What's Next? Facilitating Post-study Transitions

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10.1 INTRODUCTION

There are several key pivot points in any degree-based scholarship process where the alignment of the award program's goals with the realities of the individual grantee's experience is tested. International scholarship programs offering comprehensive support (meaning, more than just tuition and living costs) for advanced degree study (Master's and above) try to facilitate the individual's experience of these junctures with various program enhancements. From designing an application and selection process sensitized to the contextual realities of the target constituency, to ensuring university placements that speak to the individual's goals and interests, and continuing on to offering pre-departure orientations and academic advising, program administrators triangulate the myriad needs of beneficiaries with available resources and program goals. This chapter investigates the moment when the alignment of program goals and individual reality is thrown into particularly high relief: the end of the academic study portion of the scholarship. What will the individual do next? What does the program offer at this critical moment, and what does the individual actually need? Has the program design produced the individual profile envisioned by the program's mission? The previous chapter in this volume (Campbell, Chap. 9) delves into the

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second question; the text below, from the perspective of a practitioner and donor, explores the third.

These questions are increasingly important as international scholarship programs spotlight the cultivation of leaders for positive social change across the globe. The common default position of managing post-study transition by incentivizing 'return home' skirts an obvious challenge: return rates in and of themselves do not always indicate whether or not the program accomplished the goals envisioned in its mission. This is a particularly acute problem for programs with broad missions such as 'cultivating future leaders,' 'building open society,' or 'promoting social justice.' International scholarship programs with implicit or explicit social change agendas tend to express their missions in terms that reflect the geopolitical context within which the program has been launched. In this chapter I explore how context drives mission, how the context-mission dynamic impacts program design, and how the resulting designs open or narrow the gap between mission and grantee realities at the point of post-study decisions. The programs discussed below have been purposively selected to show how this frequently overlooked moment sits between program mission and program outcomes. Because the decisions of the individual at the end of their academic study are so strongly intertwined with program outcomes, effective post-study support options should be fully represented in the discourse of best practice in international scholarship program design.

I present three broad categories of programs with similar origins, intentions, and design. Programs in each category exemplify instructive points in the ongoing evolution of end-of-study transition facilitation, an evolution of design which seems to reflect a similar evolution in perceptions on how individuals engage with social change. The first category includes programs that emerged in Western countries in the aftermath of World War I and World War II. Programs from this era are characterized by a fairly straightforward belief that the exchange of ideas, enabled via the international exchange of scholars and students, not only advances research and builds knowledge but also enhances the chance for peace through improved cross-cultural understanding. Prominent examples of this classic model include the Fulbright Scholar Program (USA), the Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships (mainly UK), and the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst awards (DAAD, Germany).

The second category includes programs that prioritized capacity building and leadership development for newly emerging countries in the post-colonial and post-communist arenas. These designs grappled with

extending broadly conceptualized (as opposed to targeted trainings for organizational or institutional purposes—see Boeren, Chap. 2, this volume) support into politically transitioning societies and fledgling market economies, with an eye toward encouraging sectoral reforms in addition to strengthening public diplomacy. The Joint Japan-World Bank Global Scholarship Program (JJ-WB GSP), the US Department of State's Edmund S. Muskie and Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowships (Muskie/FSA), and the Chevening Awards of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office all exemplify this line of endeavor. In this category, we see implicit change agendas (i.e., expected multiplier effects generated by individual grantees) layered beneath development and reform goals, and a related increased attention to certain grantee support mechanisms.

The third category represents programmatic responses to new concepts of social change leadership and human development entering the public realm from thinkers such as Amartya Sen (1999) and Martha Nussbaum (2011). Programs in this category explicitly state their desire to cultivate social change leaders and promote new visions of inclusion by giving voice to non-traditional profiles from marginalized communities. In some ways a natural evolution from the capacity-building-for-development mantra of Category II programs, programs in Category III exhibit a capacity-building-for-social change philosophy with program designs that try to anticipate the needs of individuals from widely disparate home country contexts and personal trajectories. Financially, this program model tends to originate from foundations as opposed to national governments or international aid agencies. The Civil Society Leadership Awards (Open Society Foundations), the Rhodes Scholars, and the Gates-Cambridge Scholarships are instructive models of contemporary thinking about post-study transition for international scholarship recipients.

