CORNELL UNIVERSITY

June 2011

Cornell University

HUMPHREY FELLOWS ALUMNI NEWS

"Poverty is not a fatality. When people are empowered they can mobilize their own resources and define their own ways for development. I am more committed to serve my people than when I came to this country (U.S.)."

Dr. Souleymane Nacro

Quote from 00-01. Read about his accomplishments since then p. 4

Message from New Coordinator



As you may well know, Terry Tucker left Cornell to become the new Dean at Alfred State University, a small college in New York State closer to his home, last July. I was lucky to be chosen to take over some of his responsibilities last August as coordinator of this great HHF program and also have the opportunity to work closely with Francine Jasper. You may have an interest in knowing a little about me. I was born in Scotland and spent my school days just outside London. I did my agricultural botany degree at Reading University before crossing the Atlantic to do my graduate work in Kansas and then Cornell. I then spent the next 30 years working in South and SE Asia with colleagues in the national programs of Thailand, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and India. I also have traveled and worked in Tibet, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Philippines. I returned to Cornell in 2002 and spent 8 years teaching and advising students. My specialty is agronomy. I worked to improve and sustain the productivity of food crops, so essential for human food security.

I can tell you that the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program is one of the best programs I have been involved in during my career, and one of the most important as the USA and the world grapple with the many major issues confronting us today, and in the future. Solutions will require all of humanity to work together as a synergistic unit. We all must do our part to promote cooperation rather than antagonism. The best way to achieve this is to learn from each other and find ways to use our mental capacities in a positive way. The Humphrey program does just that, and I am honored to have the opportunity to work with past, present and future Fellows in the years to come. Please do not hesitate to remain in contact with Francine and me, and let us know how we can continue to nurture this growing trust and capacity to make a real difference in the world for the rest of our living days.

Peter Hobbs, Associate Director of IP/ CALS, Cornell University

Prof. Changxiao Li, 08-09
Partnerships with U.S. institutions strengthens service to marginal communities in China



Changxiao Li, second from left, oversees MOU agreement with Ningxiao University President and Cornell University administrator and faculty

The quiet demeanor of Changxiao Li does not reveal the impact this Humphrey Fellow alumni makes on several projects he undertakes. During his Humphrey Fellowship year he published at least two scholarly articles, one with his faculty mentor Dr. Rebecca Schneider. He began a relationship in 2008 with Cornell University faculty in Natural Resources that has developed into projects to help residents in Ningxiao province along the Three Gorges River. Prof. James Lassoie, Ruth Sherman, Rebecca Schneider and others in the department have also received a Cornell University Lehman award to help with their work in China along with Li. In addition there is a project with USDA, and he teaches at Southwest University, Ningxia University and has been a guest lecturer at a university in Minnesota during spring 2011. See the workshop announcement on the next page. Li did his professional affiliation with Ecoagriculture Partners, an NGO in Washington, D.C.

Call for Abstracts

Blueprint for Sustainable, Ecologically-based Watershed Management in China: A Workshop on Lessons Learned Globally

Beijing Normal University July 31 – August 4, 2011

The aim of this workshop is to discuss and present lessons learned on sustainable, ecologically-based watershed management from around the world as they apply to China. The workshop will include 8 non-concurrent sessions on topics including the natural hydrologic regime, groundwater-surface water linkages, drainage networks, floodplain protection, soil organic matter and adaptive management. **Abstracts are being accepted for case studies on successful, ecologically-based watershed management around the world.**

For more information, visit our website http://watershedmanagement.dnr.cornell.edu/ or email watershed-wrkshp@cornell.edu

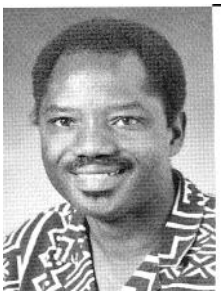


Improved watershed management can help mitigate some of the growing water quality and quantity problems worldwide. It is therefore increasingly important that watershed scientists and practitioners share and discuss their experiences on sustainable watershed management. This workshop will facilitate an exchange of information and lessons learned between scientists and practitioners from China and around the world. Each session in this workshop will have a topic overview by a keynote speaker, followed by presentations of 3 to 4 case studies, a targeted panel discussion and a full group discussion. The findings will be synthesized and disseminated through publication of journal articles, a multi-media module on www.ConservationBridge.org and development of usable guidelines for watershed managers in China.

