) seemed

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to be successfully recruiting female candidates. The problem was that the applications from women were uniformly weak compared to those from men. Knowing the country in question quite well, she found this difficult to understand. Launching her own investigation, she contacted many women in that country; she found that no one she knew had applied, knew anyone who had applied, or even knew of the program's existence.

In the above anecdote, the moral is that potentially successful female candidates existed, but the outreach to them seemingly did not. What if we did not know that, but had only the applications themselves to go by? In that country's case, the selection panel would either have to disqualify the women on the basis of merit only, or give them preferential treatment in order to satisfy the mandate. In a few instances, USIS representatives in fact mentioned this situation as one they were actually facing, or had faced in the past.

This leads to the question: in the instances cited by those representatives, were there truly not enough qualified women to compete on equal terms for international scholarships? Does that mean that programs are warranted in using the lack of qualified women as the reason for justifying low numbers of women year after year?

Responses gathered for the Humphrey case study do not differ significantly from any other program surveyed. All reinforce the conclusion that women candidates now exist, in almost every country and field of study, in sufficient number to meet the requirements of even the most selective programs. Note in this regard that few programs need to add large numbers of women to boost their percentages of female participation. As mentioned earlier, and illustrated by data in Exhibit H-1, countries with two or three placements annually could include just one woman and score respectably in percentage terms. Again and again during the course of this study, we found examples of remarkable women in the most unlikely settings who were, or would have been, admirable candidates for international scholarships.

Another factor often is cited in discussions of women's failure to enter the field of international scholarship in greater numbers: family responsibilities, particularly responsibilities for dependent children.

It may well be that significant numbers of women do not even apply for international scholarships, particularly long-term ones, because of their family responsibilities. Unfortunately, data about women who do *not* apply for scholarships is virtually non-existent (except where this study has been able to collect modest information from the AAUW non-respondents survey), making it difficult to draw any conclusions. The best this study could do was

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make some informed guesses based on data about women who had entered the field and succeeded.

What we found in this group of HHH women participants was “self selection” at work. Like their male counterparts, women who qualify for overseas scholarships represent an “elite” of talent and ambition that set them apart in any country. Unlike their male counterparts however, most of them have coped since their earliest days with a series of societal and/or familial obstacles to achievement. In light of the sacrifices and painful decisions that have gotten these women to the point where they are seriously considered for international scholarships, it should not be surprising if they tell us they are prepared to seize the opportunities and then find pragmatic ways to deal with the attendant problems. And “family responsibilities,” whether family remains at home or accompanies a woman abroad, are high on the list of such problems.

Some data from the Humphrey Program does indicate that self-selection may have its limits. Specifically, it suggests that “the percentage of females tends to be a bit lower than that of the prospective group once the new ‘class’ is finalized”; that is, after receiving and accepting fellowships, more women than men withdraw from the program before it actually begins. The program does not know the specific reasons for these withdrawals; however, it does not appear that other programs studied have the same problem.

What is known is that individuals who accept most international scholarship awards do so in full knowledge that dependent support is not going to be provided. There is one exception among our case studies: the Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences, discussed in the next chapter. Realistically, however, financial constraints faced by international scholarship programs make it highly unlikely that other programs will in this study. (In fact, the Canadian Commonwealth Program, the only other program in this study that offered such support, recently discontinued it due to funding constraints.)

Given the widespread lack of dependent support in international scholarship programs, programs that wish to help recipients with family-related problems must find other ways to do so. Data from the Humphrey case study indicates that one way is to interpret and carry out program terms and conditions in as flexible and “family-friendly” a way as possible.

The Humphrey Program is unusual among international scholarship programs in having designated and well-trained on-campus U.S. coordinators who are responsible for keeping in contact with Fellows and helping them with problems. These coordinators, along with Humphrey staff in Washington, D.C., provide this study with the benefit of their years of hands-on experience

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helping Fellows with family-related problems. Humphrey data indicate that while the majority of female Fellows leave their children home during their overseas stays, a substantial minority do not. Some Humphrey Fellows arrive in the United States pregnant, without informing anyone of the fact beforehand; there have also been several cases in which female Fellows became pregnant, and gave birth, while in the United States. In most of these cases, the common denominator that eased what might have been very difficult situations was USIA's health coverage for Humphrey Fellows, which applies no conditions on reimbursements for health care related to pregnancy.

The Humphrey Program, like so many other international programs, does not have funds available for travel back home for Fellows in case of emergency (including family emergency). In those cases, it tries to be as flexible as possible in helping the Fellow, and giving him/her every chance to remain in the program and finish the training. For example, the program will give the Fellow the ticket back home that it would have given him/her upon completion of the program and let them use it for the emergency; the onus is then on the Fellow to return to the United States at his or her own expense. The program also keeps the Fellow's maintenance allowance available during the emergency leave period. Every effort is made to keep the spot open for the Fellow, even if the emergency takes longer than expected to resolve.

Again and again, examples illustrated the importance of flexibility and sympathy on the part of the donor agency and program staff. Last year, USIA and IIE Humphrey staff met with a group of female Humphrey Fellows who had brought their children with them to the United States. What the women Fellows requested was not additional stipend support, but rather staff advice and help with on-the-ground problems that were impeding their progress in the program, such as the lack of reliable day care in their communities, or their inability to find the best schools for their children. What program staff was able to do was help identify individuals with children in the Fellows' U.S. communities who had similar concerns, and who would act as friends and mentors to the Fellows. Female Fellows mentioned that assigning "host families" or "professional mentors" who have children of similar age to the Fellow's could be especially useful in solving these child-related concerns.

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# **REGIONAL PROGRAM OF GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES**

## **Background**

This program was first established by the Ford Foundation, in response to concern that Mexican government support for overseas scholarships, which had grown steadily over the 1970s, was declining (especially in the social science fields), as was support for overseas training for Central American social scientists. Concerned that further erosion would threaten the future development of the social sciences in Mexico and Central America, the Ford Foundation established its own fellowship program in the social sciences in 1987, for Mexican and Central American academics. The Ford Program was administered by Ford Foundation staff, out of its own office in Mexico City.

In 1990, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation became a co-sponsor of the program and the Institute of International Education in Mexico City took over from Ford Foundation/Mexico staff the responsibility of administering the program. In the spring of 1995, the California-based William and Flora Hewlett Foundation became a new co-sponsor of this program. Hewlett support is directed exclusively to Mexican grantees.

Both MacArthur and Ford Foundation staff have chosen to take active roles in the operation of this program and work closely with IIE on policy and

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administrative issues and on developing strategies for the future. The foundations have appointed the members of the program's selection committee from among U.S., Mexican and Central American academics; foundation representatives also meet with the selection committee to review policy and program results.

