

**APPLICATION OF CROSS CULTURAL MANAGEMENT  
ORIENTATION AT THE FORD FOUNDATION  
INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM**

**BY**

**PHELISIA AKOTH WAGUDE**

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## **DECLARATION**

This Research Project is my original work and has not been submitted for examination to any other University.

Signature: ..... Date:.....

**PHELISIA AKOTH WAGUDE**

**D61/72973/2009**

This Project Report has been presented for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signed ..... Date:.....

**ELIUD MUDUDA**

**LECTURER,**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

## **DEDICATION**

This Research Project is dedicated to my husband Laban Oyuke and my children Jim, Beryl, Marvin and Joy for their patience and unlimited support throughout this process.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study sought to establish the application of cross cultural management orientation at Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP). Specifically, the study sought to address two main issues: To establish how the cross cultural management orientation is applied at the Ford Foundation IFP and the challenges faced in the process of its application.

A qualitative case study approach was adopted. Theories of cross cultural management are based on findings of: Geert Hofstede national culture, Gesteland's, Cross cultural dimensions patterns for cross - cultural business behavior and Annette Sinclair's key areas that managers must pay attention to when leading multi-cultural teams. In-depth interviews consisted of seven Senior Ford Foundation IFP staff and analysis was by use of content analysis technique.

The study established that Ford Foundation IFP managers apply cross cultural management orientation throughout the implementation processes. Research question one, answers how Ford Foundation IFP applies cross cultural management orientation through: Operations in a cross-cultural environment, networking and relationships, Sensitivity to cross-cultural issues, Approaches of cross-cultural management at country levels, Performance management across cultures and Communication across cultures. The key challenges are discussed in four sub-sections: Communication, time, differences in opinion and deciding on work approach, to address question two.

The study recommends that Ford Foundation should be more explicit in documenting the strategies for Cross cultural management orientation, do further research for the remaining Global Partners and whole life cycle stages of the program.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AAI</b>	African American Institute
<b>AEC</b>	Australian Education Consultants
<b>AHEAD</b>	Association for Higher education Advancement & development
<b>ESRF</b>	Economic and Social research foundation
<b>FAWE</b>	Forum for African Women Educationalists
<b>FE</b>	Fellow Elect
<b>IIE</b>	Institute of International Education
<b>IELTS</b>	International English Language Testing Systems
<b>IFF</b>	International Fellowships Fund
<b>IFP</b>	International Fellowship Foundation
<b>IP</b>	International Partner
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>MNC</b>	Multinational Co-operations
<b>NUFFIC</b>	Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher education.
<b>PAT</b>	Pre Academic Training
<b>PP</b>	Placement Partner
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>USA</b>	United States of America

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Globalization is changing behavior, team composition and team dynamics in the workplace. Organizations that remain “domestic-only” are already falling behind their multinational competitor counterparts (Cullen, 2002). According to Albrow (2006), globalization entails worldwide diffusion of practices, values and technologies. Operating beyond national borders, multi-national organizations are at the center of globalization, actively contributing to global diffusion of practices, innovations, knowledge and organizational culture (Singh, 2005). The world's economy also continues to globalize at a rapid rate as more and more organizations are breaking down national geographical boundaries, opening new markets and hiring employees of varying cultural backgrounds in the process (Gibby *at al.*, 2006).

According to Shokef and Erez (2006), organizations are dependent on the effective interaction with their environment for existence, and survival in effect organizational cultures shape management practices in different organizations. Trice and Beyer (2003) argued that organizational members cope with uncertainties and ambiguities individually and collectively, based on attitudes and strategies that have been influenced by their cultures.

This research study seeks to establish how the organizations, with focus on the Ford Foundation IFP, applies cross cultural management orientation in the implementation process of their programs. The Research established questions that relate to the approaches to cross cultural management orientation, and the operations in a cross-cultural

environment, networking and relationships, and the sensitivity to cross-cultural issues. The study also explored the approaches of cross-cultural management at country levels, performance management across cultures and the communication across cultures. The study also looked into the challenges, which are also discussed in the report.

### **1.1.2 Cross Cultural Management**

It is acknowledged that culture is a social phenomenon. Hofstede (1980) defined culture as the interactive aggregate of common characteristics that influence a human group's response to its environment. Lately Erez and Drori, (2009) have defined culture, as the collective programming of the mind, distinguishing one group or category of people from another.

Cross-cultural management is a method of achieving established organizational goals by effective planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling of the organizational owned resources in a cross-cultural environment (Pu jing, 2012). The definition emphasized in this study is also supported by Andler, (2002) who states that cross-cultural management can also be best understood by how people communicate and manage relationships with other people inside (co-workers) and outside (clients) their organizations in different cultural settings.

Management styles differ in different environments, hence in cross-cultural management. Before planning, the managers should clearly understand the differences and similarities of their own culture and the new environment's culture so that they can overcome the conflicts generated from cultural differences (Halevy and Sagiv, 2008). Mismanaging cultural differences can render otherwise successful managers and organizations

ineffective and frustrated when working across cultures. However, when successfully managed, the differences in the culture can lead to innovative business practices, faster and better learning within the organization, and sustainable sources of competitive advantage (Hoecklin, 1996).

Cross culture Management is something that continues to concern many managers. In a recent management survey, 31% of managers have confessed to being responsible for cross-cultural teams (Annette Sinclair, *et al*, 2008). One manager reported managing ‘22 different nationalities in a team of 60 people’ (Garrow and Stirling, 2007). It is on these findings that this study examines the application of cross culture management at Ford Foundations (IFP).

### **1.1.3 The Non-Governmental Organization sector**

The concept of Non Government Organisation (NGO) came into use in 1945 following the establishment of the United Nations Organizations which recognized the need to give a consultative role to organizations which were classified as neither government nor member states (Willett, 2002). This study prefers the definition of NGOs as a self-governing private not-for-profit organization geared towards improving the quality of life of disadvantaged people (Lewis, D, 2007).

NGOs have continued to come under increasing pressure to ‘professionalize’ and, in particular, to address a widespread neglect of management (Korten, 1990; Smillie, 1995). This has resulted in a growing interest in management approaches, strategies and techniques prevalent in the business world (such as ‘management by objectives’, ‘strategic

planning’, ‘stakeholder-analysis’, and ‘mission-based management’), and a willingness to import them, often uncritically, to the world of NGOs (Smillie, 1995). It is thus imperative that NGOs build their capacities in an international development context to successfully look at issues through a cross-cultural lens (Jackson.T, 2003).

Despite the fact that the main business of development NGOs involves working across cultures, the growing literature on NGO management rarely mentions ‘culture’. Instead where culture, or a cross-cultural perspective is discussed, it is seen as an additional factor that should be considered, rather than an integral part of our understanding of NGO capacity building (Lewis, 2007). The NGOs ‘comparative advantage’ is in their local responsiveness, social focus, and cultural sensitivity to peoples’ needs and the appropriateness of interventions (Cernea, 1988). It is therefore right to argue that cross-cultural management theory and approaches are central to NGO management.

Ford Foundation IFP is a Non Governmental Organization that continues to dutifully transform the lives of marginalized communities through scholarships for higher education.

#### **1.1.4 Overview of Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program**

The Ford Foundation IFP is a program of the New York City-based International Fellowships Fund, a Non-Governmental Organization, and not-for-profit organization. The mission of Ford Foundation IFP is to expand educational opportunity and foster social justice in developing countries.

The Ford Foundation IFP, International Partners support a unique and diverse global community of future leaders who share a commitment to academic excellence and community service. The Ford Foundation IFP seeks to provide opportunities for advanced study to exceptional individuals who will use their education to become leaders in their respective fields, to further development in their own countries, and to create greater economic and social justice worldwide. To broaden the talent pools from which future leaders are drawn, Ford Foundation IFP targets candidates from social groups and communities that lack systematic access to higher education. These groups vary among countries, and may include women, racial, ethnic and religious minorities, individuals living in remote or rural areas, and persons with physical disabilities.

The International Fellowships Program (IFP) was launched in November 2000 by the Ford Foundation with the largest single grant in the Foundation's history. Over 4,300 Fellows have been selected from countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Russia, where the Ford Foundation IFP maintains active overseas programs. IFP provides support for up to three years of formal post-baccalaureate study. Additional short-term pre-academic training may also be provided to aid placement and enhance academic readiness. Fellows currently come from Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palestine, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda and Vietnam.

Ford Foundation IFP beneficiary Fellows represent the breadth and diversity of the International Fellowships Program and have surmounted many challenges while earning undergraduate or Master's degrees. The Ford Foundation IFP Secretariat, based in New



York City, is responsible for IFP's overall policy and planning. The Secretariat works closely with its International Partners on recruitment and selection, pre-academic and placement issues, and facilitation of Fellows' progress during their fellowship period, whether they choose to study within or outside their home countries. Each International Partner (IP) works with other IP organizations around the world, the IFP Secretariat, and Ford Foundation (IFP) offices worldwide that play a key role in the Program's development. The Program also works closely with the Institute of International Education through several of its country offices and its New York headquarters, which processes payments and provides university placement services for US and Canada bound IFP Fellows. The program also works closely with the British Council and the Royal Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC), which provides placement services and specialized monitoring for UK and continental Europe-bound Fellows, respectively. This study focuses on the application of cross-culture management orientation at the Ford Foundation IFP in Africa.

