

# JUST ASSOCIATES

*“Justice and power must be brought together, so that whatever is just may be powerful, and whatever is powerful may be just.”* Blaise Pascal

People around the world increasingly realize that problems such as corruption, poverty and inequality can only be overcome through the exercise of active citizenship and political power.

People-centered solutions to injustice require energetic, informed citizen power capable of promoting fair, practical policies and holding decisionmakers accountable. That crucial citizen power requires courageous civic leadership, bold visions and strong organizations that represent and empower women and men across races, nations, generations, and other differences.

## JUST ASSOCIATES HELPS CHANGE HAPPEN

Just Associates (JASS) helps provide people and organizations with the knowledge and tools to create more equitable and healthy societies. Founded in 2001, JASS is an international advocacy support and learning network. We collaborate with groups to build and strengthen leadership and change strategies to promote economic, environmental and social justice, democracy and rights for all peoples.



### ***Strengthening Leadership & Strategies for Social Justice***

JASS works with organizations in the U.S. and around the globe to sharpen their political analysis and link their visions of a more just world with effective strategies for promoting democratic solutions to inequality.



### ***Making Economics Democratic***

JASS helps people understand how economic policies and actors impact their choices and livelihoods. We work with unions, NGOs and grassroots groups to develop advocacy strategies for economic decisionmaking that is fair, accountable, and more conducive to healthy communities.

### ***Promoting Women's Rights***

Drawing on a long history with women's rights movements, JASS supports local and global efforts to help women organize and build coalitions across agendas to challenge political and economic inequality and fundamentalism.



### ***Creating Local and Global Bridges***

JASS helps to connect citizens around the world so they can link local actions to global change efforts and create ever more powerful and inclusive international networks for social justice to deal with worldwide problems of violence, poverty and disease.

## JASS PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR 2003

### 1. Strengthening Leadership and Strategies for Social Justice

#### **World Social Forum: Building Solidarity Between Global Movements (January 2003)**

In collaboration with the Association for Women's Rights in Development, Just Associates organized a highly successful workshop at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in January 2003: *A dialogue for building movement solidarity for economic justice, peace and women's rights*. Global leaders like Medea Benjamin (Global Exchange and CodePink), Gigi Franciso (DAWN, Our World Is Not For Sale, International Gender and Trade Network), and John Samuel (National Centre for Advocacy Studies) were featured speakers.

#### **Exploring Linkages between Rights and Participation (May 2002 – February 2004)**

JASS is coming to the end of its collaboration with the Participation Group of the Institute of Development Studies on an action-learning project which explored the links and connections between work on rights and participation. We worked with teams of activists and educators, including four of our Associates, who are intimately tied to social movements, women's rights and citizen efforts in Brazil, Kenya, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe. This project sought to learn about and support an emerging trend where groups concerned with poverty and development are interested to change their approach from focusing on basic needs to basic rights, or rights-based development. These efforts are expanding the parameters of human rights from a focus on political and civil rights to economic, social and cultural rights. In 2003, we completed a draft "discourse review", exploring the ways key US-based international actors, including groups working on human rights, development, and democracy/governance, conceptualize the links between rights and participation and how this translates into practice. In June we co-facilitated in a meeting of all the project partners to examine progress to date and begin to identify key lessons and challenges. We are in the process of finalizing our reports to be distributed widely in early 2004.

#### **Catholic Relief Services, Advocacy Capacity Building (September 2002 – 2004)**

JASS continues to work with Catholic Relief Services as they seek to institutionalize advocacy capacity throughout the organization. Based on an initial learning and needs assessment, JASS is providing technical support and guidance to a range of departments at all levels of CRS within the U.S. and worldwide to develop a variety of tools and processes to integrate political analysis and strategy into their development work. Advocacy has evolved as a way to operationalize CRS' commitment to "Making Justice and Solidarity Real", and provides an opportunity to work with CRS staff in local U.S. dioceses as well as to build on successful international advocacy campaigns conducted by CRS around such contentious issues as conflict diamonds, HIV/AIDS, debt and trafficking. During 2003, JASS completed an advocacy training module and toolkit for structural analysis for use by CRS staff. We are currently negotiating a training of trainers and regional pilot workshops to train CRS staff in the use of the advocacy module. The first pilot workshop was held in Sarajevo in November 2003 with CRS-Europe staff and partners.