Although a certain level of post-study transition programming exists across all three categories, the variations at play suggest uncertainty as to what style of support, if any, should attach to this pivotal moment in the international scholarship experience. Unlike well-developed initiatives for improving applicant recruitment beyond urban centers and traditional elites, or the frequent deployment of pre-academic preparatory courses to help new grantees bridge toward unfamiliar academic environments, there is no clear-cut directive on what is necessary or even appropriate for post-study transition support. Concerns about cultivating dependency with over-engineered grantee support scaffolding are valid, especially in light of insufficient research on the efficacy of one approach over another. Nevertheless, because effective

post-study support extends the benefits of the overall investment, ultimately strengthening program impacts, it is important for program designers and donors to include post-study transitioning in their overall vision of the international scholarship experience. This is neither intuitive nor cost-free, and after the program model review below, I present several suggestions for low-cost adjustments that might circumvent commonly perceived challenges.

The methodological basis of my report is desktop research of international scholarship program websites, review of international scholarship program evaluations and reports, and review as well of internal documents from my work at the Open Society Foundations over the past 22 years. It is clear from my research that invoking broad concepts like mutual understanding, capacity building, open society, or social justice as an implicit or explicit mission of an international scholarship program, requires clarification. At the outset, program goals should state where the desired change or program impact is expected to sit: in the individual, in a specific geography, in a community of practice around a specific issue, or possibly in a larger social movement. How a donor or programming agency expresses its position on this point will help decide what kind of post-study efforts should be made to propel grantees toward expressing their social change potential most effectively.

10.2   CATEGORY I: CROSS-CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The shock and devastation of World Wars in the first half of the twentieth century released enormous energy for promoting world peace through improved cross-cultural understanding. As early as 1919, on the occasion of the creation of the Institute for International Education in New York, the Institute's founding fathers "believed that we could not achieve lasting peace without greater understanding between nations—and that international educational exchange formed the strongest basis for fostering such understanding" (IIE 2016a). As geo-political tectonics continually shifted during the 1940s and 1950s, colonial empires wobbled and gave way to the seemingly immutable alignments of the Cold War. Diplomats and politicians saw that universities had a crucial role to play in post-war reconstruction and establishing a new world order. Dominant Western powers were determined to steer the world toward value systems presumed to securitize

humanity against future assaults. The diplomatic intentions of the United States, the United Kingdom, and post-war Germany were expressed in the Fulbright, Commonwealth, and DAAD scholarship programs.

The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act (commonly known as the Fulbright-Hays Act) adopted by the United States Congress in 1961 affirmed the framework for the Fulbright Scholars Program, initiated by Senator J. William Fulbright in 1946. The purpose of the Act was

> to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual under-standing between the people of the United States and people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other countries of the world, and the contributions being made toward a peaceful and more fruitful life for people throughout the world; to promote international cooperation for educational and cultural advancement; and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world. (OLRC 2017)

Along similar lines, the British government launched the Commonwealth Scholarships in 1959 (see Kirkland, Chap. 8, this volume), at a point when preserving the alliances of the formal Commonwealth structure in the face of splintering colonial rule elsewhere was of tantamount importance. Hence their original intention to "provide a practical manifestation of Commonwealth collaboration by enabling citizens to share the wide range of educational resources and experiences that existed in member countries" (Kirkland et al. 2012). Commonwealth Scholarship recipients are reminded at the outset of their award of the program's expectations: "Our aspiration for you is that you will continue to thrive in your academic or professional career, and that your experience in the UK will boost your personal contribution to the development of your country when you return home" (CSCUK 2016). At the origins of both the Fulbright and Commonwealth programs, the mere expression of program goals was important in and of itself: a publicly stated belief in the power of academic exchange to increase mutual understanding and strengthen international relations was at this juncture both an end and a means (Wilson 2015a).