The stated purpose of the program is to give gifted scholars from Mexico and Central America working at the graduate level the opportunity to study selected fields within the social sciences outside their native countries. Fields of study under the heading "social sciences" are relatively broad, from anthropology to economics to environmental studies to international affairs. They also include the specialties of women's rights, gender studies, and reproductive health. The program has emphasized fields of study that will benefit not just the individual recipient, but the broader society to which the individual will return. Thus, the program gives precedence to applicants who see their own advancement as connected to the advancement of their community and their nation.

This program has stringent criteria, including strong academic qualifications, proof of admission to the graduate program of choice, three letters of recommendation, and some source of complementary funding. The most common complementary awards come from Fulbright Garcia-Robles (the Mexican Fulbright Program), CONACYT (the Mexican government's Science & Technology Commission which offers overseas and domestic scholarships), and the British Council.

### **Policy on Women's Participation**

The written guidelines of the program do not contain specific mention of encouraging the participation of women. However, this program has made increasing the number of women a priority since its early days, and particularly since 1991.

Thus, this case study provides an interesting example of how a program may establish a serious priority and carry it out successfully without the use of a written mandate.

This program should also be noted as the only one studied that currently allows for the possibility of support for up to two dependent children, as well as support for an accompanying spouse. This policy is, of course, gender-neutral; however, the expectation was that women would benefit from it disproportionately.

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## Observations on Women's Participation

The history of male/female participation over the last five years can be read in the following:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>%Female Participation</u>
1991	43	15	26%
1992	34	24	40%
1993	33	23	41%
1994	23	25	51%
1995	23	28	55%

Those interviewed in the course of this case study pinpoint three elements as key in changing the rate of female participation in this program so dramatically. They are:

First, while no formal written mandate was produced, there was from the start a clear directive from the top of the need for change, along with the possibility of consequences (such as the loss of program funds) if results were not obtained.

Second, program administrators understood and agreed with the directive, and thus responded aggressively. In this case, the emphasis was on improving efforts in information dissemination and promotion as the way to make the most progress.

Third and finally, there was an understanding of and commitment to the directive on the part of the selection committee members.

The directive on encouraging the greater participation of women came in 1991, when funders expressed dismay that after several years of modest improvement in women's participation (hovering around 30%), the rate dropped to 26%. Ironically, a selection committee member from that year recalls that the committee exercised a degree of "affirmative action" just to get to that 26% (in other words, an even lower percentage of women were in the "pre-selection" candidate pool submitted to them for consideration).

IIE and the foundations discussed strategies to turn the numbers around, concluding that there were enough qualified women in Mexico and Central America if they could be reached initially and then encouraged to enter the process. Thus, the emphasis was placed on expanded information dissemination and promotion, with the goal of reaching women as well as other underrepresented populations, such as poorer individuals or those living in more remote locales.

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Beginning in 1992, IIE changed its written material about the program to provide more information about eligibility requirements and emphasize its varied fields of study, including the fact that “social sciences” encompassed such fields as women’s rights and reproductive health. Outreach by mail was expanded greatly, with many institutions receiving program information for the first time. In addition, staff increased the number of on-site visits to universities and other institutions in the Mexican provinces and in Central America. Increasingly, it also turned to newer methods of information dissemination such as E-mail, and began the entire outreach process earlier than in the past, to give potential applicants more chance to hear of the program via word-of-mouth and still have time to apply.

As the above statistics show, these efforts bore fruit. A 1994 evaluation of the program, commissioned by the MacArthur Foundation, reviewed publicity and outreach activities and concluded that the program was then as well publicized as possible “through regular channels: university offices...other grant organizations...returned grantees, present and former committee members, and an expanding number of NGOs, and the IIE Mexico City office.” All to the good, but the evaluator cautioned that the program also needed to think of “continually new and carefully targeted approaches to reach potential candidates.” Without such targeting, publicity efforts beyond Mexico City (“where the formal information network, the invisible grapevine, and the tangible evidence of success is strong”) may be insufficient.

This advice, and the experience accumulated over the prior two years, led IIE Mexico City to redouble its promotional efforts during 1994 and 1995, even within the constraints of a limited promotional budget. Staff travel to locations outside the Federal District of Mexico continued, with visits to universities and specific organizations augmented by more innovative efforts to get the word out, such as holding press conferences (sometimes with staff from the Mexican Fulbright Program). Fruitful collaborative relationships with binational centers in Central America, and a range of NGOs and with research centers throughout the region were also established.

By 1995, 55% of all the applicants and 55% of all grantees in the program were women. Equally impressive, in 1995 for the first time, the *total* number of applicants to the program was up as well, indicating that aggressive outreach efforts were having an effect.

An even more compelling argument for the success of the program's efforts is that after every phase of the selection process was complete in 1995 (from initial screening for minimum qualifications to rigorous screening by the selection committee to in-person interviews for the far smaller number of remaining candidates), the rate of female participation—in this case, 55%—

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remained virtually unchanged. In other words, the number of women applying was so great, and their quality so high, that they could withstand and prevail over the very rigorous selection procedures.

Because this program generously allowed the study consultant to sit in on the deliberations of the selection committee in 1995, there is first-hand evidence that selections were made strictly on the basis of qualifications. Moreover, considerations of gender were noticeably absent from the discussions. This is in contrast to deliberations of some earlier years, according to some familiar with them. Once initial information dissemination efforts successfully attract large enough numbers of women (or any other underrepresented group), selectors are free to focus on other considerations. "Affirmative action" (in the sense of "lowering standards to increase participation") was not necessary to achieve high participation rates. Instead, the selection committee began to place a priority on some qualifications which previously had been undervalued and which were frequently embodied in the women candidates under consideration. Selection committee members also began to take into more serious consideration the barriers and disadvantages that women face in seeking professional development opportunities in Mexico and Central America. These factors, along with the aggressive outreach and recruitment efforts, made a dramatic difference in the final gender ratio of the Fellows.

The other notable aspect of this program is that it is currently the only international scholarship program in this study that offers the possibility of support for accompanying spouse and/or dependents. Dependent support was greatly appreciated by those grantees (male and female) who needed such support and may have encouraged women to apply who otherwise could not have even considered an overseas training experience.

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# ROTARY FOUNDATION

## Background

The world's first Rotary club was established in 1905; today Rotary International is a vast network of clubs in 151 countries and 34 geographical areas. Rotary International has long supported a range of grant and scholarship programs, which are administered under the umbrella of its Rotary Foundation. The foundation, like Rotary International itself, is headquartered in Evanston, Illinois. The foundation is governed by a group of trustees who, like all Rotary officials, are Rotarians themselves, elected by other Rotarians, and serve entirely on a voluntary basis; The foundation's scholarship program is administered by a small Evanston-based staff.