## **1.2 Research Problem Statement**

The task of developing, implementing, and managing teams across culture is a key challenge, (Deresky, 2003; Briscoe and Schuler, 2004; Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt, 2004; Moran et al., 2007) have documented the need to learn how to manage cross cultures by practitioners and decision makers. Studies have also shown several theorists argue that NGOs require a distinctive management style. Studies have also shown several theorists argue that NGOs require a distinctive management style. One view is that NGO contexts are critical in determining the type of management they need, and that the

principles of development management should therefore strongly influence NGO management (Fowler, 1989; Brown and Covey, 1989). To these schools of thought can be added a cultural perspective which questions the applicability of western management models, discusses the need for 'indigenous' approaches, and argues that the cultural environment in which the NGO operates must determine the nature of NGO management (Marsden, 1994; Zadek and Szabo, 1994).

This study therefore advances the argument for the need for NGOs to apply cross-cultural management orientation in their implementation processes just like Multinational Co operations (MNCs) are doing.

Ford Foundation IFP, an NGO, is a dynamic institution, rich with cross culture stakeholders and operating in nine countries in Africa, amongst other continents. Its innovative structures, international status and presence in Africa, makes it an interesting institution for this study. The cross cultural management aspects at Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP) include gender, race and ethnicity, religion, region of origin, economic and educational background, parents' education and employment, language and physical disability.

There are several studies relating to cross culture management that have attempted to explain the benefits, approaches and challenges of cross cultural management, for example, Ochuka (2007) undertook a research on cross cultural training for Kenyan expatriate managers and established that job satisfaction played an important role in the expatriate adjustment in an international assignment. Also of importance was the role of organization socialization, Muthiani (2008) worked on cross cultural perspective of

mergers and acquisitions in the case of GlaxoSmithKline Kenya and found out that the level of diffusion of global work values by members of an organization is positively related to the level of institutionalization of these values within and between organizations by means of regulative and normative institutional processes.

Although a number of studies have been done on Cross cultural management by different theorists, a few have been done with respect to how organizations apply cross cultural management orientation, further none has been conducted in a specific NGO, in this case Ford Foundation IFP. A gap therefore exists, thus the need for a study on the application of cross culture management in NGOs. This study thus seeks to answer the questions: a) How does Ford Foundation International Fellowships program apply Cross Cultural Management? b) What are the challenges that Ford Foundation IFP face in applying cross cultural management?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The overall objective of the study was to assess the application of a cross cultural management orientation of the Ford Foundation IFP in Africa. The study was guided by two specific objectives:

- i. To determine how Ford Foundation IFP applies cross-cultural management orientation.
- ii. Establish the challenges that Ford Foundation IFP faces in applying cross culture management orientation.

#### **1.4 Value of the study**

The finding of this study will be very useful to Ford Foundation IFP and various other stakeholders and similar organizations. The Ford Foundation IFP Program will have its approach documented, which can then be used to evaluate its achievements as well as inform future cross culture management plans in the organization.

Other NGOs and MNCs will gain insight and understand how best to apply cross-cultural management in their respective international organizations so that they can be successful, with reference to the findings of this study. The understanding of cross-cultural management will contribute to better communication skills leading to successful negotiations, especially where organizations depend on the results to be able to solve issues concerning their global partners.

More specifically, the study will be important to those interested in venturing into international business since they will be able to understand what to do right to succeed and what if done wrong will bring the organization down. The scholars will also gain knowledge on the application of cross-cultural management and acquire an insight into the factors affecting cross cultural management. They will also be able to use the findings of this study to prove various theories and to use the study as a basis for further research on other variables not included in this study.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter examines various literature and theory about cross-cultural management. More specifically it reviews the theoretical foundations of cross-cultural management, the approaches to cross-cultural management and the challenges facing implementation of cross cultural management orientation. Additionally, the study reviews past studies, theses, journal articles and books.

### **2.2 Theoretical Foundations of Cross-cultural Management Orientation**

This study reviews the theoretical foundations of cross-cultural management orientation by Geert Hofstede (1980a) and Gesteland (1999), but focuses on the study by Annette Sinclair et al., (2008) in their book “Managing Teams Across Cultures”, on the key areas that managers need to pay attention to when leading multi-cultural teams. The study explores real ways that managers are using to handle those challenges today.

Further, it reviews six key approaches managers can apply in multi-cultural team by Annette Sinclair et al., (2008) on how managers approach complexities in a multi-cultural teams. These approaches relate to management of Ford Foundation IFP program because Ford Foundation IFP managers also operate in a complex environment, with cross-cultural teams.

#### **2.2.1 Geert Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions**

Geert Hofstede's theory of cultural dimensions describes the effects of a society's culture on the values of its members and how these values relate to behavior, using a structure

derived from factor analysis. His theory has been widely used in several fields as a model for research, particularly in cross-cultural psychology, international management, and cross-cultural communication, hence its relevance in this study. Hofstede identifies three dimensions that societies choose to cope with the inherent uncertainty of living: masculinity versus femininity, amount of uncertainty avoidance and power distance.

Uncertainty Avoidance is defined as the extent to which members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty and alleviate the unpredictability of future events by reliance on social norms, rituals and bureaucratic practices (Hofstede, 1980).

Power Distance is defined as the degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be unequally shared. Low power distance implies greater equality and empowerment. High power distance is related to issues of hierarchy (Hofstede, 1980).

Masculine versus Feminine Cultures has cultural differences related to values, whereby in highly masculine cultures the dominant values relate to assertiveness and material acquisition and their strengths lie in efficiency, whilst in highly feminine cultures, values focus upon relationships amongst people, concern for others and quality of life, and their key strength is personal service (Hofstede, 1983).

### **2.2.2 Gesteland's cross - cultural dimension**

The Gesteland, (1999) Cross cultural dimensions patterns for cross - cultural business behavior include;

Deal-focus versus Relationship-focus reflects the preferences for being more task-oriented or more people-oriented in a business meeting. This is the "Great Divide" between business cultures. Deal-focused (DF) people are fundamentally task-oriented while relationship-focused folks are more people-oriented. Conflicts arise when deal-focused export marketers try to do business with prospects from relationship-focused markets. Relation Focus people find Deal Focus types pushy, aggressive and offensively blunt. On the other hand Deal Focus view Relation Focus counterparts as dilatory, vague and inscrutable.

Informal versus Formal Cultures means that cultures differ in their preferences for informality. Informality may offend high-status people from hierarchical cultures, whilst the status-consciousness of formal people may offend the egalitarian sensibilities of informal people (Gesteland, 1999). Problems in this dimension occur when informal managers from relatively egalitarian cultures cross paths with more formal counterparts from hierarchical societies. Casual informality offends high-status people from hierarchical cultures just as the status-consciousness of formal people may offend the egalitarian sensibilities of informal folks.

Rigid-Time versus Fluid-Time Cultures, is where some cultures religiously stick to the clock and diary planners, whilst other cultures are more relaxed about time and scheduling, focusing instead on the people around them (Gesteland, 1999). Conflict arises because some rigid-time visitors regard their fluid-time brothers and sisters as lazy, undisciplined and rude, while the latter often regard the former as arrogant martinets enslaved by arbitrary deadlines.

Expressive vs. Reserved Cultures means Expressive people communicate in radically different ways from their more reserved counterparts. This is true whether they are communicating verbally, paraverbally or nonverbally. The confusion that results from these differences can spoil our best efforts to market, sell and source, negotiate or manage people across cultures. The expressive/reserved divide creates a major communication gap.

### **2.3 Approaches for Cross-cultural management orientation**

This section reviewed the approaches that managers can apply when dealing with key issues that arise from working in cross culture environment. Annette Sinclair et al., (2008) had nine findings but this study reviews only six of them: What makes an effective cross-cultural manager?, building relationships across cultures, communicating across cultures, encouraging participation in cross-cultural teams, managing performance across cultures, raising cultural awareness and understanding and encouraging ethical standards in cross-cultural teams.

#### **2.3.1 What makes an effective Cross-cultural Manager?**

There is no single recipe for success in managing cross culture teams (Annette Sinclair et al., (2008). The basis for success in global business relies on understanding own culture and assumptions, and expectations about how people 'should' think and act, and then understanding others (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1998).

Effective management of cross-cultural environment mainly depends on the manager's ability to understand what is best for the organization based on teamwork and the



dynamics of the work environment (Annette Sinclair *et al*, 2008). Molinsky, (2007) adds that cultural intelligence can be defined as a person's capacity to adapt effectively to new cultural settings or contexts based on multiple facets including cognitive, motivational and behavioral features. Managers in cross- cultural environments must learn to deal with greater logistical complexities, inter-company coordination, and must also account for significant country and cultural differences (Kramer, 2005).

Annette Sinclair *et al.*, (2008) proposed the use of "A culture lens" which helps management to be both aware and responsive to different cultural needs and preferences. They further suggest that managers need to beware that they are working within complexity, be willing to build credibility and develop team trust, provide guidance rather than direct management, and remain flexible and open to adjusting the approaches according to the needs of different team members and work to unite culturally-diverse teams.

