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FELLOWSHIP...



## **ANWAR FAZAL, 1972 MALAYSIA**

Chairperson, Think City

Forty-one years after the completion of his Eisenhower Fellowship, Anwar Fazal (1972, Malaysia) reflects on the course that this experience set for him throughout his life. Fazal notes that his six month expedition as an Eisenhower Fellow “enabled my lifetime journey in two principal tracks of my life – the challenges of urban governance and that of advocacy for the public interest.” In each of those facets, Fazal has gone on to have a tremendous impact.

Fazal was selected as a Fellow in part for his leadership in activism, and upon his return to Malaysia this commitment was strengthened by his fellowship. As the Director of the Asia and Pacific Regional Office of the International Organization of Consumers Unions (IOCU) during 1974 – 1990, and the President of IOCU, Fazal ensured that the voice of the poor consumers in the developing world was heard in international fora. Fazal says that these roles were precipitated by the richness of knowledge and experience he gained in witnessing the challenges of poverty, crime, drug abuse and environmental issues, as well as his meetings with the American Indian Movement and Ralph Nader at the Board of the Consumers Union in the U.S. during his fellowship.



For over a decade, Fazal led the United Nations Development Program called “The Urban Governance Initiative”, which he notes “was described as one of the most relevant and creative initiatives, thanks to the Eisenhower Fellowship exposure.” He says that his ability to lead this initiative was a result of “meeting the doers in the more than two dozen cities I explored, big and small, old and new, and learning from the challenges they faced and the creative solutions that made a difference.” Fazal has continued to found and be one of the prime movers of several local and global citizens movements, among them the Consumers Association of Penang founded in 1969, International Baby Food Action Network formed in 1979, Health Action International in 1981 and Pesticide Action Network formed in 1982. His determination and driving force helped establish the much-needed Consumer Interpol in 1981, which was a consumer and environmental alert system to monitor the global trade in hazardous products and technologies. Throughout the 1990s he was involved in setting up the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action, the Water Watch Asia, the Sustainable Transport Action Network, Waste Wise Asia, the Asian Partnership for International Migration and the Malaysian Society for Transparency and Integrity.

Currently, Fazal is the Chairperson of Think City, an organization working to transform George Town, Malaysia into a culturally vibrant and sustainable city through projects that are catalytic, developmental, inclusive, sustainable, and that encourage partnerships. He is also the Director of the Right Livelihood College, a global capacity building initiative based at the Universiti Sains Malaysia that aims to make the knowledge of the laureates of the Right Livelihood Award, popularly known as the “Alternative Nobel Prize”, accessible to all.

Reflecting on his experience and impact since his fellowship, Fazal says, “The Eisenhower Fellowship experience has truly been great and deep. The greatest experience was just to see, smell and feel the great confrontations between those that were sapping the vitality, integrity and humanity of the U.S. and those who were seeking value for its people and the environment. The battles between these points of view continue today and I continue to be inspired by my Eisenhower experience, and continue both tracks of what was unleashed through my fellowship.”

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