Sponsored and organized by: Beijing Normal University, Southwest University, Ningxia Forestry Institute, Cornell University and Cornell University's Lehman Fund

If you are interested in sponsoring this workshop, please email watershed-wrkshp@cornell.edu for more information.

Souleymane Nacro, '00-01 Burkina Faso Recipient of Alumni Impact Award



Dr. Souleyman Nacro, '01 received a Humphrey Fellowship Alumni Impact Award in 2009 award for his work to help small rice farmers. His program used participatory research to uncover the ecology of rice stem borers in Western Burkina Faso. Using IPM and Farmers Field Schools farmers were able to increase their rice yields by 26% after their training ended in December 2010. A series of training workshops were held over a 9 year period.

Dr. Nacro is Director of Fasobiocarburant Ltd a private biodiesel company that was established in 2009. The company works with about 5000 small farmers in 2 provinces of Burkina Faso. Fasobiocarburant Ltd is a branch of Malibiocarburant S.A. (MBSA) a holding that is setting up sustainable decentralized biodiesel processors in West Africa.

Through this business thousands of farmers in Burkina Faso will be able to improve their living standards in an environmentally and economically sustainable way. Men and women, who live and farm under adverse climatic conditions, and far from commodity markets, obtain an additional income by planting Jatropha curcas and harvesting the nuts.

Besides the extra income generated from Jatropha curcas nut production, this initiative generates additional employment and spin-off activities, including:

Direct employment for 70 people and indirect employment for 5000 farmers, impacting the lives of more than 30,000 people;

A state-of-the-art biodiesel processing unit will be implemented by 2012 in Léo, Burkina Faso.





Rural Tourism as Alternative Income for Marginalized Communities
By Medea Davalasheridze

In February 2011 the State Alumni Association announced the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF) competition. AEIF offered alumni of United States government-funded exchange programs the opportunity to address global issues on a local, national, regional or international level.

Of the nearly 700 alumni project ideas, 38 projects received funding through the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF). Among the 38 projects is the joint project idea of three 2010-11 Cornell Humphrey Fellows: Medea Davlasheridze (Georgia), Milan Ivankovic (Serbia), Alla Sahakyan (Armenia), and Aleksandra Dukovska (Macedonia), a Humphrey Fellow from Arizona State University.

The title of the proposed project is Rural Tourism as Alternative Income for Marginalized Communities in Armenia, Georgia, Macedonia and Serbia.

The main goal of the project is to promote alternative income generating opportunities for marginalized communities by investigating the potentials for rural tourism development in the respective countries. The project will identify and promote rural tourism development by means of multimedia website, regional meetings, and exchange of information between relevant alumni.

The project is envisioned as having both a localized impact on the respective communities, while also promoting regional and cross-border cooperation. Rural economic poverty in the West Balkans and South Caucasus is a major problem and this program will help strengthen rural cultural preservation as well as ecological health.

The proposed project provides an innovative approach to increasing economic growth in marginalized communities through diversification of rural economies, improving the quality of life and enhancing income generation alternatives. This project will promote the integration of environmental protection principles in agricultural production and sustainable use of resources as an essential precondition for the diversification of the rural economy in socially, economically and environmentally sustainable ways.

The project is planned for one year and will serve as a pilot project for initiating other relevant future developments and follow-up activities in the rural tourism sector. The website will be used as a platform for networking and interactions at national, cross-border and regional levels.