The manager's cultural frame of reference may influence their views and approach to a number of different aspects in their role, such as power and authority relationships, coping with uncertainty and risk-taking, interpersonal trust, motivation, consultation, participation, communication and decision making (Smith *et al*, 2006).

### **2.3.2 Building relationships across cultures**

Gesteland (1999) suggests that people from more relationship-focused cultures prefer to spend time building trust and rapport at the onset of a project. They like to work with people whom they know and trust and can be uncomfortable working with strangers,

particularly those from other countries. However more deal-focused cultures prefer to get down to business and see less need for building relationships.

Pinsonnault and Caya (Alain Pinsonneault & Caya, 2005) observes that trust is one of the most important process variables in virtual team research and that initial reactions seems critical for establishing trust in virtual teams. These views are shared by Hay Group, (2007) who suggests that top performing teams consisted of members who placed a high value on people and team relationships.

Annette Sinclair et al., (2008) found that: Managers should encourage face-to-face meetings to help establish good relationships from the outset, noting that they are important at the beginning of big projects or when someone joins the team. They should take the time to understand the different cultural perspectives and backgrounds of their team members. They further suggest that if practical, hold team meetings in different locations to give people a chance to experience different countries and cultures at first-hand, organize social gatherings in addition to more formal work-related meetings, and promote culturally themed events because they can facilitate relationship and cultural awareness building. These views are shared by Tromenaars and Hampden-Turner, (1997).

### **2.3.3 Communicating across cultures**

There is practically no globalization without media and communications (Rantanen, 2005). Gudykunst's study (as cited by Browaeys and Price, 2011), stated that cross-cultural communication is a "sub-domain" of intercultural communication and has to do with "the comparison of the various ways people communicate across cultures". The language we speak, verbal or nonverbal, varies depending upon cultural factors described

as languages of context, time and space (Hall's Cultural Factors, 2009). Language skills and paralinguistic concepts such as accents, intonation and speed of talking serve as tools for communication and these can vary significantly across cultures, nonetheless, communication is not just about language (Haslberger, 2005).

Gudykunst and Kim (as cited by Alphrozo, 2009) suggest that meanings may not be conveyed in normal communication between individuals, primarily because of the ambiguity in the language spoken. It is the ambiguity that frequently leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations (Quappe & Cantatore, 2007). Universal leaders must strongly consider these cultural factors in their pursuit of asking, seeking and knocking towards gaining more knowledge, understanding and meaning to enhance their cross-cultural communication skills (Alphronzo, 2009).

A vital requirement when dealing with diversity is promoting a "safe" place for associates to communicate Koonce's study (as cited by Kelli et al, 2012). It is hence important that managers first communicate what diversity is and what the organization hopes to achieve by managing it more effectively (Bagsaw, 2004). Universal leaders frequently use their own meaning to make sense of someone else's certainty or lack cultural awareness of their own behavioral rules and relate them to others (Quappe & Cantatore, 2007).

Bholanath (2008) suggests that learning about a country's sub-cultures particularly protocol and business sub-cultures will be of great help. Yamazaki & Kayes's study ( as cited by Alphronzo,2009) posit that managers should send a clear signal that they value people from different cultures by offering educational and training courses in foreign

skills and providing rotational programs encouraging cross-cultural assignments at headquarters.

Annette Sinclair et al., (2008) found that: Managers need to check that their communications and messages are understood in the same way that they intended, be cautious when using humor and sarcasm as these might be culturally specific and open to misinterpretation, and be sensitive to the different levels of language ability in their team. Keep an awareness of team members' preferences for formality/informality in communication styles, encourage team members to speak in languages accessible to all in formal meetings and during social interactions, provide colleagues with a list of time zones and encourage intranet communications to aid accessibility when managing teams that are globally dispersed, it is also helpful to consider providing inter-cultural communication training for team members.

Maka .K. O (2011) also found that: Successful managers of cross – cultural teams should have cultural sensitivity and pay attention to cultural dimensions, having knowledge of characteristics that are typical to each cultural group can also help them cooperate easily with colleagues from other cultural background and consider the possibility of encountering communication barriers, thus, managers need not just learn to acknowledge the differences in communication ways and styles but also learn how to communicate with multicultural teams.

#### **2.3.4 Encouraging participation in cross-cultural teams**

The degree to which an individual wishes to participate in a team environment may vary according to their national culture, whilst some cultures prefer to participate in team discussions and decision-making processes, others are happy and expect to be directed by their manager (Hofstede, 1980).

Quappe & Cantatore, (2007) urge that managers should be patient, because operating outside of own culture brings surprises, misunderstandings and misinterpretations often prevail because what is appropriate behavior for one culture can be inappropriate in another.

Annette Sinclair et al., (2008) found that: Managers need to find the right time to enable maximum participation. They also suggest that for geographically dispersed teams, especially those working across different time zones, face problem of finding the right time to work, where everyone can take part in a discussion or work together at the same time can be tricky. Therefore they suggest that managers should consult team members when deadlines are set to ensure that this works across different time zones, also they should be aware of cultural differences in attitudes towards participation.

#### **2.3.5 Managing performance across cultural team**

Cultural differences have emerged in performance management systems and culture can influence methods of coordination and control, the degree of standardization in systems for evaluation and measurement, views regarding performance appraisal and the employment culture(Annette, et al., 2008). It is essential for a manager to identify the

cultural specificity of a group to understand the way to react and solve the problems it faces (Trompenaars, 1993).

Fenwick (2004) records evidence showing that performance appraisal is perceived differently across cultures – it may be regarded with distrust in certain cultures. The responsibility of managing performance in cross cultural teams is placed on both the team and the individual level (Duarte, syder 2006). As team leaders managers are accountable for completing tasks while individuals are accountable for individual performance (Monika, et al., 2009). Understanding cultural differences is important, not only because behaviors and approaches that contribute to effective performance may differ across cultures, but also because behaviors and attitudes to assessments can differ( Annette, el al., 2008). The organizations which adopt the strategy of managing differences are synergistic organizations (Subhash, 2001). When managing performance and conducting appraisals in cross cultural teams, the challenge is that behaviors and approaches that contribute to effective performance may differ across cultures (Annette, et al., 2008).

#### **2.4 Challenges of cross-cultural teams**

Gibson & Cohen's study (as cited by Dayann, 2010) suggests that in general, the greater the number of differences among members, the greater are team barriers to effectiveness. Cross cultural teams have the challenge of span of time zones, geographical boundaries, and are frequently composed of diverse members representing different disciplines, functions, professions, business units, organizations, countries, and cultures. In general, the greater the number of differences among members, the greater are team barriers to effectiveness (Gibson & Cohen, 2003). This chapter reviews challenges in terms of

difficulties of geographical distance and time zones, communication and technology and building trust.

#### **2.4.1 Geographical dispersion and Time Zone**

Geographically dispersed team members and how precisely they address questions or pass on information to their colleagues is critical for organizations success. Research shows that geographic dispersion among people generates negative outcomes, such as a decline in communication, mutual knowledge problems, and work coordination difficulties (Weisband, 2008). Because many of these members reside in different time zone areas, it is a “rule of thumb” to be precise in what each member wants to know and how well they ask a question. Annette, et al, (2008) found that: The challenge of span of time zones, geographical boundaries, are frequently composed of diverse members representing different disciplines, functions, professions, business units, organizations, countries. Other challenges faced by multi-cultural teams include misunderstandings as a result of differences in language and preferred communication style, differing perspectives, cultural norms, priorities and expectations, increased conflict and difficulties in creating an environment where all can contribute.

#### **2.4.2 Communication and Technology challenges**

Communicating effectively challenges managers even when working domestically with a culturally homogeneous workforce (Adler, 2002). Further Maka .K, (2011) posit that in the modern world, international managers face many challenges in business communication and in the workplace. Writing clearly and not using acronyms is one way

to deal with this issue. Many scholars have studied the link between globalization and media and most theorists agree that there is practically no globalization without media and communications (Rantanen, 2005, p. 4). Advances in technologies have increased each person's ability and likelihood of interacting with people of cultural backgrounds quite different from other cultures.

Communications needs to be carefully managed to take into account the cultural differences among team members. Language barrier is an obvious problem. All over the world people have different languages. Annette, et al, (2008) found that when the team members speak different languages they have trouble communicating. Many things could go wrong if clear communication is not initiated in such things such as orders, measurements, and prices. Declines in opportunities for communication are even more problematic when such communication lacks face-to-face contact and nonverbal cues.

Availability of technology is a major possible challenge for cross cultural teams in most communities in developing countries and while technology offers opportunity for frequent, easy, low-cost, around-the-clock communication, it can be an unreliable variable that affects the outcome of team communication and collaboration (Duarte & Snyder, 1999). Annetee, et al (2008) found that: some other problems include incompatible networks, slow computers, and traffic on the network. Video conferencing solutions are either: expensive and sometimes not of good quality at times. Advances in technologies have increased each person's ability and likelihood of interacting with people of cultural backgrounds quite different geographical backgrounds. This ambiguity implies greater



uncertainty, especially when processing information and making sense of various tasks and members' perspectives.