The administrative unit of Rotary International is a district. Depending on their location, they may include between 40-60 Rotary clubs. There are currently 516 autonomous districts worldwide.

The largest of the Rotary Foundation's scholarship programs is the Ambassadorial Scholarship Program, which has been in existence since 1947. The program is open to both undergraduate and graduate students; a candidate need only "have completed at least two years of university-level studies or work experience before taking up the award." The basic Ambassadorial scholarship is for one academic year in another country (usually nine months in duration).

The stated purpose of the program is to:

...contribute to the furtherance of understanding and friendly relations between peoples of different nations by enabling a man or woman to study in an educational institution located outside his or her own country. The scholar is expected to act as an unofficial

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ambassador of good will and is thereby provided with an opportunity during his or her study year and after return home to contribute to a better understanding between the people of his or her home country and the people of the country visited.

The Rotary Foundation also offers other scholarship opportunities, which may vary from Rotary district to Rotary district, as the districts have the option of deciding how they wish their support to be used. For example, for 1994-95, in addition to the option described above, participating Rotary districts could choose to offer two or three year multi-year scholarships or three- or six-month Cultural Ambassadorial scholarships, which emphasize intensive language training and cultural immersion.

An interesting, and very innovative, initiative over the past year was to offer Rotary districts the option of donating support that might go to one of their local candidates to another Rotary district entirely, one in another, poorer, country that would not otherwise have the funds to sponsor a participant. A number of districts have already opted to take this approach.

A program of the Rotary Foundation that is no longer in existence should also be mentioned—the Freedom From Hunger scholarship program, which existed from 1986 to 1994. This program was limited to participants from developing countries. In contrast to the Ambassadorial scholarships, which stress the goal of promoting international understanding, Freedom from Hunger recipients were expected to pursue advanced degrees (M.S. and Ph.D.) in agricultural studies, and then return home to contribute their knowledge and skills to combatting hunger in their countries. This program awarded nearly 300 scholarships in the eight years of its existence.

The Rotary Foundation's scholarship programs are among the largest in the world; they are also perhaps the most "international" of international scholarships, offering study venues in over 151 countries and 34 geographical areas.

A second notable feature is that, with the exception of a small paid staff at Rotary headquarters, all levels of the scholarship process, from publicizing the program locally to accepting applications to interviewing candidates to selecting awardees is in the hands of Rotary members, who do this work on an entirely voluntary basis. Members of local clubs are responsible for doing all the work until the actual selection of candidates, which is handled by committees at the district level.

Thus, for all intents and purposes, this major international program is the only one among all surveyed that can be considered in many key ways a grassroots effort. For example, although every club is supplied with uniform

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promotional material developed at Rotary headquarters, how the material is used is at the discretion of local clubs, as is how the material is disseminated. Some clubs have become known throughout the organization as innovators in promotion and information dissemination; others lag behind. Some clubs and districts are known to be quite professional in every aspect of the scholarship process; others may be more casual. These disparities become apparent when scholars are asked to describe their experiences in applying for the awards.

Over the years, there has been considerable emphasis placed on making the awards process as fair as possible. It is, for example, expressly prohibited for any immediate family members of Rotarians to apply to the scholarship programs. In addition, selection committees are supplied with written material spelling out procedures, criteria, and even sample questions for use in selections. There is considerable evidence that this material, when used by selection committees, successfully minimizes cultural and/or personal biases. However, as stated above, the broadbased nature of the organization, along with the considerable local autonomy of the clubs, means that the use of such written material is not universal.

### **Policy on Women's Participation**

There is no formal policy or mandate on women in any of the Rotary Foundation's scholarship programs. All are gender-neutral.

No discussion of the participation of women in the Rotary scholarships would be complete without a review of the history of Rotary International's membership policy towards women. Specifically, Rotary International barred women from membership until 1987. In that year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a California state law requiring service clubs to admit women was not a violation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. That ruling was the impetus for a policy statement from the Rotary International Board of Directors allowing Rotary clubs in any U.S. state to invite qualified women into membership. One year later, the Board recognized the right of Rotary clubs in Canada to accept women. One year later, in 1989, clubs worldwide were permitted to admit women.

Since then, women have joined Rotary in large numbers, and this trend is expected to continue unabated. Statistics from 1994 indicate that there were then more than 55,500 women Rotarians worldwide out of a membership of nearly 1.2 million.

Approximately 44,000 of all women Rotarians were in North America, where 91% of the U.S. and Canadian Rotary clubs presently have female members. This leaves only 11,000 women who have joined Rotary in all the

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other world regions combined. While this is seemingly a small number, it nevertheless represents a trend that is expected to continue. In the Asian and South American regions, for example, 15% of all Rotary clubs now have at least some women members. Interestingly, the area of the world that has made the least progress in recruiting women is Great Britain and Ireland, where women make up only 4% of Rotary membership.

Women are not only becoming Rotarians in increasing numbers, they are moving up the ladder in the Rotary hierarchy as leaders at the club, district, and international levels. This is likely to have an influence on the organization in the future but, as indicated from interviews with some of these women, exactly how this influence will manifest itself is still unclear.

It must also be emphasized that even when women were barred from Rotary membership, they were eligible to apply for scholarships, and many did. In fact, women participated as Rotary scholars over the years at rates that hovered continually at the 50% mark.

Given such high rates of women's participation in the Ambassadorial Program over such a long period of time, it is difficult to make the argument that more female Rotarians, or the inclusion of women on formerly all-male selection committees, will result in even higher rates of female participation. Where the impact of female Rotarians is likely to be the greatest (based largely on interviews with female scholars) is on the *perception* of female applicants that a committee of women as well as men assures a fair and equitable selection.

## **Observations on Women's Participation**

As noted above, women have done well in the Ambassadorial Scholarship Program, with levels of participation consistently at or above 50%. From 1990 through 1993, the average percentage of women's participation was 54%; for 1993/94, the percentage of women was up to 57%.

In 1993/94, Japan and the United States had, respectively, the first and second largest numbers of Ambassadorial scholars, and among the highest percentages of women. Japanese women made up 60% of those awarded in Japan; in the United States women received 59%. A much smaller player—Thailand—had the largest percentage of female Ambassadorial scholars, at a ratio of 7:1 female to male participants.

Is there something in the Rotary program that accounts for the consistently high percentage of female participants? Two factors come immediately to mind:

First, the Ambassadorial Program is open to undergraduates as well as graduates, making the candidate pool very large, even in

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countries with few women in graduate or post-graduate studies;

Second, fields of study are virtually unrestricted. The Rotary Program is probably the most inclusive of any major international scholarship program when it comes to field of study guidelines, and one of the few, along with Fulbright, that is receptive to the humanities. (In general, far greater numbers of women may be found in the humanities than in such fields as science and technology, particularly in many developing countries.)