Originally established in 1925, the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD) program as we know it today grew out of the

general proliferation of exchange programs in the 1950s. Under its current motto of 'Change by Exchange,' DAAD "promotes understanding between countries and individuals and helps secure the peace" (DAAD 2016a). At the heart of DAAD's mission lies a strong commitment to building academic capacity domestically and internationally, to "meet the challenges of the future through the vibrant exchange between academic systems," and "help developing countries establish effective university systems which in turn promote social, economic and political development" (DAAD 2016a). In this sense it represents an alternative approach from the Fulbright and the Commonwealth Scholarships by embedding individual international academic mobility within a larger goal of improving higher education institutions and networks in partner countries. Nevertheless all three programs retain the broad-stroke goals characteristic of classic international scholarship programs, whereby the value of the mobility in and of itself is as important as any subject studied or degree earned. Program models in this category are characterized by large-scale government funding and are therefore intended to serve the funding country's national and international interests.

Not surprisingly, such broadly articulated missions create a real challenge for designing targeted post-study supports for program beneficiaries. A logical option with maximum space for the range of academic disciplines and countries populating the alumni communities of these programs is simply to support alumni associations and their modern iteration, virtual networks. The Fulbright Foreign Student Program has created an online global community (IIE 2016b) for international exchange among alumni. Following various options for face-to-face encounters offered by Fulbright Enrichment Seminars during the formal award period (IIE 2016c), grantees are invited to pursue volunteer projects, mentoring, and in some cases small grants back in their home country by joining the International Exchange Alumni network.

Commonwealth Scholarship grantees are similarly encouraged to join alumni networks and seek "inclusion in the Directory of Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows" (CSCUK 2016). Specifically, the Commonwealth Scholarships Commission has created a shared space for CSC Scholars on LinkedIn, both a general group where "Fellows and alumni…discuss issues and post news of conferences, events, and research activities" and professionally defined groups, "which cover a wide range of disciplines and are coordinated by experts in the field" (CSCUK 2016).

Interestingly, the 2014 DAAD Annual Report notes that while 54 percent of the foreign students express a desire to stay in Germany after completing their studies, others leave their studies early and/or find it hard to 'connect' within their German host community (DAAD 2014). Citing the large percentage of students wanting to remain in Germany in positive terms leaves open the question of whether the agency might value retention in Germany as much as it values return to home country. The 'Embarking on your Career' information on their website is almost entirely focused on employment in Germany, for instance (DAAD 2016b).

That said, DAAD does support alumni to return to Germany for 1- to 3-month academic stays—a logical and effective mechanism to strengthen the program goals of "vibrant exchange between academic systems" (DAAD 2016a). Additionally alumni can join a global web-based network, which encourages them to mentor new applicants, connect to other alumni in their region, and share employment information.

The classic exchange models favored existing intellectual elites in their earlier formations, but have since shown flexibility in their pursuit of non-traditional profiles: both DAAD and the Commonwealth Scholarships accept applications from refugees, for instance. Flexibility in outreach and selection has not necessarily generated innovations in post-study transition mechanisms; nevertheless the reliance on building networks is perhaps logical given the range of disciplines, countries, and levels of study supported by these programs. Post-study transition in this category assumes that the 'what next?' question will be answered by individual beneficiaries independently. Without explicit goals of sectoral or community impact, the notion of pro-actively bridging the individual benefits of the international scholarship experience into larger communities is largely unaddressed.

10.3   CATEGORY II: CAPACITY BUILDING AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The rise of nation-building in post-colonial (1960s/1970s/1980s) and post-communist (1990s/2000s) arenas shifted public diplomacy goals of the post-war era toward new responses to the emerging needs of transitioning societies. The language of 'capacity-building' and 'leadership development' starts to populate international academic exchange program missions, promoting sectoral reforms (governance, public policy, finance, business, and judicial, among others) deemed necessary to establish political

systems receptive to and capable of building market economies. Underlying the explicit goals of capacity-building for development and reform lurks implicit goals of social change, as pursuing these goals inevitably generate adjustments in the status quo. Pursuing capacity-building-for-development intentions assumes benefit beyond the individual to a particular sector, if not national policy but the concept of leadership in these programs stops short of cultivating leadership for change in social communities. Without abandoning the broad public diplomacy ambitions of the first category, program language in Category II nevertheless becomes more specific, perhaps more rooted in organizationally defined benefit. One scholar notes that after September 11, 2001, educational exchanges move more firmly into the 'realm of marketization,' which means the "discourse of educational exchange has subtly shifted from one of mutual understanding, goodwill, and peace to one of 'impact,' 'effectiveness,' and 'accountability'" (Bean 2015). The latter terms create an obvious tension between program mission and individual experience, since as 'free-agent' individuals, program grantees may or may not follow the linear projections toward clear results envisioned by the program mission (Campbell, Chap. 9, this volume).