### **2.4.3 Building Trust**

When there is trust in a team, communication becomes simpler (Lipnack and Stamps, 1997, Jarvenpaa 1998, Dash 2001, Alexander 2000). Mismanaged diversity can have long-reaching effects on team members' satisfaction and productivity particularly on cross cultural teams where there is uncertainty and incomplete knowledge of all group members, trust is a necessary condition for successful teamwork (Child, 2001). Therefore, when organization ignores the existence and importance of team members diversity, conflict can emerge and neither the organizations nor its team members will realize their potential (Goetz, 2001). Misunderstandings as a result of differences in language and preferred communication style, differing perspectives, cultural norms, priorities and expectations, difficulties in creating an environment where all can contribute and the benefits of diversity can be leveraged. If team members phrase their questions carefully the first time, they will get their point across successfully without having to deal with sending changes and making up for the time lost (Alexander 2000).

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The first section of this chapter describes the research design, followed by data collection methodology and lastly how the data will be analyzed.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A case study method was used; it enabled the researcher to collect in depth data on the application of cross-cultural management orientation at Ford Foundation IFP. A case study approach was considered appropriate because it helped the researcher to place emphasis on a full contextual analysis of fewer vents or conditions and their inter relations (Cooper & Schindler2005). It also allowed investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life event at the Ford Foundation IFP, an in-depth exploratory single-case study (Yin, 2003).

#### **3.2.1 Data Collection**

A mixture of secondary and primary data was gathered to corroborate information and provide rich arguments. Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders (2008) stresses that there are two main source of data; primary data and secondary data. They suggest that primary data is information collected for a specific purpose at hand and secondary data is information that already exists somewhere, having been collected for another purpose. Data for this paper is base on these two types; an interview research and literature review. In this study both are from Ford Foundation IFP.

A structured interview guide was used to conduct the interviews which consisted of open-ended questions to collect the data. Structured interviews are “Interviews that use a set of standardized questions asked from all applicants” (Mathis & Jackson, 2008). In-depth interview was preferred as it encourages participants to share as much information as possible in an unconstrained environment and provide more qualitative information, more depth, representation, efficiency, statistics and more value (Stokes and Bergin, 2006). This was achieved through face to face interviews done through Skype.

### **3.3 Data analysis**

The data was analyzed using the content analysis technique in accordance with the objectives of the study. According to (Kothari (2004) content analysis consists of analyzing the contents of documentary materials such as books, magazines, news papers and content of all verbal materials which can either be spoken or printed. Further Hsieh and Shannon, (2005), insist that content analysis is the systematic qualitative description of the composition of the objects or materials of the study.

Content analysis has been used successfully by Githiomi (2010) in a similar study since it does not restrict the respondent to answers and has the potential of generating more information with much detail. The data obtained was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics then presented.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings and analysis with regard to the objectives of this study which is to identify how cross-cultural management is applied at Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program and to establish the challenges facing implementation of cross culture management at Ford Foundation IFP.

### **4.2 Respondents Profile**

The respondents comprised of the top management at Ford Foundation IFP both at the head office in New York and International Partners at Country office levels. In total, the researcher interviewed seven respondents as per the research design. All the respondents were available for the interview. Six of the interviews were done via video Skype a latest technology that provides face to face interviews and one interview was done on physical face to face basis. As a result the process rate was 100%.

The interviewees included The Executive Director of Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program, Director of Grant Administrations, Director of Communication and four managers of IFP International Partners from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and South Africa. Both the Executive Director and the Director of Administration based in New York have served the organization since the inception of the Program in 2000. Both are well informed on the management process in the organization. The Director for Communications also based in New York has over three years of work experience in the program and the four country level managers of Ford Foundation IFP also known as

International Partners have served in the organization for between three to eleven years. The respondents' solid background on the affairs of the organization, make them knowledgeable on the subject matter of the research and thus helped in realization of the research objectives. Secondary data collections from the organization as well as other sources are well reported.

### **4.3 Application of Cross-cultural management Orientation at Ford Foundation**

#### **International Fellowships Program**

This section addresses the application of cross-cultural management orientation as applied in the program. The set of questions in this area of the interview guide were tailored to establish the application of cross-cultural management orientation at the Ford Foundation IFP. The findings are discussed and summarized in five sub-sections: Operations in a cross-cultural environment, networking and relationships, Sensitivity to cross-cultural issues, Approaches of cross cultural management, Performance Management across culture and Communicates across cultures.

#### **4.3.1. Operations in a cross-cultural environment, networking and relationships**

In responses to whether their work at Ford Foundation IFP involves working with people from other cultures, the respondents answered in the affirmative and they all acknowledged enjoying working with people from different cultures. One of them reckoned:

“Working in a cross-cultural environment keeps us on our toes, challenges our ways of thinking, helps us to see own biases and assumptions and allow us to experience different cultures and learn from them”

In-depth study of the organization's website – [www.fordifp.org](http://www.fordifp.org) revealed that, Ford foundation International Fellowships Program IFP has forged cross-cultural collaboration across the Globe. It operates in twenty two (22) countries all over the world (Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palestine, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, and Vietnam) thus operating at the center of globalization, actively contributing to global diffusion of practices, innovations, knowledge and organizational culture (Singh, 2005).

Respondents said they had other country level networks at local country level that included local universities, NGOs, Civil societies and individual consultants. They also organized for meeting to build consensus and make decisions depending on activities at hand.

At global levels the interviewees cited more networks with specific Universities that continue to admit and enroll more IFP Fellows to study in Universities all over the world. This partnership ensures faster admission of fellows it also encourages ease of Fellows networking and cohort building at University level. They also forged partnerships with other institutions like the Institute of International Education (IIE), the British Council and the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC).

Respondents ascertained that the IFP secretariat facilitates continued networking and team building activities amongst partners. The meetings include: The IFP Global Partners' meeting where all the twenty two (22) countries meet with the IFP secretariat and the IFP continental meetings, which include the IFP East Africa meetings, the IFP Africa regional

meetings. These meetings are building trust and good working relationships amongst partners (Alain Pinsonneault & Caya, 2005) and contribute towards accomplishing the organization goals (Peterson, 2004).

According to the respondents, the meeting venues changed from one location to another to give people a chance to experience different countries and cultures first-hand. The program items included social gatherings and site visit of projects in addition to more formal work-related meetings. One respondent from New York reckoned,

“The experience through Narok in Kenya on that rough road gave me a feel of the challenges experienced by developing countries in the process of implementing the program”

Respondents also acknowledged that even at local country levels, respondents are operating in a cross cultural environment. Kenya for instance, has more than forty tribes, each ethnic group also have different cultural orientation thus posing a cross-cultural environment with different cultural norms and practices. This is supported by national culture dimensions of Hofstede, (1989). Further they revealed that the organization also encourage net working among its Alumni and Fellows. The study revealed that International cohort building activities are planned to allow fellows to interact among themselves and support one another during study and later as alumni to foster and enhance the IFP legacy.

They also confirmed that successful IFP candidates are admitted to Universities all over the world. In-depth study of documentations at IFP Kenya office revealed that most of the

Kenyan fellows studied abroad, as per the data, the largest number studied in the USA, followed by the UK and then Netherlands while only one fellow studied in South Africa and only studied one in Kenya.

#### **4.3.2 Sensitivity to cross-cultural issues**

All the respondents acknowledge that Ford foundation IFP is very sensitive to cross culture issues, another respondent reckoned: “What defines IFP is because it is cross-cultural in many ways”. Be it in-country or at the global level, IFP staff and managers always encounter cross-cultural issues.

Furthermore, the Ford Foundation IFP vision, mission, goals and objectives are very sensitivity to cross-cultural issues. In depth study of Ford Foundation IFP Partner’s handbook, (2007) revealed that: “One of the most distinctive features of IFP is its focus on providing opportunities to exceptional individuals from social groups and communities that lack systematic access to higher education.”

The Executive Director of the program acknowledged that the program supports a unique and diverse global community of future leaders who share a commitment to academic excellence and community service. The IFP target group share a common goal of high-level academic and professional achievement and a commitment to pursue development in their home country through leadership roles and social engagement with their communities and beyond (Hofstede, 1980) Individualist versus Collectivist.



The target group must demonstrate social commitment, proven leadership and appropriate academic background in context of proposed field of study and should come from social groups and communities that lack systematic access to higher education. These groups vary among countries and may include various cross –cultural aspects such as gender, racial, ethnic and religious minorities and individuals living in remote or rural areas, and persons with physical disabilities Hofstede (1980) Dimensions of National Culture.

### 4.3.3 Approaches of cross culture management applied in the process of implementing programs at country level.

In- depth study of Ford Foundation IFP documentations revealed that the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program life cycle is represented by the diagram in Figure 1 below:



Figure 1: Ford Foundation IFP life cycle Source: IFP Partners Handbook, (2007)

To achieve established organizational goals, in-depth interviews revealed that interviewees applied cross-cultural management orientation as a method of achieving established organizational goals by effective planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and

controlling of the organizational owned resources in a cross-cultural environment ((Pu jing, 2012). This study investigated only two out of the eight processes of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program IFP life cycle namely: Recruitment and selection process and Pre-academic training process.

