
The IDRC Alumni provides opportunities for former IDRC employees to maintain personal and professional links, and supports continuing dialogue on development issues.

Bulletin

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Photos from the 2014 AGM and Luncheon: In the attached file *Alumni Anciens Photo 2014.pdf*

Wish to support the IDRC Alumni Association? Contributions can be made annually or over a three-year period:

1 year	\$20
2 years	\$35
3 years	\$50

Cheques payable to the **IDRC Alumni Association**.

Return to: Donna Bickford, 1195 Priory Lane, Ottawa, ON, Canada. K1C 1Z8

Electronic transfer is also possible for Alumni across Canada and in other parts of the world who have Canadian accounts. For details contact Gerald Bourrier <bici@sympatico.ca>

Why not....?

The Alumni invite current staff who have 25 years or more of service with IDRC to the annual AGM and luncheon. At this year's event several of these...soon to be Alumni...asked if they could receive the *Bulletin*. With pleasure!

From the Chair

Rob Robertson

A BEAUTIFUL PLACE

One of the first files I handled at the Centre was a lawsuit brought by the landlord of our first Middle East regional office in Beirut. It was by all accounts a beautiful place to be, until the shooting started. Engulfed in the civil war the Centre headed to Cairo, handing a termination notice to the office watchman for delivery to the landlord. The watchman was shot and killed and the termination notice was apparently never delivered. Thus, a lawsuit.



Nearly forty years later, peace of a kind exists in Beirut but Lebanon is surrounded by States at war with others or with themselves. It was in this context that the Alumni Association recognized the Middle East region at our Annual Meeting this year. Alumni present were made aware of excellent Canadian charities doing relief work in the region to which they could contribute. As well, the Centre's Program Director of Social and Economic Policy, Dr. Sue Szabo, briefed us on the Centre's efforts, much of which

focuses on how to make a stable transition to open societies. This includes significant political participation of women, democratic control over the security forces, and work on the governance of the health and economic sectors. Sue stated the obvious...the work there is aimed at the middle and the long-term. It requires close collaboration with the Government of Canada and the participation of new and young people, not "the usual suspects."

Of all the developing regions the Middle East has always been the one most often asking IDRC "What about me?" For whatever reason...a lack of democratic space, language barriers, fewer research partners, and outright war...work there has been difficult to sustain. But it is needed even more now than when the Centre itself took flight from what everybody said was a beautiful place.

Alumni News

Nigel Fisher



Nigel Fisher was among the bright young men (and women) who helped Dr. David Hopper and the first generation of Programme Directors get IDRC underway. He was executive assistant to the senior VP Dr. Lucien Michaud, followed by Dr. Louis Berlinguet, from 1975 to 1977 when he left for Laos with the UN. Nigel remembers sporting a green velvet suit with an orange shirt and getting away with it! *The Bulletin* (No. 33 December 2012) featured Nigel's shoes, proof of the many miles walked for his work with UNICEF. In September Nigel's work for the United

Nations Organization was recognized with his investiture as an Officer of the Order of Canada.

The citation read out at the investiture tells the story:-

Nigel Fisher personifies a caring society. For over three decades, during some of the world's worst conflicts and disasters, he has worked to protect and improve the lives of civilians—children above all. He has led humanitarian operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; in Rwanda, following the genocide; and in Haiti, following the earthquake in 2010. Equally committed to the well-being of our nation's children, he has served as president and CEO of UNICEF Canada. He later led the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and continues to make important contributions to humanitarian efforts.

News from Elsewhere

Prof. Kari Polanyi Levitt

Recognizing an outstanding Canadian researcher for international development.



At the same investiture that recognized the achievements of IDRC Alumnus, Nigel Fisher, Prof. Kari Polanyi Levitt was invested as a Member of the Order of Canada. *The IDRC Alumni Bulletin* takes the opportunity to recognize and congratulate Prof. Polanyi Levitt for her contribution to the establishment of development research in Canada. In her nineties and legally blind, Professor Polanyi Levitt continues to research, write and 'agitate' for evidenced-based economic and social policy.

The citation read out at the investiture tells the story:-

Kari Polanyi Levitt helped establish international development as a field of academic study in Canada. A professor of economics at McGill University since the early 1960s, she was also a founding member of the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development. Her analysis of the expansion of multinational corporations in Canada sparked widespread debate among experts in the field of economics, and her extensive knowledge of the economic systems of Caribbean countries has made her a sought-after adviser to national governments and development organizations.

Alumni Research Awards

Annually since 2007 the Alumni have partnered with a Regional Office to support the Alumni Research Awards for young researchers. The Alumni's share of the funds comes from those who declare themselves supporters with an annual contribution of \$20.