Among Rotarians, it has long been believed that it is because of the above two factors, and particularly the latter, that women account for such a large number of Ambassadorial scholarships. An examination of fields of study of Ambassadorial scholars from 1993-94 initially supports this notion: 40 women with Ambassadorial scholarships were studying art compared to 11 men; 13 women were studying theater compared to 3 men, and 47 women were studying English compared to 23 men. Just 2 women were studying computer science compared to 12 men, and 11 women were studying engineering compared to 41 men.

On the other hand, the 1993-94 study also showed that in the fields of biology, physics, and political science, men and women participated in virtually equal numbers; in economics, women represented 42.5% of all scholars, a substantial increase from 26% in 1991-92. In engineering, women participated at a rate of 21% in 1993-94, which is low but substantially higher than the 14% of 1991-92. (However, the rate of women awardees studying computer science actually declined, from 30% in 1991-92 to just 14% in 1993-94.)

These statistics seem to indicate that at present, the breadth of field of study possibilities is a key reason for the large number of women in the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship Program. However, in light of the interesting changes that are taking place in the Rotary Program in such fields as biology, physics, and engineering, it would make sense to continue to track field of study numbers over time to determine if these trends continue and what they might portend for the Rotary Program.

The high rates of female participation, and the increasing numbers of women coming into the Ambassadorial Program in "non-traditional" fields of study, are in marked contrast to what was achieved by the separate Freedom from Hunger Program, which was operated by the Rotary Foundation from 1986 to 1994. Over the eight-year life of that program, only 70 women participated, out of a total of 296 recipients, or in percentages, 76.35% male to 23.65% female (compared to 57% female participation in the Ambassadorial Program).

As noted earlier in the case study, the Freedom from Hunger Program was

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offered only in developing countries, was only available for advanced study, and was restricted to the relatively narrow field of agricultural studies.

Obviously, the restricted field of study was one reason for the 23.65% rate of female participation. However, just as important was the nature of the selection process for the Freedom From Hunger awards, which differed considerably from the more open Ambassadorial process. For the Freedom From Hunger awards, outreach was limited. Rotary clubs disseminated information primarily to colleges of agriculture, which used word-of-mouth to get the message out. Candidates were nominated by the clubs, and then sent on to the district level, which only reviewed them. Final selection was done in the United States by experts in the field, drawn mainly from universities and research center. The selection process, in other words, was quieter, narrower, more focused, and more field-sensitive than the Ambassadorial Program, and selection was ultimately in the hands of U.S. academics in a field traditionally dominated by men, both in the United States and abroad.

What is striking to an observer is how similar so many of the features of the Freedom from Hunger Program were to those of other international scholarship programs in developing countries—and how dissimilar to the Ambassadorial program. Thus, it should not be surprising that the rate of female participation in the Freedom from Hunger program was so much closer to those of other programs surveyed for this study than it was to the Ambassadorial Program.

The 23.65% rate of female participation achieved by the Freedom from Hunger Program adds to the weight of evidence that supports a key conclusion of this study; namely, that it is no longer a valid argument for programs seeking to justify low numbers of women participants to say that qualified women simply do not exist in sufficient numbers in certain countries and fields.

Consider that in the case of the Freedom from Hunger Program, with no special effort made to attract them, or even to inform them, about a program in a narrow scientific field, enough qualified women in the developing world managed to hear about and apply for the program in numbers large enough eventually to win almost a quarter of the available slots—under the circumstances, a considerable achievement.

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# FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

This section is an attempt to summarize the most salient findings of the study on women in international scholarship, and to consider some of the broader themes that emerged in the course of undertaking this work.

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION;** that is, the ability of women, or any other underrepresented group, to acquire information about opportunities in the field, is fundamental to any meaningful attempt to increase their participation.

The reality is that access to information about international scholarship opportunities is still severely limited in many countries, sometimes deliberately, often inadvertently. In some cases, such information is held almost exclusively by relative handfuls of influential individuals, or those well connected to influential individuals. Women traditionally have not been part of those networks.

For programs that wish to increase the number of women participants, there can be no substitute for taking the initiative in developing strategies that expand access to basic information about what they offer, and what the application process entails. Any such efforts must encompass broadbased promotional and publicity activities, including wording that subtly or directly encourages women and other previously underrepresented groups to enter the process. Efforts along these lines admittedly take commitments of staff time and money, but they work. The case studies in this report contain many examples of such good-faith efforts in information-dissemination and promotion “paying off” dramatically in attracting highly qualified women.

Examples from the case studies offer different approaches to enhanced information-dissemination, ranging from the use of country-wide mass media, to in-house research to identify whole new universes of institutions to receive promotional material, to a willingness to extend the information-dissemination period longer than ever before to assure that there is adequate time for the information to get around.

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There is no single approach that is appropriate in every case, nor is it possible to ignore cultural sensitivities when developing a strategy. The wording of promotional material is critical to efforts to attract women applicants, but what is workable in one setting may be inappropriate in another.

Thus, some programs have been very successful with wording that states bluntly that “women are encouraged to apply.” Other programs, such as CLASP, which has a particularly strong commitment to increasing women’s participation, have opted for the more inclusive “Rural and urban men and women are encouraged to apply.”

All the above addresses the issue of access on the micro level; that is, the focus is on how individual programs can strengthen their internal information-dissemination/promotional efforts in specific settings. This was, after all, the focus of the study.

However, it is clearly time for those interested seriously in attracting underrepresented groups, including women, to the field of international study to begin thinking on the macro level about how the field should be making use of the new communications tools (the Internet, the World Wide Web, etc.) to circumvent the limitations of current sources of information—books that are likely to be out-of-date by the time one gets access to them, the few collections of material in advising centers or libraries, and of course the programs themselves.

The nature of the field—so large and dispersed and with certain elements changing on a periodic basis—fits neatly with the advantages of the new technology.

It does not seem farfetched to think about the possibility of amassing a database of information on overseas study and training opportunities (sources already exist that might be helpful, such as the information IIE has published in *Funding for U.S. Study: A Guide for Foreign Nationals*) and using the new technology to make the data available to the broadest possible audience.

Some organizations in the field are thinking about this. IIE, for example, is exploring how best to disseminate “Funding for U.S. Study” information (updated under the same Ford Foundation grant that supported this research effort) electronically as well as in book form. Some international scholarship programs (such as the Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences) are making use of E-Mail throughout Mexico and Central America. With the support of the Frederich Ebert Foundation, ATLAS recently offered its first workshop on the use of the new technology, as part of its regular annual meeting of Fellows. Other such efforts are surely underway.

