

**The Bernard L. Schwartz Globalization Initiative at SAIS
Leadership Development**

**The International Development Program
2007 Summer Internship Program (SIP) Report**

**Johns Hopkins University
School of Advanced International Studies**



**Prepared for
Mr. Bernard L. Schwartz**

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Executive Summary

The Bernard L. Schwartz Globalization Initiative at SAIS includes a leadership development component including the International Development 2007 Summer Internship Program (SIP). This report details the experiences of fourteen (14) SAIS students who participated in this program thanks to your generous funding. These students traveled throughout the world working with a wide array of international development organizations. In the pages that follow, you will read their personal thank-you letters, along with additional information about their specific career paths and further details about their summer internships.

The SAIS International Development students were literally scattered throughout the developing world. Two students worked to strengthen civil society in Albania by working with a public advocacy organization. One student spent the summer in a remote area of Sudan working on a microenterprise project. The capacity of a local radio station was strengthened thanks to the work of one student who worked with a grassroots NGO in Cameroon. Two students experienced the inner workings of the United Nations in Ethiopia. Finally, several students worked in different capacities for microfinance institutions throughout the world. Three students interned at the first microfinance institution in Paraguay alongside its charismatic founding leader. One of these students made a film documenting the work of this Paraguayan microfinance institution (MFI). Two students increased the capacity of an MFI in Kosovo, while new product development and impact assessments were the focus of three students working at MFIs in Rwanda.

As is clear from the letters and internship descriptions, these summer experiences have already played a valuable role in the students' future career aspirations. The SAIS IDEV summer interns have all been eager to share their firsthand experiences and are truly grateful for your support as they look ahead to expanding their careers in the field of International Development.

I. Eastern Europe

MJAFT! – Albania

Organization Description

MJAFT! (which means “ENOUGH!” in Albania) is a civil society grassroots organization advocating for good governance, active citizenship and strong communities in Albania. Its aim is to raise awareness of the many political and social problems currently facing Albania.

Internship Description

There were two SAIS interns placed at MJAFT!. Margaret Pinard researched and drafted grant concept papers and proposals, as well as planned the logistics for the youth and social programs of the organization. Ralitsa Sapundzhieva worked in the Policy Department of MJAFT!, and worked on several grant proposal projects. In addition, she explored the effectiveness of European Union aid in Albania.

Intern Biographies

Margaret Pinard

After graduating from Santa Clara University in 1999, Margaret used her political science degree to work in community development with Americorps in San Jose. Following a short stint working for a State Senate campaign in California, she was certified to teach English and moved to Istanbul to fulfill a yearlong contract to teach.

Margaret chose to spend the summer of 2007 in Tirana, Albania, working at the premier civil society organization in the country, Mjaft! Movement. She worked for the Mjaft Foundation, researching donor information, establishing partnerships for a new volunteer program to be launched, and drafting grant proposals. She also had the opportunity to observe and assist with the youth- and environment-centered social programming at the Foundation.

Now in her second year of studying International Development at SAIS, Margaret is focusing on issues of environment conservation, natural resource management, and gender equality. She plans to put this academic experience into practice with a career in sustainable development.

Ralitsa Sapundzhieva

Ralitsa graduated from Pomona College in 2006 with a degree in International Relations. Her interests as an undergraduate included post conflict reconstruction and state building. Her senior thesis explored the cases of state building by the United Nations in Kosovo and East Timor. She is from Bulgaria and attended Oxford University for a semester in 2004. She continued her exploration of Europe by attending the Bologna Center of SAIS.

Before coming to SAIS, Ralitsa held various internships in the nonprofit sector, including working for a voter awareness organization and for a community development and youth education NGO in Los Angeles. Her Summer Internship Project was in Tirana, Albania, where she worked for the main civil society and watchdog group in the country, Mjaft! (Enough!).

Ralitsa is now in her second year at SAIS on track of completing her M.A. in International Development with a concentration in Finance and Development. Her region of interest is Russia and Eurasia with an emphasis on Eastern Europe. After graduation, Ralitsa hopes to work on development projects in this region, either as part of an international organization or in the private sector.