All Alumni are deemed members and receive the *Bulletin* if we have an email address. We currently have 350 members on the mailing list: 87 are supporters. Consider becoming a supporter. (See the information at the bottom of the cover.)

The Alumni contribution is pooled with funds from the Regionally Administered Funds (RAF). The match is often more generous than 1 for 1 so that over the past eight years an Alumni contribution of \$22,000 has been matched with \$71,400 from RAF budgets. The Alumni have played a part in mobilizing \$89,000 to assist young researchers.

We acknowledge very special support, over several years, from an IDRC Alumna who again this year donated \$1,500 to IDRC earmarked for the Alumni Research Awards. There are angels.

2014 MENA

IDRC is negotiating to provide a grant to the Arab Council for Social Sciences for support to young researchers. The support is likely to be in the form of post-doctoral fellowships. For more on the ACSS visit: <http://www.theacss.org/>



Young researchers!!

ARO 2013

The Alumni Research Award for 2013 is a partnership with ARO on the project *Prevention and Protection of children from Sexual Violence and Abuse*. The \$3,500 contributed by the Alumni to the budget of \$15,000 supports the participation of younger researchers.

Thanks to Dr Navsharan Sing and Dr Ambika Sharma for sharing highlights from the first report...



The project has assembled the team and sensitized all involved to the issue of sexual violence and familiarized them with new legislation. In the three target districts training with Police, the District Child Protection unit, the Social Defense Officer and activists working with children on education, protection, health and child labour has raised awareness of the sexual violence faced by children and the work required to prevent such incidents.

Significant progress has empowered local activists, armed with knowledge, tools and video resources, to initiate the prevention of sexual violence work within the communities, raising awareness around this important but difficult issue within communities and schools.

Work in the excluded spaces inhabited by marginalized sections of the communities and the engagement with schools has made a large number of children exposed to the issue of sexual abuse more likely to use this knowledge to prevent themselves and other children from becoming victims.

An important finding to date is the lack of awareness of new legislation and the need for sensitization

on gendered inequalities and structures within Indian society. One experienced practitioner linked the increase in sexual violence against children to the skewed gender ratio leading to unmarried men taking out their sexual frustration on children and found that child rights activists are often unable to effectively intervene in incidents of sexual abuse because of the silence and stigmatization faced by survivors. In the case of rape of a three year old by her grandfather, the father of the child made it clear that he would rather kill the girl child than take any legal action against his father.

Another objective of the project is to raise awareness of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) and support survivors to overcome social and legal barriers to securing justice. Through contact with 59 survivors of sexual violence and their families, 17 have agreed to accept legal aid and advocates have filed notice of appointment in 9 court cases to date.

Research shows that many police officers have not received in depth training on the provisions of POCSO; some had never heard of the legislation. A leaflet on POCSO has been widely distributed to those working on sexual violence. Assistance has been given to survivors who are experiencing problems such as threats from the accused family or demands for travel money from the police. In all cases the survivors who were unaware of the status of their case are now fully informed and the advocates prepare for the court proceedings. Investigation has revealed that police expect the victims to arrange and pay for them to travel to other states / cities to arrest the accused. The activists continue to provide moral and emotional support to the survivors and accompany them when they attend a court.

The project will provide training to 100 activists in Anand, Sabarkantha and Ahmedabad in three sets of two-day training; by the end of December, 200 activists from more than 20 organisations will be trained.

Researchers have secured a letter from the ministry responsible for Women and Children, permitting the project to provide legal advice, assistance and representation to survivors of sexual violence. This has proven enormously useful in securing assistance from the Police: in some cases, referrals are now coming directly from the Police.

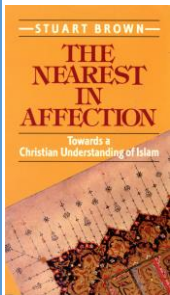
The lawyers within the team are doing this work *pro bono*, committed to doing this work as the team feels that they have the expertise required to ensure the best possible cases are brought before the court and that the survivors have an opportunity to feel comfortable enough to give their evidence.

Alumni in Print

Stuart Brown

The Nearest in Affection: Towards a Christian Understanding of Islam

Stuart wrote this book when with the World Council of Churches in Geneva. It was first published in 1995.



“The Nearest in Affection to those who believe,” according to the Quran, “are the ones who say, ‘We are Christians.’” Yet in many parts of the world where Christians and Muslims live side by side, the reality of their relationship falls far short of that ideal.

Suspicious and fears arise from ignorance of each other's history, beliefs, and practices, often leading to tensions and open conflict.