#### **Innovations in Impact Evaluations and Learning (July 2002 – 2004)**

JASS is collaborating with ActionAid in their four-year initiative to develop learning and evaluation processes that help groups assess advocacy impact and identify key lessons for improving their efforts. This initiative is focused on designing flexible, participatory and innovative tools for program assessment and organizational learning that build on local groups' goals and vision of change and incorporate insights

from citizen advocacy experiences around the world. The collaboration also seeks to generate cross-cutting lessons on factors contributing to effective advocacy in different contexts.

### **Participatory Governance in China (February 2003)**

Valerie Miller collaborated with the LogoLink program of the Institute for Development Studies and the Ford Foundation to co-facilitate a workshop on participatory urban governance in Wuhan, China. The workshop brought together some 30 participants from 8 cities to examine different approaches to problem-solving and planning that emphasized active citizen engagement. The participants were a combination of local government officials, neighborhood leaders and NGO staff who face the challenges of China's entry into the global marketplace and are working in pilot initiatives on urban participation throughout the country. As in many countries, China is confronting the challenges of downsizing government services and state-run economic enterprises.

### **Advocacy Learning and Strategy Workshops: Zimbabwe and Tanzania (March and June 2003)**

Just Associates was invited to collaborate with MWENGO (Reflection and development center for NGOs in East and Southern Africa) and AFRODAD (African Forum and Network on Debt and Development) in an advocacy workshop for experienced African activists involved in the East and Southern Africa Debt Networks and Land Rights Alliances to explore the new challenges and strategies needed to address global and national economic trends.

In the context of their Tanzanian Advocacy Partnership Program, PACT invited Just Associates to facilitate an introductory advocacy workshop for their partner organizations. Eighty people participated in two workshops that explored the basics of strategic planning for citizen-centered advocacy. Several Tanzanian case studies provided a grounding for discussions and allowed participants to examine their own context and experience more deeply.

### **CDROM course: Action for Change-Advocacy and Citizen Participation (Feb 2003 – 2004)**

JASS was invited by Fahamu, an organization committed to supporting progressive social change in the South through the use of information and communication technologies, to collaborate in developing a CDROM course titled *Action for change: advocacy and citizen participation*. The course is based on the book *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, and is one of eight courses in Fahamu's Human Rights Training series. The course aims to help activists analyze, plan, and manage strategies geared to improving the lives and participation of marginalized people and forging broad alliances of reform across society with a clear understanding of potential risks. We will be finalizing the text for the course in early 2004 and then piloting the course mid-year.

### **Online Course on Advocacy and Human Rights (on-going)**

Valerie Miller collaborates with Human Rights Education Associates in teaching online courses on advocacy and human rights for activists around the world. The two-year collaboration has produced a network of alumni who are working in the field of human rights on issues that range from land reform and HIV/Aids to women's rights and immigration.

## 2. Making Economics Democratic

### **Economic Policy Empowerment Program (EPEP) (July 2002 – 2004)**

JASS is working with a wide variety of European development organizations through the European Network on Debt and Development's (EURODAD) Economic Policy Empowerment Program to help them design support strategies that empower people to be involved in economic decisionmaking processes. In 2003, JASS developed guidelines for EPEP's analysis and documentation of economic policy empowerment work. Moving into 2004, we will be developing an "economic policy empowerment handbook", drawing on our work in popular education and economic literacy. EPEP/Eurodad has also requested JASS' support as they move through a difficult process of organizational integration and change.

### **Economic Advocacy Training for Solidarity Center and Trade Union partners (July 2003 – May 2004)**

JASS was invited by the Solidarity Center, the international arm of the AFL-CIO, to evaluate its economic literacy programs in Indonesia and Sri Lanka and to strengthen the capacity of South Eastern Europe trade unions to provide economic literacy training and capacity-building for members. The learning generated by the economic literacy evaluations will lay the foundation for a broader education program in Europe and contribute critical lessons to similar efforts around the world.

### **Democratizing Economics: Linking Economic Literacy with Empowering Strategies for Change with Action Aid International (2004)**

ActionAid approached JASS to design and facilitate a learning and action project with its staff and partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America and other key activists and academics. We have prepared a draft concept paper and are hopeful that funding will be available in 2004 to expand this work.

## 3. Promoting Women's Rights

### **Feminist Advocacy Capacity Building in Latin America**

*Las Dignas: Feminist Advocacy Workshop with Women (February 2003)*

With support from UNIFEM, Mujeres por la Dignidad y la Vida (Las Dignas) invited JASS to facilitate a workshop on advocacy capacity-building with key activists and academic groups from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Themes of power, resistance, and post-conflict served as the backdrop to the gathering which provided participants with an opportunity to examine their own strategies critically in the light of other experiences around the world. Following this workshop, the UNDP-El Salvador office contracted Just Associates to help Salvadoran women's organizations to begin development of a collective advocacy plan.