It will be important, however, that such high-tech information vehicles do not further handicap those already disadvantaged in the new technology. Only

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12 of Africa's 54 nations are currently linked to the Internet, for example, and, even where access exists, it may be confined to the same "old boy" network—now just an electronic one.

Private foundations with an interest in expanding opportunities for women might well know of others interested in women's issues who are working in this general area. If so, they might consider taking on a convening function, bringing experts from different but related fields together to consider how best to proceed. Further, given the reality of U.S. government agencies concerned with both women and international scholarship fighting for their very existence at this moment, if financial support was needed to further any of these efforts, only private foundations could at this stage shoulder that expense.

**MANDATES DO MATTER** when it comes to facilitating the participation of women, or any other underrepresented group. Such mandates may take a variety of forms and still be effective. However, formal mandates in and of themselves are not enough to change a program's profile.

First, what is a mandate? Mandates may be numerical, but they need not be. Mandates may be stated in writing in promotional material, but again, they need not be.

This study surveyed programs with every conceivable approach to mandates, from those with numerical quotas for women's participation (e.g., CLASP and ATLAS) to others with formal directives but no quotas (e.g., the Humphrey Program) to still others with no mandates at all (the Rotary Scholarships). Findings indicated no direct correlation between one approach and a program's success in increasing women's participation. Some programs with numerical quotas were very successful, but some were not. In some cases, the actual numbers of women in a program with no mandates (such as Rotary) were far higher than programs with numerical quotas in place.

This study defines a mandate as a commitment. Thus, mandates are important as a way of making a program's commitment to something—in this case, increasing the number of women—concrete and up-front. Mandates make a commitment public, presumably increasing pressure on a program to show demonstrable success; further, they provide field staff with a specific goal.

The difference between successful and unsuccessful mandates were that the former had the following three elements in place:

- the mandate represented a true commitment from the very top to meaningful change, and was so perceived by those in the field charged with implementing it.

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- the mandate had “teeth”; that is, it came with consequences for failure for those charged with implementing it (such as poor job evaluations for field staff or the possibility that a program would no longer receive financial support if it failed); and
  - results were monitored regularly.

**FAIRNESS PARTICULARLY IN THE SELECTION PROCESS IS ESSENTIAL TO INCREASING WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP FIELD. THE KEY TO FAIRNESS IS PROFESSIONALISM.**

Much of the decision-making in international scholarship falls to in-country selection bodies. The composition of such bodies differs from place to place and program to program, but generally they are permitted to operate with considerable autonomy.

While the initial screening of written applications is a routine procedure, the next stage of the selection process, which often involves in-person interviews, has wide potential for abuse.

In general, the case studies found selections were conducted fairly and professionally, but there were some vivid examples of unfair, unprofessional and even biased behavior on the part of selectors. Many of these involved overly intrusive personal questions aimed exclusively at women or questions designed to be unanswerable, along the lines of, “Will you miss your family if you receive the award and are overseas for years?” (either “yes” or “no” in this case can be viewed as the “wrong” answer).

Most programs had available excellent resource material on fair and equitable selection procedures. The problems arose when autonomous in-country selection bodies chose to ignore such material. For example, some programs have written guidelines specifically urging in-country selection bodies to include female panel members, but there is no follow up to ensure that they do so. It is thus not surprising that all-male selection bodies remain commonplace. Such all-male bodies may operate quite fairly (and many women testified to this during the interviews); nevertheless, in such cases at a minimum the **perception** of fairness is severely compromised.

It also appears that few programs give as much attention as they should to rigorous selection procedures when it comes to choosing their own selectors. There are wide variables among programs when it comes to who sits on such bodies; some selection bodies pay a great deal of attention to assuring the inclusion of discipline-specific experts; others are notably lax.

One selector who has served on a number of international scholarship re-

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view panels noted that programs that profess to take issues of fairness and equal access seriously nevertheless rarely take the time to learn whether potential selectors have in their own careers demonstrated a commitment to the same standards. (In other words, has a university faculty member appointed both male and female teaching assistants; has the head of a department promoted both men and women?) The unwillingness of programs to ask these types of tough questions at the outset is a key reason why abuses in selections, particularly at the interview stage, are so difficult to eliminate.

Unprofessional selection practices and procedures affect male as well as female applicants, but their impact can be more devastating for women, who still face many other formidable obstacles in pursuing international scholarships. Under these circumstances, professionalizing selections and minimizing the opportunities for abuses has the effect of "leveling the playing field," and enabling women to compete fairly.

Programs wishing to facilitate the participation of women should recognize that success will result more from fair and unbiased selections than from belated or half-hearted instances of preferential treatment designed to redress flaws in the process. For such programs, examples in the case studies of programs that have taken the lead in analyzing and reforming every aspect of the selection process offer constructive suggestions for replication.

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SCHOLARSHIPS HAVE AN IMPACT ON WOMEN'S DECISIONS TO APPLY AND/OR ACCEPT SUCH AWARDS.**

Important terms and conditions of scholarships include fields of study, age limits for applicants, required length of stay, allowances for accompanying dependents and/or spouses, health insurance, and provisions for emergency leave. Such terms and conditions influence all prospective candidates' decisions to apply for and accept such awards; the impact may well be greater for women.

Women currently participating in the programs studied indicated by a wide margin that, while they found various scholarship terms and conditions difficult and sometimes painful (notably the overwhelming lack of dependent support), they found ways to cope within the limitations of the grant.

To some extent, this should not be surprising. Like their male counterparts, women who have the academic and personal credentials to succeed in the world of international scholarship are among their society's elite in talent and ambition. Unlike most of their male counterparts, however, in many countries, these women have made a series of adjustments—to family and the cultural norms of society—that has enabled them to take the steps necessary to become viable candidates for international scholarship opportunities.

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In contrast, the scanty data that exists about women who do not apply for such opportunities suggests that it is among this group—potential women applicants—and at the earliest stage in the process—the decision to apply—that women are deterred by limitations in conditions and terms from even entering the application process. Moreover, there are some cases covered in the case studies that suggest that occasionally women offered awards turn them down when faced with the reality of having to abide by limitations of terms and conditions (or cannot get family members to go along with the terms and conditions, which amounts to the same thing).

In the course of our research, we were struck by a number of women grantees with dependents who indicated that lack of availability of dependent support was not a major determinant in their decision to apply or accept an award. Here again, one might postulate a “self-selection” theory; that women who enter the international scholarship arena in the first place have already made a series of difficult choices and sacrifices just to get to that point, prominent among them how they deal with family and child responsibilities. It is likely that the effects of family and child responsibilities as a deterrent to women’s participation would be more clearly measurable if accurate data could be collected from the women who opt not to apply to such programs, perhaps deterred by the absence of financial support for dependents. The AAUW non-respondent survey findings seem to indicate this is the case.