Recruitment and selection process involves defining Ford Foundation IFP Target Groups, Outreach and Publicity, Application Screening and Review, Committee Fellow-Designate Selection and lastly is IFF Endorsement.

Interviewees revealed that to reach their target population, each IP defined the target population in own country context. For instance, Kenya has severe wealth disparities from region to region and from one location to another. The target populations in the country are marginalized by Economic empowerment imbalance and geographical location (living and operating in the urban city slums or from the rural and disadvantaged regions like North eastern, parts of Rift valley and Coast Province).

In Tanzania, the respondent said they did not give economic imbalances much consideration, thanks to the country's historical background. The whole of Tanzania has fairly equal levels of economic wealth distribution and geographical marginalization. The country went through the "Ujamaa Villagilization" a socialism policy where the Government of Tanzania strived to give all citizens equal opportunities and minimized unfair privileges. However, the IFP site in Tanzania was able to define group on the basis of poverty (Urban or rural poor), rural or remote areas origin, and commitment to work, religion, and residence in Zanzibar.

South Africa like Kenya considered the geographical regions and ethnicity issues more seriously in consideration to the historical injustices as a result of the Apartheid system in the country before independence.

To select target group, interviewees acknowledged that to ensure they manage the process to accommodate the complexities in their countries while at the same time uphold the policies of the organization. Though unconsciously, they applied cross cultural management orientation skills throughout the program implementation stages. Erez and Drori, (2009) argues that managers should apply solutions relevant to the cultural context.

To address ethnicity the respondents gave different arguments to justify their actions as per their country cultural contexts. In Kenya ethnicity is prevalent, and the country has forty two different tribes with a few largely populated communities and several less populated tribes, hence it was given much consideration for balance. Tanzania respondent said they did not have to deal with ethnicity, again because of their Socialism policy, while Uganda said they had to deal with it but minimally also due to historical injustices resulting in the dominance of the Baganda tribe in the country.

Furthermore, levels of educations were considered by all the respondent International Partners. This, they said was because it formed the basis for the selection. It was a policy that all successful candidates must have achieved their undergraduate degrees. To manage cross-cultural complexities, the areas with lesser education levels had the bar lowed to accommodate them. For instance in Kenya, a female fellow from Marsabit was awarded scholarship even though she had a Pass grade. This was because girl in that community are marginalization by customary laws that regard them as of low status in the society and

thus have lesser access to education and economic empowerment. In South Africa the interviewee said they highly considered candidates who suffered from the gross inequalities of the education system by the Apartheid, those who never enjoyed education from the best Universities in the country. A special example is of one fellow who got education only through correspondence form of education.

Employment and work experience in a field of study as criteria for selection was a key factor. A number of Fellows benefitted from the scholarship because of their passion in working with the marginalized communities with the aim to uplift the status of such communities like the poor urban slum dwellers, environment upgrading and peace builders for conflict management and rehabilitation of street children. Kenya considered candidates working with the marginalized communities, “Those who demonstrated a passion for working with the marginalized such as the urban Slums and conflict prone regions”

Physical disability cases were seriously considered by all the respondents, for instance Kenya has eight physically disabled fellows, Uganda has seven, Tanzania has four and South Africa has seven.

The Pre-Academic Training (PAT) programs aimed to fill the possible cross-cultural education gaps also better known as International education gaps that might exist amongst Fellows in terms of their education orientation back at home vis-à-vis the foreign education systems. All respondents acknowledged planning, organizing, controlling and coordinating the pre- Academic trainings in the countries cross-cultural context (Hostefede, 1989). The respondents said , the PAT included computer proficiency

training, English Language training and testing, Report Writing, Presentation and Research Skills training provided to all the FEs either at group forums or individually.

Here again, interviewees said they had to manage the cross-cultural complexities to achieve organization objectives. They sourced for and engaged the services of different institutions relevant to the Ford Foundation IFP policies. For instance in Kenya the interviewee said they engaged: For the English Language tests, the British Council, for IELTS training and testing, Uniserve Ltd, for information on studying in the UK and details of institutions in the UK, programs and the general application and visa processes to United Kingdom. US Embassy in Nairobi, the America Educational Advising Centre, provided information to Fellows wishing to study in the United States. Australian Education Consultants - AEC an organization representing a number of top Universities in Australia provided the relevant information to those wishing to study in Australia. AEC also provided training and testing of IELTS and supported the fellows during visa processing stage. Computer training was done by Comsat Technologies and Computer Pride Limited local computer training colleges with experience in IT skills training and assessment.

In-depth study revealed that the interviewees applied Cultural Intelligence to select and identify the institutions, as posited by Kramer, (2005) that Leaders in cross-cultural environments must learn to deal with greater logistical complexities, inter-company coordination, and must also account for significant country and cultural differences. Thus the IPs made considerations on the availability of services, costs and other national culture differences (Hostefede, 1980).

The PAT training period varied from country to country in terms of content and time taken depending on the needs. For instance in Tanzania Kiswahili is the official National language and not English, hence their PAT programs took more time than the other three countries to ensure they do more English Language training to pass the language test. Also at country level depending on the education background of fellows, the IPs made decisions on the amount of time individual FEs required for training to be able to pass the tests which were very crucial for university placement purposes.

A very important pre-training program was the cultural shock training to counter or prepare Fellows for cultural shock on arrival abroad. The respondents said the forum was necessary to prepare FEs for their new destinations by basically providing clues to help them manage cultural shocks and re-emphasize the gains of their education to their local communities and country, aimed to emphasize theories of (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1998) who posit that the basis for success in global environment relies on understanding own culture and assumptions, expectations about how people 'should' think and act, and then understanding others. The training addressed potential culture shock and academic and cultural adaptation demands that Fellows may face in their new environments. Regardless of whether a Fellow goes overseas or stays in-country, he or she may face significant challenges in adjusting to a new academic and physical environment. This was the very last meeting for every cohort before the Fellows departed to their respective universities.

The interviewees said in East Africa, the meeting was organized on a rotational basis for Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania while in South Africa it was held in-country and lasted for 2-3 days and one interviewees reckoned:

“Team work spirit was a necessary component especially for us in East Africa, we had to work together during this period to come up with workable budget, coordinate pre-departure activities, make flight travel arrangements, arrange for accommodation, invite relevant guest speakers/resource persons and set comprehensive program agenda.”

The pre-departure meeting was also aimed at enhancing and re-enforcing cohort building and networking, which is in agreement with researchers (Lipnack and Stamps, 1997, Jarvenpaa 1998, Dash 2001, Alexander 2000) who posit that when there is trust in a team, communication becomes simpler. Among others things, activities during this meeting program included information on overview of Ford Foundation IFP by looking on its Achievements, Cohort building activities such as legacy building activities and Networking as part of training in Group dynamics and leadership.

The training emphasized on the theories of Hall’s cultural Factors, (2009) and cultural dimensions of Hofstede, (1980) amongst others by including training component such as:

“Contribution of Higher Education to Leadership Development in Africa; The role of Higher Education in Social Justice Promotion; Overcoming Marginalization (Studying abroad, managing cultural shock abroad and Re-Entry culture shock).”

Pre-Departure Orientation meetings also marked the last revision of the policies and guidelines of IFP. The respondents said they reviewed the handbook page by page and engaged fellows into meaningful discussions. The contents in the Fellows' Handbook address issues like: Who is the Fellow's Contact person, Fellows Financial Support and Budget Management, Health and Accident Insurance, Fellow's Academic Reporting Responsibilities, Pre-departure Preparation Logistics and IFP Communication protocols. Each Fellow was handed a copy of the Fellows handbook for continuous reference and use throughout the fellowship period.

From analyzing the responses from the interviewees, it was clear they encountered complex environment issues like (political, economic, legislative, social, and cultural) which they tried to turn into opportunities by identifying the cultural specificity group to understand the way to react and solve the problems it faces (Trompenaars, 1993).

#### **4.3.4 Performance management across cultures at Ford Foundation IFP**

Ford Foundation International Fellowships program has its set organizational culture. Organizational culture includes set organizational norms and practices, values that focus on collaboration, respecting and working with people with different cultures, keeping criticism constructive and so on (Duarte & Snyder, 1999; Schein, 2004) that guides its performance management.

Respondents acknowledged that Ford Foundation IFP has delegated the role of performance management to her partners and has assigned them roles and responsibilities. It has also provided adequate guidelines and toolkits to ensure successful management of the program as discussed below.