Launched in 1983, the Chevening Awards program of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) "offers a unique opportunity for future leaders, influencers, and decision-makers from all over the world to develop professionally and academically, network extensively, experience UK culture, and build lasting positive relations with the UK" (Chevening 2016a). The terms 'influencers' and 'decision-makers' hint at an increasingly instrumentalist view of how international scholarship programs serve foreign policy needs: expectations of what the beneficiary will accomplish are growing more complex, more oriented toward tangible benefits (in policy-making, in government, presumably in the private sector as well) beyond the individual to his or her professional community.

Even more explicit in its capacity and leadership development intentions is the Joint Japan/World Bank Scholarship Program (JJ/WBGSP). Originating in 1987 "as part of a special Japanese initiative to strengthen human resources in developing countries," JJ/WBGSP supports individuals to develop the "skills that are necessary in order for countries to prosper in the highly interconnected and competitive global economy" (The World Bank Group 2017). Somewhat unusually, the program goals also includes expectations for how Japanese beneficiaries should contribute to international development: "Japanese national scholars are expected to advance their professional career with a keen focus on the alleviation of

poverty and enhanced shared prosperity in developing countries" (The World Bank Group 2017). The notion of a global community of professionals plays out further in the post-study support mechanisms included in this scholarship model (see below).

The US government was quick to exploit both diplomatic and development opportunities created by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Originally launched in 1992, as the Benjamin Franklin Fellowships, the Edmund S. Muskie and Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Program was the first openly competed scholarship for US-based study in the 15 states of the former USSR. The Scholarship Programs department at OSF was one of four original administering agencies, an engagement that lasted from 1992 to 2004. "The purpose of the Muskie Program is to train people who will assume leadership positions in their native countries"; people who are "able to demonstrate professional aptitude and leadership potential in the field of specialization" and who are "lacking a source of funding for study in the United States or access to another US-based training program" (Muskie/ FSA 1994). Including a financial need criterion sent a clear message about tapping new profiles, a message reinforced by Program directives for recruiting in non-capital cities and striving for gender equity. Similar to the origins of the Fulbright and Commonwealth programs, offering publicly competed, merit-based awards in the post-Soviet context in itself meant promoting transparency and access. Beyond this notable characteristic, all three of these examples represent nuanced but significant departures from the classic Category I models, and their post-study transition mechanisms (see below) underscore in particular their emphasis on practical applications of international study abroad.

This category represents perhaps the biggest gap between mission and design at the post-study transition moment: despite clear mandates to recruit beyond traditional elites in the target countries, there is little programmatic attention to the difficult choices those new profiles face after their studies are complete. The intention to spur reform via individual capacity building does however lead to some innovations such as pre-study language classes, cross-cultural orientations, and mid-year grantee conferences. Post-study transition support mechanisms in this category are characterized by an emphasis on post-scholarship professional networks and employment. Connecting alumni for the sake of general associational benefit (Category I) now adopts a more purposive agenda and language: alumni networks should advance professional careers, not just lead to greater understanding across cultures. The option to take up post-study internships

materializes, in addition to support for professional networks within online alumni communities.

The Chevening awards scheme includes 'Chevening Connect,' linking current grantees to alumni via a web-based matching program featuring search options by subject area, country of origin, industry type, current location, and current employment. The idea is that this encourages peer-to-peer professional connections, a kind of 'buddy system' that supports mentoring (Chevening 2016b). Professional networking is the tool deployed by the JJ-WBGSP as well, in their "Alumni and Scholars Capacity Enrichment Network for Development" (ASCEND) initiative. ASCEND will "create and nurture active JJ-WBGSP alumni networks in countries and regions, connecting them to the World Bank and Japan," and "(P)repare JJ-WBGSP scholars to return home after completion of their degrees to make full use of their new skills and contacts to enhance the effectiveness and impact of their home institutions" (The World Bank Group 2017). A key component of ASCEND is an online discussion forum linked to a database of grantee/alumni CVs and thesis abstracts.