Many programs surveyed in this report would like to provide dependent support, but all cite as prohibitive the high costs, and one that used to provide such support is now cutting back this benefit. Even scholarship programs which continue to provide such support have to confront the program implications of these costs. Simply put, candidates with dependents need larger financial packages than those with no dependents. Given the limited pool of funds available, a panel that chooses an applicant with dependents may have to turn down two or perhaps three others with smaller financial requirements. Given the uniformly high qualifications of these candidates, this becomes a very tough call for selectors.

Almost every international scholarship program is dealing with problems related to severe financial constraints; it is unlikely these pressures will abate in the foreseeable future. It is therefore unrealistic to expect most programs to liberalize scholarship conditions and terms. However, programs can and should be willing to be as flexible and imaginative as possible in developing approaches to assist participants and potential participants. Case studies provide examples of programs taking the lead in interpreting and implementing rules on everything from initial time constraints on applications to emergency leave and health insurance coverage for participants to helping participants with young dependents find pragmatic solutions to day-to-day problems.

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**EVEN AS PROGRAMS SEEK TO FACILITATE THE GREATER PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, THEY ARE NOT WELL-EQUIPPED TO HELP THEIR ALUMNAE BUILD UPON THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS ONCE THEY RETURN HOME.**

Most female recipients of international scholarships have had to overcome enormous social, economic and/or political obstacles to reach their present levels of achievement. By virtue of their talent, determination and adaptability, they are among their countries' elites. Logically, such women should do well returning home with their new knowledge and credentials. In fact, programs know relatively little about how these women fare. Some of the programs studied have alumni networks and thus have some general information about their women alumni, but not gender-specific data. The CLASP program is exceptional among programs studied for its wealth of statistical data on alumni, but even in the case of CLASP, there is lack of the kind of anecdotal information that brings out the human stories behind the numbers.

Many women scholarship recipients interviewed for this study were aware that exposure to new customs and different ways of life had changed them in some ways; some expressed concern about how they would fit into their home countries; and if the changes would adversely affect them in their personal and professional lives back home. Others were equally concerned about how their new skills and attitudes could help change and improve the professional context to which they were now returning.

Such women would clearly benefit from ongoing support (programmatic if not financial) once they returned to their home countries and faced these personal and professional challenges. At the very least it seems advisable for international scholarship programs concerned with facilitating the greater participation of women to develop effective methods to keep in touch with and track over time the progress of their alumnae. How in fact did these women fare on their return home, immediately and over time?

Some programs have in place re-entry workshops for returning scholars as a way of minimizing potential problems. In the Spring of 1995, the AAUW added such a workshop, naturally focusing exclusively on the needs of women, to the agenda of their conference for departing scholars.

There is some debate among program staffs, experts in women's issues, and among female scholarship recipients themselves, on how important so-called "re-adjustment" or "re-entry" problems are for women, and how much emphasis should be placed on them. Some, including the AAUW, see helping women scholars minimize re-entry dislocations as of key importance. Others argue strongly that returning women scholars are important potential "change agents" for their societies because of how they have changed while

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abroad: thus, the accent should not be on helping them readjust, but on supporting them as they seek to make changes in their societies. There was strong support for both views among women we interviewed.

What is not debatable is how little support is actually available to such women after their return home, and how much such support is needed. Programs make major investments of time and money in scholarship recipients only while they remain in the programs. As stated earlier, just a few programs have developed the apparatus to keep in touch with returned scholars over time; even fewer have been able to offer alumni access to professional networks that would help their careers to flourish; none surveyed for this study are providing even modest continued financial support for professional activities in the scholar's home country.

Under the above circumstances, there is a strong argument to be made for programs concerned with returning scholars, particularly but not exclusively female, to think about allocating relatively small amounts of support for these individuals' continued professional development back home.

**"THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH QUALIFIED WOMEN" IS NO LONGER A GOOD ENOUGH EXCUSE** for programs that year after year fail to raise dismally low rates of women participants. Undoubtedly, women's paths to progress throughout the world have been at best incremental; at worst, almost invisible. Nevertheless, progress there has been, and this shows up almost everywhere in women increasing their numbers in higher education in general, and in fields of study formerly unthinkable for many. This study alone was able to identify examples of graduate level programs from Syria to Benin to the Andean Region to Mexico and Central America that have been exceptionally successful in attracting large numbers of highly qualified women.

Persistently low rates of women's participation are also difficult to justify because of the absurdly low numbers of individuals in question; in many developing countries, programs offer just one or two or three scholarship opportunities annually. Under such circumstances, dramatic gains (in percentage terms at least) can come about from the inclusion of just one or two women per country. It is possible in some settings that large pools of qualified women simply do not exist, particularly in certain fields of study; it strains credibility to believe that one or two women cannot be found who qualify for international scholarships in almost any field of study. By more aggressively seeking out such women, and sharing information about qualified women candidates, international scholarship programs can certainly improve their percentage of women participants and help women achieve their full potential in every country of the world.

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# APPENDIX

## SUMMARY OF SYMPOSIUM ON INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Monday, December 4, 1995

### CO-CHAIRS

**Richard M. Krasno**

*President, Institute of International Education*

**Alison Bernstein**

*Vice President, Education, Arts & Culture, Ford Foundation*

On December 4, 1995 IIE hosted an invitational symposium to discuss the findings in the preceding report and to develop an "action agenda" to translate these findings into realistic strategies and practical steps to increase women's participation in international scholarship programs. The day-long conference brought together forty-five influential and knowledgeable individuals from eleven countries on five continents. Conferees included policy-makers from government and private funding agencies, senior staff from a variety of international scholarship programs, NGO leaders well-versed in women's development issues, and international program alumnae. A full list of attendees follows this summary.

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The conference was designed to encourage open discussion and debate among the participants. Discussion during each of its five sessions was led by commentators with special expertise or interest in the topic. The final session, led by Alison Bernstein, was devoted to the action agenda. Using the ideas from preceding sessions as both foundation and springboard, conferees put forth a number of innovative strategies for future progress. The conference agenda, and a summary of the key points in each session follow.

## **CONFERENCE AGENDA**

### **Opening Session – Information Access**

What information is available? How is it disseminated? What technology is utilized and how (Internet, radio, press, grapevine)? Are women candidates actively recruited; if so, how? What recruitment issues affect women's willingness/ability to apply? Lead time for application deadlines? Open applications vs. nomination by employer/ committee?