Ford Foundation IFP secretariat steers a middle line, by standardizing elements across the whole organization to centralize and simplify some practices and unify partners, while allowing differentiation where necessary. This agrees with Roosevelt (2001) who argues that managing diversity is a comprehensive process for creating a work environment that includes everyone. The Executive Director, Dr. Joan Dassin reckons:

“We prefer to apply a transnational culture to allow for compromise in work styles, values, approaches and harness the strengths that lie in diversity”

From in-depth interview, the study discovered that International Fellowships Program is a decentralized endeavor. The management of Ford Foundation Fellowships Program recognizes diversity and its potential advantages and disadvantages that help them to define organizations’ approach to managing the diversity (Price, 1997). IFP secretariat therefore recognizes the strengths of individual teams and assigned particular roles as they take care to maintain an awareness of different attitudes to team working. This is evident in the Roles and Responsibilities to all partners involved in the program as discussed below:

International Fellowships Fund (IFF) and IFP Secretariat unit based in New York, throughout the fellowship cycle, develop and provide resources, policy guidelines, materials, advice, support, and evaluation, on behalf of funding organization. The International Fellowships Fund (IFF) is an independently incorporated not-for-profit organization. IFF collects information from its worldwide partners for reporting and research purposes. They help in the identification of locally based organizations as IFP’s International Partner and assist with the start-up phase of IFP in the corresponding region

or country; help convene relevant stakeholders to build IFP constituency in a country or region; provide oversight and guidance to IFP partners in developing program strategies that are practical and sensitive to local context; maintain direct contact with the IFP Secretariat; facilitate relevant linkages with Ford Foundation's on-going in-country programming.

Institute of International Education (IIE) and independent institution, also based in New York is IFP's principal partner in facilitating Fellows' payments, and placing Fellows in the US and Canada. They also manage Fellows Grant administration and monitoring by disbursing tuition and academic related costs, living expenses, and other payments in the process of fellows studies.

British Council and Nuffic (the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education) are International Placement Partners that provide placement services for Fellows wishing to study in the UK and continental Europe, respectively. They also may perform services such as Specialized Monitoring Partners for Fellows studying in their region. Both are independent institutions.

IFP's International Partners carry out significant responsibilities. They help shape the program globally and implement it locally, in line with (Jackson, et al, 1992) recommendations that organization should assign the work of diversity management to senior managers. They are responsible for helping to interpret and apply IFP global guidelines in the local context. IFP's International Partners perform the main task of interacting with Fellows, from initial outreach recruitment, to selection, through placement, ongoing support and post-fellowship activities. The supervisory role of the IPs

is delegated to IFP independent Partner institutions in the implementing countries like FAWE (Forum for Africa Women Educationalists) in Kenya, in Tanzania it is hosted by Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF), in Uganda, Kampala the program is hosted by (Association for Higher Education Advancement & Development (AHEAD) and in South Africa it is delegated to the African American Institute (AAI).

The respondents concede that IFP secretariat adopts a strategy of managing differences hence the roles and responsibilities of each partner helps to unite culturally diverse teams by emphasizing the common culture of IFP as spelt out by the IFP Secretariat in New York and implementing policies at local country levels to provide associates access to information and opportunities. The organizations which adopt the strategy of managing differences are synergistic organizations (Subhash, 2001).

One respondent said:

“We hardly encounter conflicts that cannot be resolved amicably, because the roles and responsibilities are clearly stated, thereby ensuring smooth running the organization”

IFP Secretariat develops and provides IFP Toolkits and guides to IPs for reporting, financial responsibilities, and general tools for program implementation. Schollhammer (1977) emphasized the need for international codes of conduct to govern cross-cultural activities. In addition to local materials, the Ford Foundation has produced some publicity resources for use by Partners. These are mechanism for whistle blowing and having the

means by which a team member can refer things outside of the line control (Annette, et al, 2008).

Secondary research study on Ford Foundation IFP documents revealed that other tools include: the professionally designed and copyrighted IFP logo, website – [www.fordifp.org](http://www.fordifp.org) that has links to all International Partner websites and provides general information about the IFP program as a whole and IFP Report. The entire IFP logo, including the full name “Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program” is always displayed on the top left of all documents, with the local Partner logo displayed on the right. One respondent reckons: “The IFP guidelines and toolkits were like the bible in the lifecycle of the program”

From in- depth interview, the study revealed that IFP secretariat maintain a high level of awareness of the contributing factors on the way the organization is managed through principles, policies and practices and their appropriateness to the socio cultural contexts within which the organization operates (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1998). In- depth interviews revealed that the IFP secretariat sets several baseline criteria for all IFP applicants worldwide.

Eligibility criterion for IFP fellowship applicants at the time of selection requires applicants to: Come from social groups and communities that lack systematic access to higher education (as defined/determined by the International Partners), be resident nationals or residents of the eligible country, the IP respondents from the four countries said the applicants had to be resident nationals only. Hold a baccalaureate (or equivalent) degree and have demonstrated academic achievement and potential in their undergraduate

studies, have demonstrated leadership skills and commitment to community service and/or national development, have significant relevant professional or other work experience related to proposed field of study (IFP Partners handbook,2007).

To ensure transparency and consistency universally, the respondents said that in consultation with the Ford Foundation overseas offices and the IFP Secretariat, they were responsible for developing a fair and transparent recruitment and selection process based on the IFP articulated criteria and guidelines at the global level.

To reach target populations with information about IFP that attracts informed and appropriate applicants, evidence from IFP documentation revealed that IFP secretariat recommends that IPs develop Outreach and Publicity strategies that: “Reduce risk of self-exclusion within the target group, allow sufficient time for prospective Fellows within the target group to apply, material that spoke to unique social or cultural characteristics of the target group in ways that encouraged them to apply, identified preferred geographic areas and/or determined areas to be excluded, they explored alternative outreach strategies beyond national-based media (e.g., local media, vernacular radio and newspapers, supportive individuals, NGO networks, etc.), outreach strategies are guided by the screening process, expected application volume and the number of fellowships, outreach strategies cost effective and time efficient, publicity materials reflect current IFP policies and means of assessing the effectiveness of the outreach strategies” (IFP Partners handbook,(2007).

The selection and setting up committees of the shortlist/readers and/or selection committee who review credentials/authenticity of applications and conduct finalist interviews and

administer finalist Questionnaire respectively is done by IPs in consultation with the Ford Foundation field offices as an independent selection committee to review applications of all “finalist” candidates.

In-depth study revealed that IFP secretariat provides guidelines. IFP secretariat recommends two independent readers to read and review each approved application a third reviewer is assigned if a tie-breaker is needed. The readers must be independent of the IP and the short-listing committee cannot include IP staff members. Criteria for selecting readers match those applied for choosing selection committee members. Ad hoc reviewers and/or short-listing committee members may or may not be part of the final selection committee.

Respondents said, the process of recruiting selection team involves a paper-based review of the candidate’s complete file as well as a personal interview of the panel. Possible Selection committee members may include, individuals from diverse backgrounds, including representatives from IFP target groups, in case of multi-country sites, they also invite committee members from other parts of the region, or those with international backgrounds and others, such as public intellectuals, leaders from civil society groups including representatives of ethnic minority and women’s groups, expatriates, and others. They should exhibit respect and be committed to the goals of IFP. Potential candidates and current Fellows do not serve on the selection committee. Recommended number of every panel is five to seven. Selection committee members may serve a maximum of three years, with a staggered rotation to ensure continuity. It is of importance that committee members

understand the notion of “lack of systematic access to higher education” and are able to objectively select applicants in the target groups” (IFP Partners handbook, (2007).

Further IFP secretariat provides the definition of the target population. A study of the IFP documents revealed three main sets of attributes that broadly define an appropriate IFP candidate as: Academic background and proposed field of study, demonstrated social commitment and proven leadership potential. Locally defined criteria may be added, where interviewees said they managed the process to accommodate the complexities in their countries as they uphold the policies of the organization.

To evaluate appropriate academic background in the context of proposed field of study the panelists looked for: “Areas of previous study, grade average, evidence of improvement, especially in the last two years of undergraduate study, academic record in field of specialization, publications and related academic activities, clarity of academic goals and research focus (especially doctoral candidates).

To evaluate social commitment, panelists looked for candidates who demonstrated: Employment history of a minimum of 2-3 years, volunteer work/service and continuity of experience, receipt of community awards, recognition for volunteer/community service ,clarity of social goals, high level of commitment to return and engagement in service-oriented activity after graduate study is completed and membership in voluntary/civic/service/development-oriented or professional organization (IFP Partners Handbook,(2007).

To evaluate leadership potential panelists looked for: Candidate should be an officer or founder of organization, leadership position in schools, professional, religious, or civic community organizations and NGOs, coordinator or project head, receipt of recognition/awards for leadership capability from peers, members of organization, workplace or school, provincial, national or international awards and pioneering activities such as first generation learners (IFP Partners Handbook, (2007).

#### **4.3.5 Communication across culture**

In response to the typical ways to communicate a cross culture at IFP, the respondents agree that IFP has ensured effective communication processes. Most theorists agree that there is practically no globalization without media and communications (Rantanen, 2005). The communications director in New York admits that the head office is in charge of managing the global website. Review of the IFP documentations also revealed detailed information on IFP communications: The IFP Global public website at [www.fordifp.org](http://www.fordifp.org) provides useful information for Fellows and Partners. The website is managed from the head office in New York. It links to all partner sites, reports on recent events, news from the IFP Director, and features on Fellows' achievements. It has two web-based facilities: a set of community tools for Fellows and an administrative area for Fellows and Partners. The Fellows' community tools include list serves, facebook, and other features designed to promote electronic networking and targeted information sharing among Fellows worldwide (IFP Partners Handbook, 2007). The respondents admit that this has created a "safe" place for associates to communicate (Koonce, 2001). The IFP secretariat communications director also provides access to various reporting forms to



facilitate managers with internal reporting systems for the organization like endorsement, placement forms.