The Muskie program took a slightly different approach, with post-study career support that sought to extend the benefit of alumni professional expertise to the needs of local institutions of higher education, in hopes of creating wider and sustained impact. Seeking to build local capacities to teach the supported fields of study, the Scholarship Programs at OSF designed the Support for Community Outreach and University Teaching (SCOUT). This initiative supported both full and part-time teaching and special project activities that built upon the grantees' academic and professional experience. Full-time Teaching Grants were designed "to stimulate and facilitate the development of academic careers of Muskie/FSA alumni in their home countries and assist them in applying their knowledge and experience towards educating young people in their countries in the spirit of values of open civic society, rule of law, market economy and democracy."[1] Part-time Teaching awards allowed returning alumni to combine "their professional activities with university-level instruction. The Program supports ... alumni ... who have primary vocations outside academia in their home countries but are interested in developing and providing instruction at institutions of higher education or post-diploma training and retraining."[2]

In an early move to promote home-country civic engagement for returning international scholarship recipients, SCOUT also offered *Special Project Grants*, whereby alumni could submit proposals for projects

"designed to strengthen community, secondary and higher education by introducing innovative content, methods and materials of teaching and research, strengthening academic and scholarly exchange and fostering school and university linkages to the community."[3] SCOUT represents how multiple goals can be bundled into a post-study options package. It also shows how capacity-building models can enhance their impact by addressing *internal* home country brain drain (from academe to the public or private sector) as well as international brain drain. As an approach that went beyond the targeted professional networks common to many capacity-building scholarship models of the time, SCOUT exemplified new thinking about creating wider circles of influence for individual scholarship beneficiaries.

Transitioning and low-income countries continue to represent 'windows of opportunity' to improve access to international scholarship opportunities. Doing so necessitates preparatory initiatives (language training, pre-departure orientations, standardized test classes) to help bridge the gap non-elites frequently face in highly competitive international award programs. As applicant pools grow more inclusive, the international scholarship experience starts to represent what can be called a 'structured disruption' in the lives of the individuals seeking these new pathways. As noted, program designs acknowledge this disruption by devising various ways to improve access to and performance during the scholarship. Yet the enhancements attached to the capacity-building models seem to assume that the experience of winning and participating in the scholarship will suffice in preparing beneficiaries to achieve the wider institutional and societal goals of the program. How the structured disruption of the experience actually plays out for the individual has been treated elsewhere (Baxter, Chap. 6 and Campbell, Chap. 9, this volume); the next section of this chapter looks at several program design options that might mitigate some of its negative side effects.

10.4   CATEGORY III: CULTIVATING SOCIAL CHANGE LEADERS

Social change scholarship frameworks articulate expectations beyond individual benefit toward what an individual can do for his/her home community ('agents of change'). The added dimension of driving social (beyond sectoral or institutional) change sharpens the importance of post-scholarship choices, signaling a need for program designs sensitized to dramatically different social, political, economic, and academic cultures

across the globe. The emphasis on 'leadership' (already apparent in Category II) points to a complex expectation that the 'leaders' will be prepared to actively promote social change. In other words, normal scholarship benefits of deepening knowledge, building professional sectoral expertise, and absorbing cultural differences are now expected to produce results for broadly defined 'communities,'—possibly communities of professional practice, but also issue-oriented social groups, and, perhaps most challenging, marginalized geographic spaces and constituencies. The intention to create leaders may apply to any number of societal sectors—public or private, academic, or professional—but the emphasis is decidedly on empowering individuals to be agents of change.

The recently launched Civil Society Leadership Awards (CSLA) of the Open Society Foundations is a case in point. Structurally similar to the Muskie awards (full cost coverage, targeted fields of study, targeted countries, openly competed with a multi-phase selection process, and with various enhancements to assist non-traditional applicants), CSLA is an amalgam of scholarship programs administered by OSF from 1994 to 2013. A comprehensive award program openly competed in 17 countries "where civil society is challenged by a deficit of democratic practice in local governance and social development," CSLA supports "individuals who clearly demonstrate academic and professional excellence and a deep commitment to leading positive social change in their communities" (CSLA 2016). The program prioritizes outreach to community leaders and students in marginalized countries in a systematic attempt to help these individuals develop and improve their ideas and visions for leading change. Program guidelines encourage the selection of candidates with unusual personal trajectories as well as those with more traditional resumes, seeking a mix of professionals, activists, and authentic local voices.