### **Second Session – Selection Process**

Who/what determines the final candidate pool? How are screening panels selected/prepared/monitored? Who sets selection criteria? How do/should applicants prepare and present themselves (role-playing, coaching) for the interview? How are issues of cultural sensitivity handled in the interview process?

### **Third Session – Scholarship Nuts and Bolts**

How might scholarship conditions and terms discourage and/or limit women's participation: Specified fields of study? Age limits? Required length of stay? Allowances for accompanying dependents and/or spouse? Medical insurance? Do these factors affect applicant pool gender balance? Do they affect women's acceptance rates?

### **Fourth Session – Mandates/Targets**

How do programs define their target constituencies? What criteria and standards are used to define those constituencies? Can or should these criteria be broadened? What are the programs' goals? Have the setting of mandates and/or numerical targets been useful/necessary in increasing women's participation? Is simple "fairness" enough?

### **Fifth Session – Post-Program Activities**

How do program participants build upon their experiences after returning home from the scholarship period? Do women face unique issues of reintegration

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and how can the programs assist them? How can/should technology be utilized to extend the knowledge and facilitate continued communication. What can be done to ensure technological access, if necessary? How can the returned women grantees be utilized to increase future participation by other women?

## **Closing Session – Action Agenda for Donors and Implementing Agencies**

A general discussion focused on how the donor community and implementing agencies can develop specific strategies for increasing women's participation across the broad spectrum of international scholarship programs.

### **CONFERENCE SUMMARY**

#### **First Session: Information Access**

Chair: Mariam Chamberlain (National Council for Research on Women)

Commentators: Iris Burnett (United States Information Agency)  
Heather Monroe (ATLAS Program)

#### **Ms. Chamberlain:**

The Fourth U.N. Conference on Women (Beijing) illustrated women's recent advances in the world, and the dramatic growth of women's networks. UN data show growth in numbers of university women worldwide, indicating a large potential scholarship pool.

Networking is expanding on a global scale, but access to information about international scholarship programs remains very limited. New information technology is a plus, but is not always available to women candidates.

#### **Ms. Burnett:**

It is a difficult time to seek U.S. government support for educational exchange, a view that is short-sighted and adversely affects even high-profile existing programs such as the Fulbright. Programs will become even more dependent on the private sector and NGOs.

1970's policies are gone—it is now illegal to have too specific a mandate, so government programs can no longer strictly target women.

Bilateral commissions and overseas USIS posts must take initiative in enhancing women's participation; not all do so.

A collaborative effort is needed to develop mechanisms to evaluate needs of international women and find resources in support of women's programs.

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USIA did a survey of women being served, and found that a “media guide” was a high priority. Two were produced, one generic, and one specifically for women—and the women’s guide “sold out” almost immediately, suggesting that women are hungry for more information.

### **Ms. Monroe**

ATLAS dramatically increased women’s participation, from 7% in the 1960’s/ 1970’s to 20% in the 1980’s to 30-50% today. Reasons include:

- a change in administrative policy, directly encouraging women to apply
- a feeling of “ownership” in the Missions with the influx of more money
- a subversion of previous “old school” bureaucrats who had little interest in increasing women’s participation
- increased media advertising
- staff who personally meet with various in-country groups to get the word out
- a provision that allowed candidates to apply with three undergraduate years, rather than four-year bachelor’s degrees

### **Discussion**

Many programs are exploring the potential of the Internet for information access, emergency grantee services, program alumni networking, and as a funding strategy.

Discussants voiced caution because the Internet is not equally available globally.

Electronic communications lessen face-to-face contact and reduce the personal encouragement that may be more effective for women.

### **Second Session: Scholarship Nuts and Bolts**

Chair: Peggy Blumenthal (IIE)

Commentators: Felicia Utorodewo (University of Indonesia)  
Katharine Redmond (AMIDEAST)

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**Ms. Utorodewo:**

Practical factors that enhance women's participation are:

- non-exclusive fields of study
- possibilities for short-course programming (i.e. "sandwich" programs)
- spousal allowance to support accompanying family
- adequate allowance for grantee
- medical insurance
- early availability of applications to allow time to persuade family and employers
- publicity targeted toward husbands, employers, and children
- emphasis that opportunities for women will "benefit the country"
- centralized information dissemination to get beyond "elites," which excludes women outside the power structure
- raised applicant age limit to 40 years, to encourage women to apply after children are grown
- more available and widespread information about funding
- less emphasis on personal contacts

**Ms. Redmond**

There is great variation among countries in their societal/cultural support of women pursuing international education and AMIDEAST found different strategies were required for different countries. For example:

Syria, though culturally conservative, views women as vital workforce partners where government is sensitive to women's dual demands of education and family responsibilities.

The Tunisian pool is small, given cultural expectations that women remain at home. However, field of study plays an important role. In the Fulbright program preference is given to American Studies, which is one of the fields in which women are best represented.

West Bank women, fiercely independent, often pursue opportunities after age 40, and recruitment by other women is often a factor.

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## Discussion

- Programs should adopt less stringent age restrictions.
- Language used should be gender-sensitive, rather than gender-neutral.
- Flexible program length and sandwiching (which combines study abroad with time back home) is crucial.
- For unsuccessful applicants, rejection letters should recommend other scholarship programs to approach.
- Given limited/non-existent child care allowances within programs:
  - challenge the status quo that women must be primary care givers
  - child care should be more structured and less gender-specific
  - but fact remains that women are constrained by existing societal norms

## Third Session: Selection Process

Chair: Janet Greenberg (Girls, Inc.)

Commentators: Margaret Crahan (Hunter College)  
Asma Abdel Halim (Humphrey alumna from Sudan)

### Dr. Crahan

Often “senior scholars” not engaged in training younger scholars sit on panels year after year, a tendency that is detrimental to women scholars who may have recently entered the field. Their mentors may not be familiar with those who are not up to date on recent trends in scholarship.

- Selectors should be screened according to their work record, background, record on encouraging/mentoring women.
- Selectors need awareness of their professional responsibility to equal opportunity, and the program’s goals for diversity.
- Panels should be relevant, vital and energetic, including young scholars who are familiar with new thinking and new research tools in the field.
- There should be more women on selection committees.
- Selectors need handbooks with detailed selection criteria. (i.e. are

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academics stressed, or are interpersonal skills as important?) They should list specific evaluation tools and methods, mindful of development stage of home country.

- Program staff needs to: 1) be more assertive and proactive in recruiting new selectors; 2) increase interaction with selectors, and 3) ensure better correlation between program criteria and selectors.
- Include a one-page evaluation form for selectors to describe the process—what worked, what did not, what is weak and what needs strengthening.
- Ongoing collaboration between selectors and program staff is crucial.