This short introduction to Islam for Christians offers a wide-ranging overview of what Muslims believe and where their beliefs and practices reveal points of contact or divergence with Christianity. It thus provides both an agenda and a solid foundation for strengthened and respectful encounters between members

of the world's two largest faith groups”

More at:

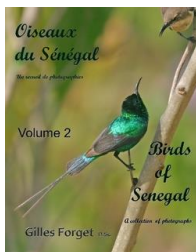
<http://books.google.ca/books?id=pcuIAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=islam>



Gilles Forget

The Birds of Senegal / Les Oiseaux du Sénégal (Volumes 1 and 2)

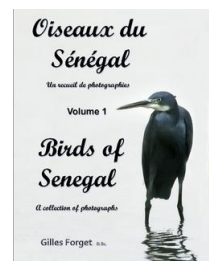
A collection of photographs / Un recueil de photographes



Follow Gilles Forget through the parks and reserves of Senegal in his first of two collections of bird photographs. Over 99 color photographs of species taken in Djoudj, Niokolo-Koba, the Saloum Delta and Lower Casamance are presented and commented in English and French.

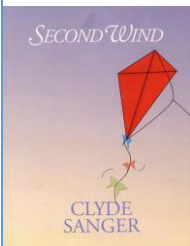
The books can be purchased through online vendors such as Amazon and through the publisher ([gilles forget - Lulu.com](http://gillesforget-lulu.com)), the latter being the preferred option because the price was originally reduced by

30% from the suggested retail.



Clyde Sanger

Second Wind



This is Clyde's (Associate Director of Communications at IDRC 1971-77) second collection of poems. The first, *Defrosting* was featured in the *Bulletin* November 2007. Clyde writes: “Like its predecessor, *Defrosting*, it is unashamedly a further act of self-indulgence, a self-published collection of poems and verse chosen by myself.



After more than 30 years of daily journalism and a decade of writing biographies and books on such topics as international development and the UN Law of the Sea,

I have found increased delight in poetry, reading and trying to write it.”

Among the people celebrated in the collection are IDRC Alumni Maureen O’Neil on the occasion of her leaving IDRC in 2008, and Gerry Helleiner when a board member of the North South Institute in 1992*.

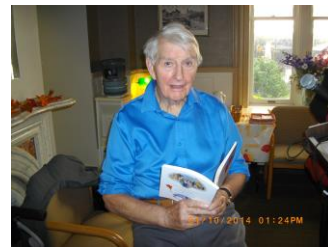
To read these and other poems the collection can be bought from Clyde for \$15.

*NSI was wound up in September 2014 when core support from Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) was terminated.

Gallery



Roula El-Rifai / Maureen O’Neil bewitched



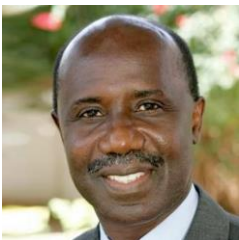
Clyde Sager, Poet

A selection of photos from the 2014 AGM and Luncheon are found at the end of the bulletin.

Where Are They Now?

Akasi Aidoo

Akasi writes from Dakar:-



My years at IDRC are among the best years of my life. I was with IDRC from 1988 to 1993, and then joined the Ford Foundation, where I spent close to 15 years.

I currently head TrustAfrica, an initiative of the Ford Foundation from 2001 to 2006, now spun off as an independent grantmaking foundation.

In October this year, I will be joining Humanity United (www.humanityunited.org) as a Senior Fellow for several years -- Still hoping to retire at 70 (smile), and have 6 years to go. Humanity United is a grant making foundation that supports work aimed at building peace and advancing human rights. Trust Africa is in a very good place right now, with great staff and Board, effective programming and solid financial base ~~ so it's the best time to hand over to a more dynamic and younger person who can take it to the next level.

So, in a nutshell that's my story since I left Ford.

Philip English

Philip writes from Dakar:-

Greetings. I have been posted here for the last three years as lead economist for the World Bank, working on five countries but especially Senegal.

With mandatory retirement fast approaching in November 2015, my wife and I spent a few days this past summer scoping out neighborhoods in Ottawa for a possible new home. While the thought of Ottawa winters has us wondering if we have gone soft after 20 years in Washington, DC and Dakar, I look forward to reconnecting with old friends from IDRC.



Warm regards.

Steven Tyler

Stephen writes from BC:-

I enjoy reading the alumni newsletter...



I continue to be busy consulting from my home in Victoria, mostly on local climate adaptation and resilience planning. I have managed to stay involved with some long-running projects in Vietnam, where I act much like an old-fashioned PO, focusing on proposal development, training, startup, coaching, and reporting in close collaboration with local colleagues. I also work in BC and Canada on various projects, sometimes in association with IISD. I occasionally also serve on project review panels for big IDRC / SSHRC programs, and this past year was selected as a panel member for the external review of IDRC's Climate Change and Water program. I occasionally meet former IDRC colleagues in Victoria or passing through, and admire their relaxed and retired demeanour. I hope to emulate David Brooks, who complained last time we corresponded that his consulting work was beginning to dry up...