The Gates-Cambridge and Rhodes scholarship programs are also explicit in their goals to create social change leaders. Gates Cambridge seeks to "build a global network of future leaders committed to improving the lives of others" (2017); Rhodes Scholars will exhibit "outstanding intellect, character, leadership, and commitment to service, [and] demonstrate a strong propensity to emerge as 'leaders for the world's future'" (The Rhodes Trust 2017a). The post-study transition mechanisms attached to all three programs opens up a relatively new area of activity for international scholarship programs, that of empowering individuals to lead if not create communities of social change-oriented citizens.

Once again seeking to link the power of the international scholarship grantee to the needs of organizations, the Scholarship Programs at OSF

recently launched the Civil Society Professionals Program (CSPP), an innovative internship opportunity for grantees of the Civil Society Leadership Awards. Whereas the SCOUT initiative described above sought to create or fortify links between returning professionals and local universities, the CSPP seeks to "bridge the academic experience of Scholarship Programs' grantees to professional opportunities that can both facilitate their return home and link them to the global OSF network and wider civil society" (CSPP 2016). The intention now is to extend the benefit of the individual scholarship into local, regional, and even international communities of civil society organizations. Our assumption is that this 'network immersion' will improve the capabilities of the individual, strengthen the capacities of the hosting organization, and cultivate a sense of shared purpose among those working towards building open societies. The internships are competitively awarded after hosts and grantees collaboratively propose an internship project; the process itself therefore embodies tangible results of active professional networking. Still in its infancy, the model remains untested; one prospective vulnerability may well be a lack of peer-to-peer support captured in the Gates-Cambridge and Rhodes models.

The Gates-Cambridge Scholarship Program and the current iteration of the Rhodes Scholarships at Oxford exemplify a highly evolved approach to post-study transition challenges, by setting the stage for this transition well before it actually transpires. Exploiting the added value of clustering grantees at one host university, these program designs include enhancements throughout the course of study that encourage reflective and confidence-building approaches to managing ambiguity and decisionmaking. Rhodes Scholars at Oxford participate in a 'Service and Leadership Program' (The Rhodes Trust 2017b) that includes skills workshops, global challenge discussions, internships, and grantee retreats. In their second and final year of study, the grantee retreat focuses specifically on preparing for post-study transition. 'Transition therapy' includes exercises to promote personal growth awareness alongside professional identity construction. Back on campus, multiple student-led clubs cultivate fledgling networks for contemporary social issues: Rhodes Social Impact Group, Rhodes to Asylum, and the LGBTQ Society are some of the grantee-defined groups available.

Gates-Cambridge Scholars also benefit from on-campus enhancements within their 'Learning for Purpose' program (Learning for purpose 2017). Designed and implemented by the grantees themselves, Learning for Purpose offers a variety of interactive options ('brain trusts,' TED talk video

discussions, scholar blogs, scholar-led skills workshops) exploring cross-cutting themes such as 'Driving Change,' 'Sharing Ideas,' 'Crafting/Creativity,' 'Catalyzing Teams,' and 'Reflection and Resilience.' In this case, the attention to cultivating generic life skills with peer-to-peer learning underscores a key point for the scholarship holders: they are a resource as well as a friend for their peers.

Active reflective practice during the academic term not only recognizes the individual's need to approach personal growth and complex societal topics with openness and confidence, but also sows the seeds for coherent and meaningful networks in the post-scholarship world. Both the Rhodes and Cambridge models explicitly acknowledge and create space for peer-to-peer learning, underscoring the importance of developing personal coping capacities in tandem with professional and academic competencies during the scholarship period. It is possible that some of this peer-to-peer learning occurs naturally in programs that support clusters of students at host universities, but leaving this crucial interaction open to chance is not ideal. Inevitably, some grantees will end up on the outskirts of informal groups of friends, and those are precisely the individuals who might benefit most from facilitated and inclusive peer spaces.

International scholarships explicitly promoting positive social change agendas frequently operate on the assumption that an individual's development of 'soft skills' (critical thinking, inter-cultural competency, decision-making, adaptability, etc.), layered atop rigorous academic study, will naturally cultivate future leaders (Baxter, Chap. 7, this volume). Yet we have learned that winning the award and achieving a degree is not sufficient for actually realizing program goals. Several of the innovations showcased above suggest that reflective practice during the scholarship itself may well mitigate certain post-study transition challenges. The OSF model suggests a different approach to amplifying professional networking as a post-study option. In all three examples, we see complex interpretations of what is meant by a 'comprehensive' scholarship, and the implications for resource allocation are interesting: the goals of a program and its grantees might well find closer alignment if transition-oriented discussions and targeted follow-on options figured more prominently in the program's overall design.