I. Eastern Europe

Beselidhja/Zavet, World Relief, Kosovo

Organization Description

Beselidhja/Zavet (BZMF) is World Relief's microfinance institution in Kosovo. It was established in 1999 following a housing reconstruction program run by World Relief's disaster response team. The MFI has two local names, Beselidhja and Zavet, both meaning "honor" or "covenant", and having connotations of "trust" and "keeping one's commitments." These two names are significant because the

organization operates among both Serbs and Albanians, the only MFI in Kosovo to do so. A key component of the work is a peace and reconciliation initiative that brings together Serbian and Albanian businesspeople for business transactions. In less than two years, Beselidhja was able to cover all of its operating costs out of the income generated from its loans. Beselidhja disbursed its first loans in June 2000 and currently serves 1,663 clients with an outstanding portfolio of \$4 million.

Internship Description

There were two SAIS interns working at World Relief in Kosovo. Among many diverse tasks, David Bowers designed a strategic plan for conducting a marketing survey to gauge demand for potential new products and new geographical regions. In addition, he developed a Management Information System (MIS) upgrade plan and evaluated new MIS systems. Anna Sumchenko spent time observing the work of the loan officers in the field and subsequently submitted a report on strategies to improve the operations of the field team. She also worked with the Marketing Department to find new ways of informing the public about the products offered by the MFI.

Intern biographies:

David Bowers

Born in Ethiopia and raised in Kenya, David has always been interested in international development and Africa in particular. He graduated in 1998 from Taylor University with a BS in computer science. After his undergraduate degree and a year of international volunteer experience, he began work for a consulting firm developing custom software solutions. While in this job, he filled roles as a manager, systems architect, trainer, and programmer; and worked on assignments that included a major retailer, the US Navy, and a large trade association for mutual funds.

Now entering his second year as an MA in International Development with a focus in finance at SAIS, David is eager to pursue a career that blends his international experiences, his academic foundation in economics and finance, and his information technology experience. He is particularly interested in working with businesses as a means of doing economic development in Africa.

Anna Sumchenko

A 2005 graduate of Macalester College (St. Paul, MN) Anna earned her undergraduate degree in Economics and Environmental Studies. Her interest in International Affairs developed from the multicultural educational experience at Macalester and was complemented by the diverse working environment of Washington, DC.

During the summer of 2007, she worked for World Relief's Beselidhja/Zavet Micro Finance Organization in Pristina, Kosovo. Her work consisted of evaluating the operational part of the organization, as well as cooperating with the human resources department on designing and implementing the new salary and incentive systems.

Having successfully completed her first year of SAIS at the Bologna Center, Anna is now undertaking her second year of study at the Washington campus. Anna is working toward her M.A. in International Relations with a concentration in International Development and Finance. With an excellent academic background, Anna plans to utilize both her educational and professional experiences at SAIS to pursue a career in microfinance and development.

II. South America

Fundación Paraguaya – Paraguay

Organization Description

In 1985, Fundación Paraguaya became the first micro-enterprise development program in Paraguay. It is now the largest NGO in Paraguay, with 17 offices and 150 full-time staff members, supporting micro-enterprises in more than 136 towns and cities across the country. Thus far, it has disbursed over USD \$37.5 million - representing more than 186,000 loans - and currently offers technical assistance, management training and credit to over 36,000 micro-entrepreneurs.

Internship Description

There were three SAIS interns working in at Fundación Paraguaya this past summer. Marcus Holmlund's primary task was to create a permanent mechanism to analyze microfinance client poverty levels. As a result of Marcus' research, Fundación Paraguaya will be able to carry out future impact assessments. Xavier Martin-Palomas trained staff members on the use of a new microfinance software (MICROFIN) which established an improved cash flow system, providing the organization with timely and accurate information from its regional offices. Micol Pistelli's work consisted in designing and implementing a practical system for collecting socio-economic information to evaluate the impact of the "Committee of Women Entrepreneurs" program. In addition, she created a 16-minute documentary film about the program.

Intern Biographies

Marcus Holmlund

A 2004 graduate of Oxford University, Marcus earned his BA in Economics and Management. His interest in South America began during his undergraduate years and further developed during time spent working in Ecuador and Colombia prior to beginning his MA at SAIS in Bologna in September, 2006.

During the summer of 2007, Marcus worked for the Fundación Paraguaya de Cooperación y Desarrollo (Paraguayan Foundation for Cooperation and Development) in Asunción, Paraguay, where his primary task was to create a permanent mechanism to analyze microfinance client poverty levels. This will, ultimately, allow the Fundación Paraguaya to conduct impact assessments and thus to examine the extent to which it is fulfilling its core mission of helping to bring people out of poverty.