See Also: <http://www.iisd.org/biography/stephen-tyler> and <http://pressitt.com/smnr/asian-cities-to-roll-out-first-climate-change-resilience-indicators-in-2012/11473/>

Letters to the Editor

Thanks for this latest Bulletin...nice to recognize some names & faces. Especially liked the photo of the group travelling to China...you can let Ray Audet know that I'm having the same receding hairline problem Lol.

Ed Zdyb

IN MEMORIAM

Alioune Camara
1951-2012

Alioune was with IDRC from November 1, 1987 as Regional Program Officer to June 30, 2012 when he retired as Senior Program Specialist with IID.



I was prompted to write in to the Alumni Bulletin when I saw the obituary to Alioune Badara Camara in *Le Soleil*. He passed away on August 24, only one year after retiring from IDRC. Alioune was an ICT program officer for 20 years in the Dakar office. I knew him a little from my time in IDRC and was pleased to meet him again when I took part in a workshop at IDRC on the think tank initiative back in 2011. The obituary gives a glowing testimony to Alioune who was clearly respected as a leader in his field. It can be read at the following link: <http://www.osiris.sn/Alioune-Badara-Camara-1951-2014-Un.html>

Philip English

Another homage is found at: http://www.seneweb.com/news/Necrologie/deces-d-rsquo-alioune-badara-camara-un-doyen-des-tic-s-rsquo-en-est-alle_n_133812.html

It was with profound sadness that I learned of Alioune Camara's passing. Though I had known Alioune for a number of years prior to being posted to Senegal in 1992, it was during those years in Dakar that I truly learned to appreciate him as a friend, colleague and valued member of our WARO senior management team. He was a gentle and kind man. He was highly respected by the scientific community in the region, and by all staff in WARO. In my capacity of Regional Director, I often sought out his advice and guidance on matters relating to staff and government relations. Invariably, his thoughtful responses were truly appreciated.

After my departure from Dakar and from IDRC, I remained in contact with Alioune and frequently communicated with him on matters relating to my development consulting work. As always, his advice was well received and valued.

He will be missed.

Gerry Bourrier

Clara Torres
1926-2014

Clara died peacefully on October 18 in Ottawa. She is survived by daughter Clarita Robinson, sons Marco, Carlos, Alejandro; 9 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.



<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/ottawacitizen/obituary.aspx?pid=172925520>

Clara was with IDRC from 1976 to 1992.

Your editor remembers Clara as his 'She who must be obeyed' for anything to do with the documentation and budgets when he joined the Social Science

Division in 1979. There were moments when this irked; but a decade later when I was Deputy Director of the division knowing that Clara had her eye on the fine print for the *comme il faut* of project administration was welcome insurance.

Honorary Alumnus

The Bulletin's IN MEMORIAM is dedicated to Alumni, whom we wish to remember and celebrate for time shared as colleagues in IDRC. Earlier in this number the *Bulletin* took a moment to share the news and the pleasure of reporting on Prof Kari Polanyi Levitt's investiture in the Order of Canada for the contributions she has made to international development scholarship in Canada.

Prof. Norman Girvan is an exemplar of the outstanding intellectuals and practitioners IDRC is privileged to have worked with and for. Alumni are encouraged to offer an IN MEMORIAM when they learn of outstanding IDRC partners they wish remember and celebrate.

Norman Girvan
1941-2014

Sadly another outstanding development scholar and activist with very strong connections with IDRC passed away in April 2014 after a tragic accident.



Professor Norman Girvan's connection with IDRC goes back to its first days when he was the lead researcher for the *Caribbean Technology Policy Study* for the Science and Technology Policy Unit lead by Dr Geoff Oldham. From 1979 to 2004 your Editor enjoyed his collegiality and comradeship when Norman lead the design and delivery of the *Science and Technology Policy Workshops* (3-P-79-0146), four month-long postgraduate courses held in Tanzania, Senegal, Liberia and Jamaica. Over the years Norman executed contracts for several IDRC units.

In retirement, based in Trinidad and Tobago, Norman mastered the new technology using the internet to promote, encourage and network researchers and activists across the Caribbean.

The Canadian Association for Development Studies (CASID) has posted a tribute to Prof Girvan at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TdGT458B7k>

Photos from the 2014 AGM and Luncheon

In the attached file *Alumni Anciens Photo 2014. pdf*



*Don't be shy? Join IDRC Alumni on Facebook:
at "IDRC Alumni" group and / or "IDRC" page.*



<https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/556623107712593/>
