In January 2003, Martin Spechler, professor of economics at IUPUI, attended the Fourth Annual Global Development Network Conference in Cairo, Egypt. The five-day Globalization and Equity conference was attended by more than 500 researchers from every continent.

The Global Development Network (GDN) is an international not-for-profit umbrella organization comprising 11 regional partners that sponsor research on development and its effect on world populations. To date, GDN has conducted global research projects in explaining growth, understanding reform, and bridging research and policy. Its $10.36 million budget for 2002 was composed of grants by the governments of Austria, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom; and by large international corporations such as Deutsche Telekom, Merck, and Petrobras (Brazil); as well as by the World Bank, its original sponsor.

The conference theme of "Globalization and Equity" reflected GDN's commitment to build research capacity in developing and transitional economies to advance development, alleviate poverty, and assert social justice. At the conference, approximately two dozen competitive projects on the topic of "Understanding Economic Reform" were reviewed and funding approved for 2003–04, including Spechler's proposal on "Understanding Economic Reform in Uzbekistan."

Spechler's research reflects his interest in transitional economies of former Soviet bloc countries and his affiliation with IU’s Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center. For the GDN-funded project, he will partner with colleagues Farrukh Suvankulov, budget sector chief in the Uzbek Ministry of Finance; Ulugbek Khasanov, associate professor of international relations at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan; and Sayyora Umarova, an economist with the World Bank in Uzbekistan. Their research will examine the effects of economic reform on women, small business, and rural areas of every region of Uzbekistan in an attempt to understand why the state-directed gradualist model of reform has had its particular successes and failures.

Spechler has partnered most recently with Suvankulov; Kuatbay Bektemirov, head of Aral Sea Region Institute for Socio-Economic Studies at the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences, who is currently in Bloomington to pursue a master’s degree in the School of Public Affairs and Environmental Sciences; and Sergei Chepel, department head at the Ministry of Macroeconomics and Statistics at the Center for Effective Economic Policy, Uzbekistan. Their research on "The Uzbek Paradox: Growth without Neo-Liberal Reforms," also competitively selected for GDN funding, will be published by Edward Elgar Publishers with several other studies of East-Central European and former Soviet transition countries.

Most GDN projects, like Spechler's, have the ancillary purpose of building scientific capacity in transitional and less developed countries for

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three basic models. So again, China illustrates many important points that I cover in the class. Beyond this, however, I think we have to deal with China’s numbers, its growing influence—political and economic—and its potential to provide an alternative media model for other Asian nations.”

J414 draws many students from the School of Journalism, Russian and East European Institute, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, and the Kelley School of Business. It is considered a “research elective,” but there is an emphasis on studying how things are, how they got to be the way they are, and what we can expect in the future.

“Since most IU students have a limited understanding of Asia, its history, various cultures, impact on the world economy, etc., one of my goals is that students come to grips with how

important Asia, especially China, will be during their careers in the mass media,” says Raymer.

Raymer’s previous extensive experience in Asia has not generally included China, so he will spend this summer and fall of 2003 on sabbatical leave in mainland China, conducting research and gaining firsthand experience with the Chinese news media.

Both the visiting scholars and journalists program and the increased East Asia content in journalism courses will contribute greatly to the understanding of East Asia and its import to world news media.

—Susan Furukawa
East Asian Studies Center

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policy-oriented economic and sociological research suitable for publication and funding from first-world sources.

Abdulatif Al-Hamad, director general of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, referring to the recent and highly critical UN Development Program report by Arab intellectuals, challenged the common belief that European imperialism and Israeli “occupation of other people’s lands” are to blame for the economic failures of Arab states. He said that their educational systems and business climates must be improved. Other prominent participants included Suzanne Mubarak, first lady of Egypt, who spoke on globalization, gender, and development; Atef Ebeid, prime minister of Egypt; Rima Khalaf Hunaidi, assistant secretary-general of the United Nations; Ernesto Zedillo, former president of Mexico; and Benjamin Mkapa, president of Tanzania.

—Martin Spechler
at the Giza pyramids with Farrukh Suvankulov, budget sector chief at the Ministry of Finance, Republic of Uzbekistan.