Now undertaking his second year of study at SAIS in Washington, D.C., Marcus is working towards his MA in International Relations with a concentration in International Development and International Economics. With an excellent academic record, Marcus plans to use his experiences at SAIS to pursue a career in economic development in South America.

Xavier Martin-Palomas

Xavier Martin-Palomas earned his undergraduate degree in Economics at Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona (Spain). Previously, Xavier had completed an undergraduate degree in Psychology. While he

obtained both degrees at Spanish universities, the desire to integrate his education in an increasing global society made him enroll at SAIS where he is working toward his M.A in International Relations with a concentration in Economic Development.

Xavier's professional experience has been focused on the banking and the non-profit sectors and it has been carried out in eight different countries. For example, he has worked as a financial and trading analyst for a leading Spanish financial entity in its offices in Spain and France. Over the last few years before attending SAIS, he worked at Un Sol Mon Foundation—a non-profit foundation specialized in the provision of microfinance services in developing countries—as the Coordinator of its International Microfinance Program.

During the summer 2007, Xavier worked as an intern at Fundacion Paraguaya where he was expanding his interest in microfinance. Now, Xavier is pursuing his second year of study at SAIS where he has an excellent academic performance. After graduation Xavier plans to use what he has learnt at SAIS to pursue a career in microfinance.

Micol Pistelli

A 1997 graduate of University of Bologna, Italy, Micol earned her undergraduate degree in political science. Her interest in international affairs and development cooperation led her to gain significant experience on the field, serving as an intern for the Italian NGO C.E.F.A. and for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome.

In the year 2004, she worked for the Italian Embassy in Egypt, on a program of poverty alleviation and employment generation through microcredit. Her work consisted of evaluating the impact of the program on its women beneficiaries. Before attending SAIS, she also spent two Summer terms as a student of Arabic language at the University of Amman and at the Fajr Center in Cairo.

Now undertaking her second year of study at SAIS, Micol is working toward her M.A. in International Relations with a concentration in Development Studies and Emerging Markets.

II. Africa

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – Ethiopia

Organization Description

As part of the Secretary-General's program of reform in 1998, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) was reorganized into the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Its mandate was expanded to include the coordination of humanitarian response, policy development and humanitarian advocacy. OCHA, a department of the UN Secretariat, operates through a network of field offices which support UN Humanitarian Coordinators and country teams. It also maintains regional support offices and Regional Disaster Response Advisors in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific.

Internship Description

There were two SAIS interns working at UN-OCHA in Ethiopia. Elizabeth Arlotti worked in the Information Office, compiling information and writing for their weekly and monthly publications. Michelle Langdon also researched and wrote articles for UN-OCHA publications about the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia. Both Elizabeth and Michelle worked for the Pastoralist Communications Initiative to document the Pastoralist Policy Framework Implementation Workshop at the Shaba Nature Reserve in Kenya.

Intern Biographies

Elizabeth Arlotti

Elizabeth Arlotti graduated *cum laude* in 2001 from the University of Southern California, earning undergraduate degrees in philosophy and psychology. Following her graduation she fulfilled a long-time dream and joined the Peace Corps, moving to Turkmenistan to train local teachers. After the events of September 11th 2001 all Peace Corps volunteers were evacuated from Central Asia, and Elizabeth spent a year in the U.S. teaching math and English literature/composition in the Los Angeles Unified School District. In 2002 Elizabeth began her second Peace Corps tour in Guinea, West Africa, where she taught math and “Life Skills” (AIDS education, decision making skills, etc) to junior high school students in a small village. At the end of her two-year contract Elizabeth extended her service for a third year to work as a technical assistant for a small local non-governmental organization working to promote girls’ education in Guinea.

It was during this third year, working on behalf of the local NGO in collaboration with groups ranging from local populations to international aid organizations, that Elizabeth began to consider development work as a career. After examining programs at various universities, Elizabeth chose Johns Hopkins SAIS for its rigorous academic standards and emphasis on the theoretical as well as practical components of her chosen field.

Elizabeth spent her first year at the SAIS Bologna Center and is currently in her second year of study in Washington DC, working toward her master’s degree in International Relations with concentrations in International Economics and International Development, following the Social Change and Development Track. Between her first and second years she interned as an Information Consultant at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Upon receiving her degree Elizabeth plans to return overseas, pursuing a career in international development, specifically focusing on education and women’s issues.