At the Local country level, respondents said that Ford Foundation IFP places a high priority on communicating the importance of the program to a broad array of educational institutions, policy makers, media and potential beneficiaries to attract informed and appropriate applicants during Outreach and Publicity activities. The respondents said they applied various cross-cultural communication approaches appropriate for their country context. Among the methods applied included: Physical Staff travel and repeat visits/presentations to remote target areas, wide distribution of IFP materials, appointed nominators, organizational networks (NGOs, universities), press releases, group information sessions, introducing IFP to universities, academic programs and departments and individual professors, prepaid mailing for applications from remote areas, using Fellows and Alumni as recruiters, a mix of media advertising including Internet, local language newspapers, posters, radio, television, as well as specific newsletters and journals that target populations are likely to read, feature articles and interviews with IPs about the program in local media.

Physical visits acted as a channel to engage communities into active listening. Bholanath, (2008) argue that active listening helps to reduce misunderstandings. In Kenya for example the respondents explained:

“We made physical outreach campaigns to the most remote regions of Kenya such as Turkana, Pokot and Marigat among others”

The most effective channel of communication according to the respondents was radio. They also used self sponsored advertisements on radio and television. The South African respondent appreciates the need to build stronger cultural relationships with several communities. She put it in plain words:

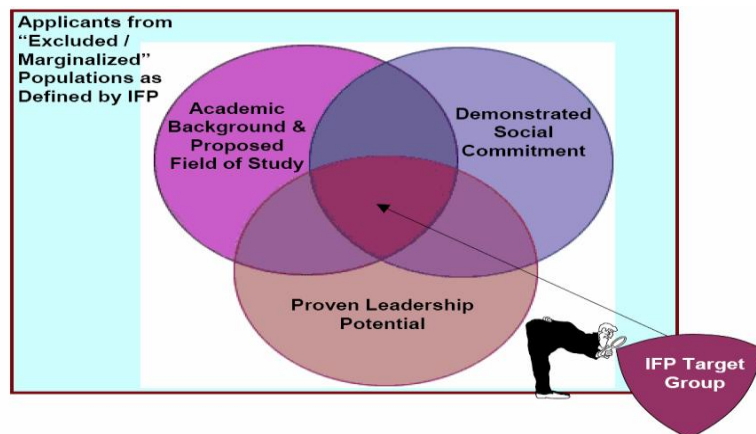
“I can speak all the major languages in my country, and this made it easy for me to communicate easily with different communities on the radio program and even when we went out for outreach programs”

South Africa used a weekly popular news paper “The Daily Sun”, Kenya used daily news papers “The Standard Daily” and “Daily Nation” while Tanzania used the Daily News, Mwananchi, Majira, Zambia Leo and Mtanzania. Terhi Rantanen (2005) highlights the role of media and communications in globalization by defining globalization as a “process in which worldwide economic, political, cultural and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space”

Understanding the language of time was a necessary aspect in management of cross-cultural communication to avoid guilt of being ethnocentrism by negatively judging an individual by your own cultural standards (Harris & Moran, 1993). Respondents acknowledge that the IFP Secretariat recommends that, to receive or deliver feedback information to the most disadvantaged rural areas, IPs should apply strategies convenient for recipients. Hence respondents applied deadline roles with considerations of individual country communications infrastructure. For instance, they said that return of application forms lasted for a period of one and a half months in an effort to embrace rural and remote

region applicants whose forms took longer to arrive. The deadline for submission of application forms was also disqualified by the date of posting and not the date of delivery.

The publicity materials were designed to speak to unique social or cultural characteristics of the target group, thus ensuring accurate perception and interpretation of what is conveyed verbally and non-verbally ways that encouraged them to apply, which is in agreement with (Jacob, 2003). For instance respondents said they tailored the materials to suit their audience while adapting to the Ford Foundation IFP policies as illustrated in Figure 2 below:



**Figure 2: Marginalized IFP target group**

**Source: IFP Partners Handbook (2007)**

The diagram above designed by IFP Secretariat (IFP Partners Handbook, (2007) quickly and easily describe the target group and it served to communicate the Ford Foundation IFP target group very effectively.

The monitoring of Fellows while on studies required clear channels of communication. The respondents said they used various means to communicate depending on the

geographical location, time zones, availability of technology, reason for communication, need for the communication amongst others. One respondent reckoned:

“The Ford Foundation IFP modules and tool kits, the Fellows hand book and the Partners Hand book supports easy in communication between us and the fellows during their study”

Further, respondents explain they maintained a constant and regular communication between IPs, IFP secretariat, IFP Placement partners, FEs during studies and Alumni that continues all through the life cycle of the program. Interviewees said they achieved this through emails, telephone, Skype or face to face, and emails as country cohorts, regional cohorts and even as international cohorts or as may be convenient. One of the respondents explains the necessity of effective communication,

“Severally I had listen and give chance to fellows to speak and air their views because I needed to create dialogues with them and to understand them”

In-depth study of IFP documentations revealed that Ford Foundation IFP tool kits, guidelines and materials are in different languages including: English-language and/or translated and customized by International Partners to versions in Arabic, Chinese, French, Indonesian, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Thai, and Vietnamese. Effective cross-cultures communication systems must therefore be established and modeled for appropriate communication processes and regularly engage, inform, update, review progress and provide feedback (Annette Sinclair et al., 2008).

#### **4.4 Challenges facing cross-cultural Management Orientation at Ford Foundation IFP**

In this last subsection, the study seeks to address the second objective of the study which is to identify the challenges facing the application of cross-cultural management orientation at Ford Foundation IFP. All the respondents acknowledged that working with people from different cultures posed challenges. Some of them feel that the differences in cross culture can cause misunderstanding at work and this in agreement with (Quappe & Cantore, 2007) who posit that, the ambiguity in a multi-cultural environment that frequently leads to misunderstandings and misinterpretations, whereas other respondents feel the differences is an excellent source for synergy and their sentiments are in agreement with those of Subhash (2001) who suggests that organizations which adopt the strategy of managing differences are synergistic organizations. This study has discussed only four of the challenges which include: Communication challenges, time management challenges, differences in opinion and deciding on work approach.

##### **4.4.1 Communication Challenges**

According to the respondents, communication is a challenge given the lack of face-to-face communication thus requiring greater levels of synchronizing collaboration and information sharing among team members. Communicating effectively challenges managers even when working domestically with a culturally homogeneous workforce (Adler, 2002). The respondents said they faced the challenge of communication both at country levels as well as with global partners, thus making it a challenge to build relationships and gain trust. Also a lot of time has to be taken on clarifying phone calls

and emails in order to ensure a clear understanding of the messages. Despite these efforts still there were miscommunications. One respondent remarked:

“Some FEs missed on very important instructions they needed, like ensuring they secure accommodation before arrival at the institutions.”

As much as the respondents did their best to provide the necessary information, some Fellows still spent their first nights in either very expensive hotel thereby overspending their whole month's stipend. This resulted from the diverse members representing different disciplines, functions or partners as in this case, the placement partners and IPs had to communicate to University Agents who in turn helped to find temporary accommodation for Fellows following the fellows request for such a need. Thus the greater the number of differences among members, the greater are team barriers to effectiveness (Gibson & Cohen, 2003).

Another possible reason for such miscommunications is technology which despite offering opportunity for frequent, easy, low-cost, around-the-clock communication, is an unreliable variable that affects the outcome of team communication and collaboration (Duarte & Snyder, 1999). Some areas where the respondents operate have very poor communication networks and some of the FEs still experienced usage challenges.

#### **4.4.2 Time management challenges**

Another major challenge is time management, whether in country or cross border and respondents confess they are always careful not to fall into the ethnocentric or parochial trap, also posited by (Cf. Adler, 1991; Hofstede, 2001). The IFP target groups are

marginalized communities with limited access to email or telephone communications. The respondents observe that many times it is a challenge to reach FEs with urgent information and it would take more days to locate them, thus delaying feedback to the IFP secretariat, placement partners or to Host Universities or other partners who needed feedback.

Another time management challenge cited by the respondents is the challenge working in different time zones. Individuals in UK, US and even South Africa are some hours ahead or late so getting work done need one to take note of this. Research shows that geographic dispersion among people generates negative outcomes, such as a decline in communication, mutual knowledge problems, and work coordination difficulties (Weisband, 2008). For instance, respondents cite cases of Fellows calling them in the middle of the night seeking clarifications. This is because when their day begins in US, night is falling in Africa.

The other challenge that the respondents cited was of scheduling activities. One respondent gave an example of finding the most appropriate time, convenient to all selection committee members/panelists. This is a challenge because most panel members are busy people responsible for other responsibilities as employees of their organization or busy with other issues. At times it was a little challenging to have them commit their time for an exercise or activity and some had to be replaced by others who were less competent or had lesser experience of the IFP model.

Organizing for FEs meetings and PAT trainings also poses a challenge because of time and distance. Some of the FEs had difficulty in securing time out of work to attend the

training sessions. Another group had the challenge of travelling long distances from their rural homes to the city where the training was conducted.