**Ms. Abdel Halim:**

- There must be a more diverse, larger applicant pool.
- There should be more advertisement in a variety of media.
- Alumni scholarship programs for in-country recruitment need to be more effectively utilized, as do U.S. foundation and NGO networks in various regions.
- Given both physical and political barriers to USIS in some countries, better applications procedures are needed, perhaps electronic document delivery.
- Applicants should be able to deal with USIS directly, rather than through ministries, where an application can easily be “lost” or where contacts are vital.
- If there is discretionary money at a post, small grants should be made available to women with potential—particularly in developing countries—to increase their competitiveness and help them be really good candidates for international study in the future.

#### **Fourth Session: Mandates/Targets**

**Chair:** Charlotte Bunch (Center for Women's Global Leadership)

**Commentators:** Isabel Londono Polo (Foundation for Columbia's Future)  
Alan Adelman (IIE/Latin America)

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## **Ms. Bunch**

The commitment to increasing women's participation must be real; those in leadership positions must truly believe that women in these programs make a difference. Without this, any mandate or target gets tagged as affirmative action, or a quota program, which defeats the mission.

## **Ms. Polo**

The past disparity between men's and women's participation in COLFUTURO was stark. To counter this several steps were taken:

- A reaffirmation of the mission, i.e. revised language that specifically includes women—since “gender-less” words do not encourage and may appear to exclude women.
- An insistence that all applicants' submissions follow the rules. Previously, late applications and those in violation of age and other requirements were routinely considered. The first year rules were enforced, 85% of ineligible applications were from men. Enforcement of rules works favorably for women, who tend to adhere to requirements and take fewer risks (i.e. send in late applications) than men.
- The institution of a gender-blind first round review in the selection process, by removing names and other gender clues from applications.
- The institution of more specific instructions on what the selection committee should be looking for in potential grantees. Guidance on the applicant pool average scores, so women with higher scores would not easily be ignored.

## **Mr. Adelman**

In the Regional Program of Graduate Fellowships in the Social Sciences, dependent support (40% for a spouse and 20% per child up to two children) is available. This is a crucial factor in this program's success in attracting and retaining women. It is, however, atypical in the field in this area. The program also has no age restrictions, and accepts in a broader range of field of study.

Donors are very attentive to picking selection committee members committed to gender balance. Vigorous recruitment efforts make a big difference.

## **Discussion**

Programs must have a true commitment to women, either implicit, or explicit, but with “teeth,” i.e. accountability built in.

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The threat of losing funding would be an appropriate and effective enforcement technique for government programs to use with local selection committees.

Mandates must be implemented in a completely fair manner so that they are not perceived negatively, i.e. as inevitably lowering quality standards.

## Fifth Session: Post-Program Activities

Chair: Maria Eugenia Verdaguer (AAUW Educational Foundation)

Commentators: Rounaq Jahan (Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University)  
Iren Bartok (Humphrey Program alumna from Hungary)

### Ms. Verdaguer

AAUW launched a pilot effort that demonstrated the need for strong alumnae networks and support mechanisms to counter isolation (especially in male-dominated environments) and to help women balance their home and professional lives. The pilot pre-departure workshop included two key components: an overview of cultural adaptation issues and the use of roleplaying. Issues addressed were:

- dealing with symptoms of re-entry culture shock
- coping strategies
- static image of the home country
- technology as applied home
- others' expectations of the returning scholar
- professional integration
- peer or family member feelings, including jealousy
- stereotypes and marginalization

### Ms. Jahan

Focus should be less on "adjusting" to the status quo back home. Women who get to this level are already unique, so there is no reason that upon their return they should attempt to be what they never were.

Women need more professional, rather than interpersonal, support as well

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as professional networking to alleviate any sense of marginalization.

Funding agencies should be developing methods and resources for helping grantees when they get home—they should be supported in their professional lives just as they were supported in their academic lives.

**Ms. Bartok**

In the Humphrey Alumni Association in Hungary, efforts are being made to build good connections with staff at USIA, IIE, and the Fulbright Commission, Alumni/ae assistance is available to recruit and select future Hungarian Humphrey Fellows, to give advice and to help Americans coming to Hungary.

To enhance their credibility, donor agencies and sponsors need to support returning Fellows. Technological support for post-program activities is also desirable, but difficult since access to E-mail and the Internet is limited outside of academia in East-Central Europe and other parts of the world.

**Discussion**

Returning alumnae are inevitably changed, so attempts to fully re-integrate may be both futile and inappropriate. An AMIDEAST workshop helps returning women get more comfortable with a certain level of alienation.

The positive aspects of change should be the strategy women employ to resist pressures to conform. Program support in this area would be indispensable.

Donors must be sensitive to the needs of returning grantees. Funds should be provided to help alumnae at home, building upon the investment donors have already made in them. Such balanced, deliberate and targeted support would keep their momentum going.

**Closing Session: Action Agenda for Donors and Implementing Agencies**

Chair: Alison Bernstein (Ford Foundation)

**Ms. Bernstein**

We are “singing to the choir” here today, because those that are present are already aware of the problems. It is the agencies that did not attend today whom we must involve in this discussion.

A review of key factors during the discussion that will improve women’s participation in international scholarship programs includes:

- Get the information out! Develop stronger links between scholarship programs and local NGOs, women’s groups, etc.

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- Continue efforts to monitor and evaluate and share information about programs' efforts in this area, not just to reveal weaknesses, but to highlight successes.
  - Encourage networking/information sharing among programs, grantees, alumni through E-mail and the Internet (encourage electronic literacy and/or provide training for grantees), as well as more traditional methods such as professional associations, newsletters, radio.
  - Share applicant outreach among programs, so they help each other recruit.
  - Develop a standard multi-program form to encourage multiple applications.
  - Work to influence the broad policy environment, since many government bureaucracies appear to share problems vis-a-vis gender issues.
  - Institute sensitivity-training for gender issues for donor agencies and selection panels.
  - Make better use of in-country offices of other scholarship programs.
  - Diversify selection panels, making their composition reflect fairly the demographics of the country.
  - Collect and disseminate "criteria of fairness" to guide selectors.
  - Age restrictions should be loosened for applicants and younger people should sit on selection panels.
  - Use alumnae in the recruitment, selection and orientation process.
  - Regional coordination to support alumnae (publishing articles, etc.) should be pursued across funding agencies.
  - Provide more support for returning grantees.
  - Promote alumnae/i reunions, with possible cost-sharing among scholarship programs.
  - Influence more use of World Bank dollars for training programs (especially in light of declining U.S. dollars)
  - Disseminate project handbook, "Study Abroad: You Can Get There from Here – A Guide for Women" as widely as possible.

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## Conference Participants (listed alphabetically by Organization)

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