Michelle Langdon

A 2002 graduate of Boston University, Michelle earned her undergraduate degree in International Relations with a minor in Business Administration. Her interest in international studies was amplified with a semester spent abroad in London.

Upon completion of university, Michelle applied for the Peace Corps and was granted a position as a community health volunteer in Madagascar. She lived in a small village and for two years worked to

improve the overall health of community members by focusing on nutrition, hygiene, maternal-child health and HIV/AIDS prevention.

During the summer of 2007, Michelle interned at the United Nations in Ethiopia with Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Her work consisted of researching and publishing articles related to the humanitarian situation in Ethiopia.

After successful completion of her first year of study at SAIS Bologna, she will be finishing her work for her M.A. in International Relations with a concentration in International Development in Washington, DC.

III. Africa

The Fomunyoh Foundation – Cameroon

Organization Description

The Fomunyoh Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in 1999 to assist and support charitable causes and movements involved in the enhancement of democracy and human rights in the Republic of Cameroon. The Fomunyoh Foundation partners with philanthropists and democratic and human rights constituencies within Cameroon as well as internationally to improve the well being of the Cameroonian people, and to strengthen democratic institutions and human rights in Cameroon.

Internship Description

There was one intern working with The Fomunyoh Foundation in Cameroon. Lisette Planken worked to start the foundation's nascent radio station. She contributed to on-the-job technical assistance and training to 10 staff, and helped the in-country team to design and produce creative radio programs for broadcast.

Intern Biography

Lisette Planken

A 2005 graduate of the University of Iowa, Lisette earned her undergraduate degree in Management and International Business. Her interest in international development developed from her extensive travels as a world class athlete during her 10-year diving career.

In the summer of 2007, she worked for The Fomunyoh Foundation in Cameroon, Africa. Her work consisted of developing an organizational structure for the foundation and its nascent community based radio station by providing technical assistance and training to the full-time staff that run the radio. In addition, she also contributed to designing and producing creative radio programs for broadcast, as well as putting administrative systems in place that can allow the local staff to better manage the radio station.

Now undertaking her second year of study at SAIS, Lisette is working toward her M.A. in International Development with a focus on Africa. Lisette plans to utilize her experiences at SAIS to pursue a career in the non-profit/ NGO sector.

III. Africa

Mercy Corps – Sudan

Organization Description

Since 1979, Mercy Corps has worked amid disasters, conflicts, chronic poverty and instability to empower the poor. It has provided \$1.3 billion in assistance to people in 100 nations. Supported by headquarters offices in North America, Europe and Asia, the agency's unified global programs employ 3,400 staff worldwide and reach nearly 14.4 million people in more than 35 countries. Mercy Corps' TALME program (Twic County Agriculture, Livelihoods and Micro-Enterprise) in Southern Sudan is working hand in hand with community and local partners. This program is funded by the European Commission and is increasing the food security of more than 150,000 people in Twic County, in Warab State.

Internship Description

There was one SAIS intern with Mercy Corps in Sudan this past summer. Beniamino Savonitto worked as an officer for the Twic Agricultural Livelihoods and Micro-Enterprise (TALME) program in Twic County located at the border between North and South Sudan. During the summer, he conducted trainings on business skills and group dynamics with nine women micro-enterprise groups. He also established three pilot savings and credit groups with women in business. In addition, Beniamino developed and conducted a baseline market survey of three major markets in Twic County.

Intern Biography

Beniamino Savonitto

Beniamino earned his undergraduate degree in Political Science at Luiss University, in Rome. During these years he developed a strong interest for the theory and the practice of economic development in Africa.

During the summer of 2007, he worked for Mercy Corps, in South Sudan. His work in the Twic Agricultural Livelihoods and Micro-Enterprise program consisted of conducting trainings and supporting the activity of women micro-enterprise groups and credit groups in the region. Further he designed and conducted the first survey of the markets of Twic county, with the goal of providing a baseline for further engagement of NGOs and microfinance institutions in the county. Before attending SAIS, he had worked in Serbia for a center devoted to the development of public administration.

After a first year at the Bologna Center, Beniamino is now undertaking his second year of study at SAIS in Washington, D.C. Working towards his M.A. in International Relations, he is concentrating in International Development with particular focus on the economic and financial aspects of development. Beniamino has an excellent academic record and plans to utilize his experiences at SAIS to pursue a career in development in Africa.