#### **4.4.3 Differences in opinion**

The other major challenge cited by the respondents was administering the IFP policy. Misunderstandings and misinterpretations often prevail because what is appropriate behavior for one culture can be inappropriate in another (Quappe & Cantatore, 2007). For instance a respondent gave an example of implementing the selection criteria. The respondent said occasionally I had challenges with the panelists and sometimes it took a lot of discussions to make some panelist see things through the IFP lens. The respondent reckons;

“A few panelists had their mindset to policies of other scholarship programs like Fulbright who are keen on academic excellence only, which IFP looks at but with consideration to other important factors.”

The values relating to people, relationships, exclusion, gender, and power and cross-cultural sensitivities as well as principles and mechanisms to manage these differences vary (Hofstede, 2008) and these, the respondents said are a challenge to manage during selection processes.

#### **4.4.4 Deciding on work approach**

Respondents had the challenge of adapting to different opinions. The challenges they said boarded on creating a pleasant environment with a positive atmosphere that make people feel appreciated by appreciating each other's weaknesses, showing understanding of each



other's pressures and influences that affect them. Such challenges occur due Language differences, mannerism, differences in working styles and patterns, differences in religion and beliefs, time management, differences in opinion, how to do things and on making decisions on work approach also supported by (Weisband, 2008).

They cited the example of personality descriptions ranging from neutral expressions such as "introverted" or "extroverted" to more strong descriptions such as "difficult", "disruptive", "egomaniac", "prima donna", "aggressive", "always right", and "can't sit quietly". The greatest challenge for them was extreme behaviors of extroverts who dominated team meetings and did not have "that empathy component" and the introverts who did not share their knowledge.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the findings collected from the analysis of the data and the conclusions reached. The chapter incorporates the various suggestions and comments given by the respondents during the interview. Findings have been summarized along the objectives of the study and conclusions have been drawn from the study. The chapter also gives recommendations for further studies.

### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The study was undertaken with two objectives, to find out how Ford Foundation IFP applies cross-cultural management orientation and to establish the challenges Ford Foundation IFP faces in cross-cultural management orientation. The study found out that Ford Foundation IFP encourages the application of cross-cultural management orientation in the entire organization. This is evident in their vision, mission and goals as well as in their working tools like the Partners handbook, (2007) as reflected also in the responses from the study. The organization should make it explicit that managers ought to wear “Culture Lens” throughout the implementation process. The study also found that the organization faces cross cultural management challenges in the process of implementing the program.

In this research the findings indicate that although the managers at Ford Foundation IFP apply cross-cultural management orientation, it is done unconsciously. Most of the managers are not aware that the skills they apply in the process of their work are cross-

cultural management orientation skills despite the fact that at all time they are dealing with complex cross-cultural environment to effectively implement the program objectives. The organization should in future organize refresher training on cross-cultural management for all managers at all levels.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The cross-cultural management orientation at Ford Foundation IFP is without doubt commendable. It can certainly be considered a success having led to Ford Foundation IFP successful recruitment of over 4,300 Fellows from all over the world, and 91% successful completion of studies. Also they have a winning 82% of Fellows return rate after studies due to their selection and recruitment criteria that are based on the development of social justice. The selection further addresses the gender and vulnerable groups, in all areas, especially the marginalized and disadvantaged localities. The program adhered to the definition of Cross-cultural management by Pu jing , (2012), that Cross-cultural management is a method of achieving established organizational goals by effective planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and controlling of the organizational owned resources in a cross-cultural environment.

The success notwithstanding, there are areas in which Ford Foundation could give due consideration in future on cross-cultural management. It has shown the need for, and how it is important to develop a distinct vision and strategy for cross-cultural management orientation. This is in consideration that not all managers come into the organization with their “cultural lens” on. This should be effectively communicated in the appropriate

channels of communication in a well coordinated and regular manner throughout the implementation process.

This study has thus shown that it is important that NGOs should 'professionalize' and, in particular, address a widespread neglect of management (Korten, 1990; Smillie, 1995), by building their capacities in an international development context to successfully look at issues through a cross-cultural lens ( Jackson.T, 2003).

#### **5.4 Recommendations for further studies**

The field of International Management is in nascent pre-paradigm state of development hence new paradigms should be explored through further research studies to shape the understanding of cross-cultural management orientation and the performance of organizations including NGOs.

This study focused on only four countries where Ford Foundation (IFP) program operates and was limited to Africa only. In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the issues surrounding cross-cultural management orientation at Ford Foundation IFP program, other countries where the program operates could be explored. This study also only focused on two of the eight processes of the program hence there is still need for the remaining six stages to be explored.

In addition, similar research studies could be carried out in other institutions, especially in the NGO sector, in order to draw lessons for cross-cultural management orientation both at country, regional and global level.

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# APPENDIX

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

### Part 1 Background information of interviewee

- a) Name.....
- b) Nationality.....
- c) Position.....
- d) Gender.....
- e) Experiences of years working with International Ford Foundation Program.....

### Part 2

1. Describe application of Cross Cultural Management orientation at the Ford Foundation International Program (IFP)?

i. Does your work at Ford Foundation IFP involve working with people from other cultures? Do you enjoy working with cross culture teams?

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ii. In your view is Ford Foundation IFP sensitive to Cross cultural issues?

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iii. What in your view are, the different approaches are of cross culture management that you apply in the process of implementing IFP program in your country?

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iv. Cross culture management plays an important role? Do you agree, if so how did it support your work process at IFP?

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v. What do you think are the typical ways to communicate a cross culture at IFP? Explain.

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2. What are the challenges facing the application of cross cultural management orientation at Ford Foundation International Fellowships?

i. In your opinion, does working with people from different culture pose challenges? Can you describe the challenges?

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ii. Do you think the differences in cross culture are a reason for misunderstanding at work?

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iii. Kindly describe the cross cultural challenges you faced in the process of work at Ford Foundation (IFP)?

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**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**  
**MBA PROGRAMME**

Telephone: 020-2059162  
 Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi  
 Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197  
 Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 19/7/2012

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

The bearer of this letter Phelisia Atok Wagide  
 Registration No. D6172973/09

is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.



  
**IMMACULATE OMANO**  
**MBA ADMINISTRATOR**  
**MBA OFFICE, AMBANK HOUSE**

## LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

POSITION	NAMES
Chief Executive Director- New York	Dr. Joan Dassin
Director of Administration –New York	Ms. Zalher Yolande
Director of Communication – new York	Ms. Diana Whitten
Country Manager – Kenya	Ms. Everlyn Anyal Musa
Country manager – Tanzania	Mr. Margaret Kasembe
Country Manager _ Uganda	Mr. Andrew Omara
Country manager _ South Africa	Mrs. Louise Africa

Phelisia Wagude  
P.O. Box 00100-23585  
Nairobi.  
Date 5<sup>th</sup> July 2012

The Executive Director  
Dr. Joan Dassin  
Ford Foundation International Fellowships Programme,  
809 United Nations Plaza, 9th Floor  
NY 10017 (212) 984-5558  
New York USA

Dear Joan,

**Re: Case Study on Ford Foundation IFP-Kenya**

I am currently in the process of doing my Masters in Business Administration project on cross culture management and would very much like to do a case study on Ford Foundation IFP –Kenya on this subject.

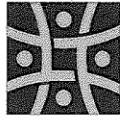
From my interactions with Ford Foundation International Program over the past years I have come to discover the Ford Foundation IFP as a successful story in its own right. I think there is a lot to say about Ford Foundation IFP but I am most keen to do a case study about the application of cross culture management in this Program.

By this letter I am requesting for your permission to proceed with the case study. The study paper will only be available at the University of Nairobi and with yourselves (if you would like a copy). I would really appreciate if you could allow me to do the case study to enable me complete my Masters of Business Administration project.

Attached please find my proposal paper for your further information and review. It gives the proposed outline of the proposed study.

I look forward to your favorable response.

Yours faithfully,  
Phelisia Wagude.



FORD FOUNDATION  
INTERNATIONAL  
FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM

July 5, 2012

Ms. Phelisia Wagude  
P.O.Box 00100-23585  
Nairobi.

Dear Ms. Wagude,

As Executive Director of the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP), I am pleased to authorize your proposed case study on IFP-Kenya. I understand that you will submit the case study as partial fulfilment for the requirements of the Degree of Master of Business Administration at the School of Business, University of Nairobi.

Having read your proposal on "Application of Cross Cultural Management Orientation at the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program (IFP) in Kenya," I am confident that the study will add to our knowledge of how IFP was implemented in Kenya, and help us to understand the degree to which explicit strategies to manage the multiple cross-cultural orientations represented by diverse actors within the program were (or were not) effective.

I understand that the study paper will only be available at the University of Nairobi. Please ensure that the paper does not include any sensitive or private information about individual IFP Fellows.

The IFP Secretariat would also like a copy of the study to contribute to the IFP Global Archives at Columbia University. Aside from its importance for IFP-Kenya, we expect that the study will be relevant to researchers from other IFP countries. These researchers should be able to access the study through the IFP Global Archives.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joan Dassin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. Joan Dassin  
Executive Director  
Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program