*Planning and Coalition Building: Expanding Women's Rights (Mozambique and Zimbabwe, March 2003)*

At the request of Oxfam America's Southern Africa Regional Office, Just Associates ran a workshop for Oxfam partners in Mozambique and Zimbabwe to strengthen their strategies on women's rights. Since the workshop, the Mozambican women's rights coalition led a successful campaign to gain women's equal rights to inherit property.

### **WEDO (on-going)**

JASS has continued to occasionally work with the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) in New York on strategic planning. Founded by prominent American feminist, Bella Abzug, WEDO plays a critical leadership role on UN-focused advocacy to fight for and safeguard commitments to women's rights in UN agreements. As they navigate the complexities of the changing global environment, WEDO has established an on-going relationship with Just Associates for support to staff and board on political analysis and strategic planning.

#### **Gender and Rights-Based Approaches (November 2003 – April 2004)**

Associate Everjoyce Win, who became Action Aid's International Gender Advisor in early 2003, has asked Just Associates to take the lead in developing a manual on gender and rights-based approaches for use by ActionAid staff and partners. As ActionAid shifts to more fully incorporate rights-based approaches in their development work, this manual will be an important contribution to strengthening conceptual and practical clarity about the significance of rights based approaches as they focus on the structural and systemic causes of inequality and injustice.

### **4. Creating Local and Global Bridges**

#### **Interim Director, Action Aid USA (December 2003-April 2004)**

During the first quarter of 2003, JASS' Executive Director juggled a part-time but demanding job as interim director of Action Aid's new US office, taking over from JASS colleague, Irungu Houghton. She recruited the new director, Atila Roque, a prominent Brazilian economic justice advocate and co-coordinator of the World Social Forum and hired a policy director. In that role, she became directly involved in a number of global and regional campaigns where she gained important contacts and insights for JASS work. She continues to advise and work with Atila and is currently exploring a joint project for connecting with US constituencies on global issues.

#### **Linking with U.S. Activists (June 2003 – June 2004)**

JASS is jointly funded from Ford with the Grassroots Policy Project (GPP), involved in helping US groups understand, build and transform power more effectively. In 2004, we hope to work more directly with GPP in their many efforts to help state coalitions and US training centers to integrate power analysis and make significant strategic shifts so that their work deals with ideas as well as policy. We're hoping that this project will enable GPP and JASS to share and weave together the best of their work, and build real bridges between our partners. As a Ford grantee, JASS participated in a convening of key US social justice leaders in the summer and gained a lot of insights about the tensions and challenges regarding race, elections, gender and strategic choices among these groups.

## Publications / Reports

- *A New Weave of Power People & Politics* is now available in Russian and the Spanish version is scheduled for publication by mid-2004.
- *Making Change Happen: Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, workshop report
- *Seeing Eye to Eye? Inter.Action Member Agencies and World Bank Staff Assess their Operational Collaboration and Policy Engagement for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development*, by Darcy Ashman
- *Some research gaps in gender budget work from an advocacy perspective* and *Highlights from a citizen/gender budget advocacy project in Indonesia* published in the BRIDGE, Gender & Budgets Cutting Edge Pack
- *A dialogue for building movement solidarity for economic justice, peace and women's rights*. Report from World Social Forum workshop
- *Advocacy Training Module: Making justice and solidarity real* (CRS)
- *Structural Analysis Toolkit* (CRS)
- *Guidelines for Country Mapping and Case Studies on Economic Empowerment* (EPEP)



## Conferences / Activities

January 14, 2003: Convened a seminar in DC with well-known South African gender economist, Debbie Budlender on *Fair and Responsive Budgeting: Tools and lessons from gender and pro-poor budgeting*.

March 3, 2003: facilitated *Introduction to Advocacy* for class on Art & Politics at Corcoran College of Art & Design

September 7-10, 2003: workshop - *Strengthening Social Change Through Evaluation and Learning*, JASS participated as co-facilitator and resource

November 17-22, 2003: workshop - *Action Aid in Practice—Rights and Empowerment*, JASS participated as resource person in this staff development workshop to develop common approaches to rights-based development.

December 5, 2003: co-organized a workshop with InterAction on *Local Stories – Global Implications: Using Bolivia's Current Crisis to Understand Economic Globalization* featuring Jim Shultz and Marcela Olivera