III. Africa

Urwego Opportunity Microfinance Bank, World Relief, Rwanda

Organization Description

Urwego Community Banking is World Relief's microfinance institution in Rwanda. In recognition of the need to assist in the economic recovery efforts following the genocide of 1994, World Relief organized a microfinance initiative in late 1996, disbursing the first loans in July 1997. Just a few months ago in August 2007, Urwego (which means "ladder" in Kinyarwanda, the local language of Rwanda) merged with Opportunity International, creating Urwego Opportunity Microfinance Bank (UOMB), the first officially licensed microfinance bank in Rwanda. The combined operation has offices in 27 of the 30 districts in Rwanda, more than 28,000 loan clients and over 3,000 savings clients. UOMB has \$4.5 million in equity capital and a loan portfolio of \$1.7 million.

Internship Description

There were two SAIS interns working with Urwego in Rwanda this summer. Janine Mans worked largely with the finance and donor relations departments. She co-wrote a grant and a mid-grant evaluation document. In addition, she put on a short training workshop for some members of middle-management on proposal writing. Sarah Rotman's main project of the summer was carrying out an economic and social impact assessment. This project involved heading up a team of eight staff and interns to interview 150 clients throughout Rwanda in order to gauge the changes that have occurred in their lives since receiving loans.

Intern Biographies

Janine Mans

A 2003 graduate of Santa Clara University, Janine earned her undergraduate degree in economics and political science. During undergraduate studies, Janine balanced a challenging academic course load with extensive community based development work, both locally and internationally.

From 2003-2005, Janine worked as a Peace Corps volunteer in Mali, West Africa. Over the course of these two years she partnered with local organizations in the planning and implementation of a number of projects, including a national conference for the managers of savings cooperatives. Over the summer of 2007, Janine built on this experience with an internship with a microfinance bank in Kigali, Rwanda. Now undertaking her second year of study at SAIS, Janine is working toward her M.A. in International Relations with a concentration in International Development. With a few years of practical field experience and a solid academic foundation, Janine plans to work in the field of microfinance upon finishing her studies.

Sarah Rotman

A 2001 graduate of Wheaton College, located outside of Chicago, Sarah earned her undergraduate degree in Political Science. During her time at Wheaton, Sarah studied abroad in France and did a Spring Break service project in Honduras.

After college, Sarah served as a Peace Corps volunteer for two years in Benin, West Africa where she

taught English in a secondary school. Upon returning to the US, Sarah worked as Program Director for a small, startup NGO doing educational development work in Haiti and several countries in Africa. During the summer of 2007, Sarah interned with a microfinance bank in Kigali, Rwanda.

Now undertaking her second year of study at SAIS, Sarah is working toward her M.A. in International Relations with a concentration in International Development. She is focusing on the specific development sector of microfinance and the region of Africa as her future career goals.

III. Africa

Vision Finance, World Vision – Rwanda

Organization Description

Vision Finance is part of the World Vision International and Vision Fund International family. Vision Finance was formed in 1999 to directly address the economic development needs of a nation still struggling to recover from the genocide five years prior. Vision Finance currently has over 100 employees, more than 23,000 clients, and has exceeded US\$3 million principal balance extended as loans to poor entrepreneurs in Rwanda. Vision Finance is using these loans to change the lives of people in need, especially women. Its services promote holistic transformation in the lives of the economically productive poor Rwandese through the development of sustainable microenterprise.

Internship Description

There was one SAIS intern at World Vision's microfinance institution in Rwanda, called Vision Finance. Pierre Berard worked as the New Product Project Manager. He enabled Vision Finance with the capacity to offer equipment leasing to micro-entrepreneurs, in particular for coffee growers. He also created a micro-lease product for solar panels and organized focus groups to assess the potential of this product in various regions of Rwanda without electricity.

Intern Biography

Pierre Berard

A finance professional with 8 years of experience, Pierre decided to make a career change to work in development. He previously graduated from a French business school and worked in France, Switzerland and in the US.

During the summer of 2007, Pierre interned with the microfinance arm of World Vision in Rwanda. He enabled the microfinance institution with microleasing capacity in order to reduce portfolio risk and to have broader reach into rural areas. With this, he initiated the launch of two new products: solar panels and a productivity-improving bicycle for the coffee industry, the "coffee bike".

Now undertaking his second year at SAIS, Pierre is working toward his M.A. in International Relations with a concentration in International Development. His goal is to assist microenterprises in Africa and Latin America, through both technical assistance and funding.