10.5   COMMON CHALLENGES, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

What we now need to consider are the realities of program design and implementation, staying cognizant that some of the more attractive features described above exist within specific and well-resourced environments, and

are preceded by recruitment, selection, and placement practices that may or may not be available throughout the landscape of international scholarship schemes. Programs and donors frequently allocate resources with a difficult choice in mind: adding more programming may mean supporting fewer individuals. This is a tough dilemma, particularly for programs extending awards into politically and economically constrained communities where simply helping people 'get out' is a compelling imperative. Yet perhaps 'more' programming isn't the answer so much as 'different' programming. For instance, most comprehensive international scholarship programs (meaning, those that offer enhancements beyond funding travel, stipend, and university fees) already allocate resources to events or gatherings whose content could be supplemented by if not recalibrated towards 'what's next?' discussions. Given the pertinence of cultivating good decision-making and transition skills for grantees early on in their studies, orientation programs are a natural moment to begin conversations about the non-academic challenges that lie ahead and available resources to draw on. University site visits by program staff, grantee conferences, and any skills-oriented workshops are also logical contexts for similar discussions.

In addition to financial cost, consideration of human resources is unavoidable. Administering international scholarship programs is already labor-intensive, and adding new elements to program design and implementation requires staff time, attention, and follow through, as well as quality staff training. Here the Gates-Cambridge and Rhodes Scholars models offer possible solutions: One, work with host university partners to see if existing resources on-campus could be applied to preparing grantees for post-study transition (see Baxter, Chap. 7, this volume) and, two, explore what the grantees themselves can bring to the table; peer-to-peer learning empowers the grantees to think of themselves as resource leaders and encourages them to collaboratively identify the questions and issues most relevant to their needs. The latter model does not necessarily depend on having a certain number of grantees clustered at one host; one could imagine regional peer groups communicating online that would work as well, especially if the grantees within the designated region have had previous face-to-face meetings earlier in their program. That noted, further research on the added value of enhancements, generally for developing the inter-personal skills, know-how, networks, mentors, and work experience necessary to ease post-graduation transition is needed to convince scholarship program leaders to increase investment in post-study options.

Outside of staff- or grantee-led reflective discussion, other academic and non-academic experiences could also help grantees confront ambiguous and difficult choices with managed expectations if not full confidence. Recent discourse related to cognitive behavior (Holmes 2015) suggests that exposure to the unfamiliar and dislocation from home community bolster mental capacity not only for tolerance, but also for creativity. Within social change agendas, creative problem-solving is clearly a quality we value highly and expect rigorous academic study in alternative environments to produce.

Perhaps it is time to adopt a more holistic vision of what 'learning' in international scholarship programs means. For professional degree earners, working with host country civil society organizations and local government offices engaged in community welfare could open up new insights into how various kinds of resources can be identified and creatively applied, even in under-resourced areas. Alternatively, participating in a local advocacy effort, perhaps even local demonstrations, would flesh out the strengths and weaknesses of host country government policy and public practice. Fairly common to undergraduate academic experiences, options to volunteer in low income communities, attend city council meetings, participate in environmental clean-ups, and intern with municipal government offices would offer valuable experiential learning contexts for international scholarship students, particularly those anticipating leadership roles in their home communities. For visiting professors from sending country universities, observing if not participating in university-community initiatives could give them fresh ideas for developing their home institution's ability to offer politically palatable yet socially transformative opportunities for their students.

Helping international scholarship beneficiaries directly experience communities of practice outside of the classroom would certainly tighten the alignment between social change goals and individual grantee experience. Fostering reflective practice within communities of shared values during the scholarship offers grantees a stronger position from which to contemplate next steps, because it exposes them to the choices others make in facing uncertainty, ambiguity, and unknown consequences. If programs are deliberately seeking to cultivate social change leaders, building social change experiences into the scholarship program clearly advances the goals of the program.