INNOVATION

2010-11 Cornell Humphrey Fellows: Medea Davlasheridze (Georgia), Milan Ivankovic (Serbia), Alla Sahakyan (Armenia), and Aleksandra Dukovska

Updates from Fellows around the World



Photo: Denis Pesut, Croatia '07-08

Kesrat Sukasam, 1994-5 Thailand

Programme Field Operations Officer, UN Industrial Development Organization

Vienna, Austria
K.Sukasam@unido.org

Dr. Ohnmar Khaing, 2007-8
Myanmar

National Coordinator, Food Security Working Group and SRI Facilitator

Rajkumari Sunita Devi

Nominated for RAMSAR Award

The RAMSAR Conservation Wetlands Award is given to individuals who contribute to the to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. The next award will be in 2012. Mrs. Devi is a GIS expert working on watersheds. Cornell University Fellow 2007-8 from Manipur India





Diana Pelaez Restrepo, Colombia

Project Director, Agencia para el Desarrollo Regional de Antioquia-ADRA

www.adra.org.co. This agency is a NGO projects ranging from training and capacity building to logistics macroprojects development (cold chain in the state)

Until we meet again...is the bittersweet goodbye Fellows bid each other at the end of their year at Cornell. You never know when or where you may meet again.

2009-10 Fellows, Barbara Botos, Hungary and Mujtaba Syed, Pakistan met at the Climate Change Conference in Bangkok, April 2011. Both Botos and Syed work with climate change programs after their Fellowship year.



Fellows 03-04 Prakash Mathema, Nepal and YingpingYang meet in Beijing in 2011

Disaster Risk Management in South Asia: An Experience
Man B. Thapa, Nepal
(1998 – 1999)



In January 2010 Mr. Thapa moved to Afghanistan and continued his work with UNDP as a Project Manager, National Disaster Management Programme. Even in a challenging context like Afghanistan, he is continuing his activities to raise local capacities especially that of women and girls in the field of DRR, reviewing disaster management policies and framework, coordination, strengthening institutional mechanism, strengthening Kabul University to design and run degree programme on disaster risk management, etc.

Mr. Thapa stared his work in the field of disaster management from the beginning of 90s when he used to work with Winrock International (WI) Nepal as a Research Officer. As a Research Officer, he used to examine the impact of disasters such as flood, landslide and drought in food grain production in Nepal. The finding was that the disasters have a very negative impact in food grain production in Nepal. This empirical research work inspired him to devote more of his work in disaster field. He left WI in 1995 and joined UNDP Nepal in 1996 as a Community Disaster Management Consultant (CDMC). As a CDMC, he was responsible to design and implement community-led disaster management (CLDM) activities in communities that were divested by 1993 water induced disasters in Nepal. As a student of agriculture and social science, Mr. Thapa had very good understanding of the gender issues, role, community dynamics, the status of women and men in the selected communities. Based on these understanding, he assisted communities to form three different types of groups; only male, female only and female and male mixed. Group with male members only formed in communities where strong male dominance was observed, so does the female group, where female were dominated by male and mixed groups were formed in communities where female were equally empowered and respected by male members. Based on these capacity building activities, groups designed, implemented and monitored different disaster risk management/reduction (DRM/R) activities such as river trainings, landslide management/control, large scale natural resources management, community fish farming, community dairy farming and milk collection, etc. Because of the successful community mobilization, capacity building of communities, linking disaster with natural resources management and livelihoods, etc. activities in Nepal, Mr. Thapa was invited to present his experiences in the Gender – Disaster expert group meeting in Turkey in 2001.

During this project period, Mr. Thapa not only organized community based disaster management activities at the community level in Nepal, rather designed and organized several training programmes at national, district and community levels. Similarly, he realized that there is a need of formal/ informal network at the national and district levels to share experiences, challenges and opportunities in the field of disaster risk reduction (DRR) in Nepal. Along with few like minded individuals, he played a crucial role to establish "Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal" (DP Net) (www.dpnet.org.np) in 1996. He drafted the first charter of the Network and Strategy. Now, DP Net is national level network of government and non-government institutions playing a crucial role in the field of disaster risk management in Nepal. Similarly, in the same year, along with few development professionals in Nepal, he played significant role to form another network knows as "Nepal Participatory Action Network" (NEPAN) (www.nepan.org.np) to promote participatory process at all levels of development planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation and raise capacity of Nepali in the field of participatory processes.