Ultimately the challenge of establishing causality between specific program elements and desired social change outcomes begs for more research and new approaches to evaluation. Vulnerabilities in all of the models

discussed raise the question of breadth vs depth: would focusing resources on one style of engagement, one region, or one issue deliver more sustained results than a multi-pronged enhancement approach? Is there a strong rationale for developing and strengthening a 'critical mass' of social change leaders in a particular sector and country/region? Can critical mass theory help us design better programs for positive social change?

10.6   Concluding Observations

Channeling resources toward finding, selecting, and preparing grantees to perform well in their host environment is not synonymous with supporting positive social change in the home environment. Implicitly of course we all recognize that actually creating positive social change on a meaningful scale in any community or country is both an ambitious and ambiguous target. Scholarship programs nevertheless play a crucial role in helping individuals develop their own ideas, capabilities, and strategies for producing a larger good.[4]

Program goals are effectively advanced by thoughtful holistic program designs that recognize key pivot points for individual beneficiaries. Whether the individual opts for an immediate return home, a deferred return via another international experience (another advanced degree, a job or an internship, or a personally motivated relocation), or an extended stay in their host country, the scholarship program's ability to situate this individual further along his or her path to becoming an agent for positive social change depends largely on its ability to prepare the individual for managing difficult and ambiguous choices.

Programs designed to foster positive social change in struggling communities must think outside of the purely academic box, and put as much attention to the post-study experiences and choices of their grantees as to their recruitment and selection strategies, their pre-academic preparatory support, and their engagement with grantees during the scholarship period. If a program is primarily interested in changing the facts on the ground of the sending communities and countries, post-study transition support should incentivize return home, possibly with support for home country projects and local internships, and, where possible, regular regional gatherings.

Alternatively, if a program prioritizes change or progress within a targeted issue area (access to justice, health rights, transparent governance, drug policy), post-study transitioning can be facilitated with international

internships at policy-making hubs, or additional training in advocacy, litigation, and data-driven research. Positive social change can emerge from both physical return and professional returns (Dassin 2009), but a program's goal should be clearly supported by its design, with a clear and consistent awareness of the kinds of choices the individual will have to make, and the points along the way where the program can help.

A key question therefore for grantees at the end of their studies is: what's next? In this chapter we reviewed program designs that try to help grantees answer this question in ways that affirm and reflect the goals of the international scholarship program. To be sure, program administrators, donors, and state agencies can choose to downplay this moment, and this question, in program design, on the basis that more programming risks creating a type of grantee dependency on scholarship support. But I would argue that this approach is shortsighted, because at such a critical point for the individual and the larger goals of the program, it is logical and feasible to incorporate thoughtful options that pave the way to greater returns on the overall investment in human potential.

We are witnessing a gradual closing of civil society space in many countries around the world, a situation which both demands significant investment in future leaders, but also calls into question what constitutes appropriate 'expertise,' much less 'leadership,' in evolving global realities. International scholarship programs breathe life into local and global conversations about knowledge, learning, and human development by offering transformative experiences to individual scholars. Bracing for uncertainty and ambiguity, in fact 'learning' how to be uncomfortable with the choices at hand but still be able to move forward, are qualities that are increasingly essential for individuals seeking to lead positive social change. Conditions that pertained in their home community at the time of application may or may not pertain at the time they graduate. The content of the courses they undertook may not match up to viable jobs back home. The expectations of their families may well change from eager support to desperate demands. Their own perceptions about what they need in order to survive and even thrive will be challenged.

Traditionally promoted with the belief that exposure to alternative educational resources and cultures would spur mutual understanding and promote peace, many scholarship programs have more recently shifted toward promoting 'positive social change' and 'leadership.' Given evolving perceptions of the agency of individuals in social change, donors and administering agencies need to recalibrate their vision of what a pathway to positive social

change should look like in today's international scholarship program world. Attending to the individual grantee's '"what's next?' moment is an essential part of this task.

NOTES

1. Support for Community Outreach and Teaching (SCOUT), Internal Memo, November 6, 2000.
2. Support for Community Outreach and Teaching (SCOUT), Internal Memo, November 6, 2000.
3. Support for Community Outreach and Teaching (SCOUT), Internal Memo, November 6, 2000.
4. Aryeh Neier, personal communication with author, June 10, 2016.

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