Mr. Thapa's significant contribution in the field of MGDRR is noteworthy to mention here. During a Gender-Disaster Expert Group meeting in Geneva in February 2007 organized by UNISDR, all participating experts agreed that there is a great need to trained human resources in the field of MGDRR globally to reduce the high number of women and girls casualty due to any natural disasters. Mr. Thapa took lead to organize first such ToT on MGDRR in South Asia. With the technical and financial support from United Nations Development Progremme New York and Geneva, UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Geneva and Northumbria University, UK, the regional ToT was organized in Colombo,

In short, Mr. Thapa is one of those South Asians who had been significantly contributing in raising capacity at all levels in the field of disaster risk management, supporting governments to develop policies, establishing institutional mechanism, networking, coordination, etc. at all levels. Wherever, he has been based and working, Mr. Thapa is instrumental in significantly expanding DRR programmes from scratch to national level. His journey in the field of DRR will continue in the years to come.

2010-11 Humphrey Fellows



Front Row l-r: Yongsong Chen, China; Erika Diaz Pascacio, Mexico; Milan Ivankovic, Serbia; Ozlem Durmus, Turkey; Frank Alormene, Ghana; Medea Davlasheridze, Georgia; Ricardo Ramos, Panama; Back Row: William Cinea, Haiti; Esther Mukundane, Rwanda; Enver Figueroa, Peru; Abdallah Alqamshouai, Oman; Abdullah Ahmad, Bangladesh; Alla Sahakyan, Armenia

Being a Cornell University Humphrey Fellow requires a lot of energy to participate in coursework, research, group projects, workshops, communicate with many different cultures academically, professionally and socially . The class of 2010-11 demonstrated their ability to excel in the various arenas. This year our group included Fellows with diverse interests from agriculture marketing, innovation in production systems, interests in green building, developing a public garden for a country, emerging energy and biogas education, ecoagriculture and environmental management and policies.

Humphrey Fellows volunteered at Museum of the Earth, soup kitchens, helped with home building projects, helped to organize a class trip to Mexico, gave lectures to farmers and the community, met with students and teachers from primary to university to enrich the classroom learning experience and most importantly made a lot of friends and good contacts during their stay in the U.S. We continue our relationship with Alfred State College as an associate campus partner and Fellows helped to internationalize the campus and community through their lectures this past year on the Importance of Bilingual Education see YouTube Video http://youtu.be/mdtX4xAcDEc

and by rolling up their sleeves to help greater community with stream monitoring see YouTube Video http://youtu.be/kwPjSHA49Oc

They had affiliations with Cornell Plantations, IFPRI, Wellsville College, USDA, the World Bank, Ecoagriculture, CIIFAD's Making Markets Matter, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Hobart William Smith, ACDI VOCA and the Everglades Park in Florida. We congratulate this class for their professional development and advancing the good name of the Cornell University Humphrey Fellowship Program.















Professional connections
Affiliations
Friendships
Service to communities

CALS News

Prof. Christopher Barrett and Students Design and Employ Tools to use Index Based Insurance for Poor

Financial innovation to help people escape from poverty, by providing a safety net against loses, encourage more investment and help to protect ecosystems.

See CIIFAD March 16 video
http://ciifad.cornell.edu/seminars.cfm

Also refer to Dr. Jerry Skees CIIFAD Oct. 20 lecture and powerpoint "Helping the Poor Manage Natural Disaster Risks"

One Great Idea 100 years ago
Cornell Cooperative Extension

Dean Kathryn Boor , Professor of Food Science told the Cornell audience that the novel idea of Liberty Hyde Bailey in 1911 will continue to move humanity forward, ie. the importance of understanding science and using scientific methods and reasoning everyday will help to improve the quality of lives worldwide.

Liberty Hyde Bailey believed that an academic institution should reach every person in the land with "both information and inspiration."

Send us Your Stories, Updates and Contact Information

Contact: Francine Wilson Jasper, fj10@cornell.edu,
Cornell University International Programs/CALS
622 Bradfield, Ithaca, NY 14853

We're on Facebook too:

The Facebook name is 'Cornell Humphrey', or you can search by the email 'gradassist@cornell.edu', or click on this link: http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/profile.php?id=100000993696314