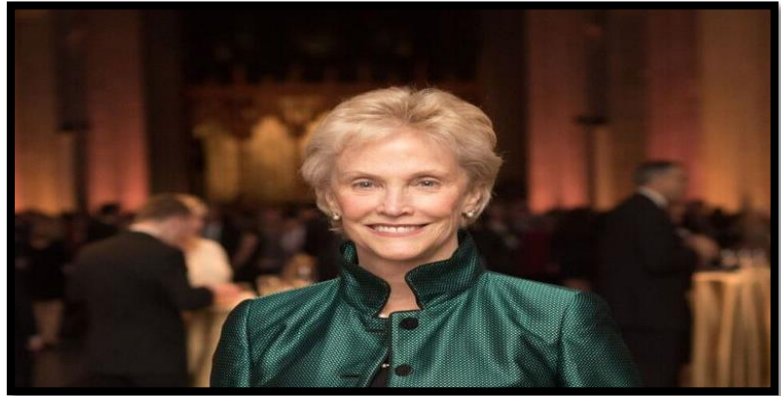


Interview with Dr Carolin Crabbe

Please describe your general background and 1-2 highlights of your career:

For 20 years I worked for the World Bank, spent about 10 years each in USAID and the Inter-American Development Bank, and about five years running my own company, the Global Finance Group LLC, which developed small and medium scale environmental projects.



As an economist I have had the opportunity to review and analyze governments' economic plans, help them to determine which projects had the highest priority, with maximum economic return to the economy, and then developed the selected projects, to insure they were funded by the organizations I worked for. As I look back on my career, two exceedingly positive experiences stand out.

First, I am frequently asked which of the 50 countries I worked in did I "like" the best. My answer is always the same... I found all of them interesting, fascinating and greatly enjoyed the people I worked with.

Second, while in the field, I almost always worked with, and for, people who wanted to help others. Occasionally, I would meet a minister of finance who wanted to put a highway past his *quinta* to make life easier for himself. But most of the time, from the mayor of Corquin, to the Head of the Highway Authority of Ethiopia, I worked with people who wanted something better for others, not for themselves.

What in your life has led you to an interest in development and how do you think law can shape positive development trends? What do you think are the most important law and development trends currently?

Immediately after World War II I moved with my family to Thessaloniki, Greece. Two houses down from ours was a large overgrown field with interconnecting streets and burned or bombed houses. It was there that I developed my first friendships. Strikingly, these friendships were with children who were far less fortunate than me. My friends were shoeless (even in winter when it could snow) and dressed in rags. Most seemed to be orphans. Even at that young age, I sensed this was not the way life should be. They should have parents like me and live in a warm house with lots to eat.

One of these children became my special friend. He always admired my clothes, and especially my shoes, which I gave him. He was so scrawny that even though he was taller, my clothes and shoes fit him. One day my friend took me to meet his grandmother. He had no parents. They lived in one of the largest but totally dilapidated houses on the ruined fields. When we entered through the front door, the entire back walls and middle section of the house had been burned down. What remained of the ruins was a half-circle of rooms and a grassy patch where a goat was tethered. My friend led me to the only room where the walls and door were still intact and there seated on the floor and huddled around a small stove, was the oldest lady I had ever seen. Despite the stove, it was cold. There was not one piece of furniture in the room. No electricity. She offered me a sliver of the piece of cake I had given my friend earlier in the week with a smile that had few teeth. That experience made me want to cry and it still haunts me. No children or elderly should be living in such heartbreaking circumstances.

From Greece we moved to other countries, and I was constantly confronted with poverty and hunger. The people I met were kind and generous and did nothing I could see to deserve such a mean existence. I

always wanted to help change this. At university, I tried pre-med study and thought I might be a doctor working in developing countries, but once we started dissecting creatures, I found the profession was not for me. In the end, I studied economics and spent over 40 years working in emerging markets, in a wide variety of projects from small rural schools, feeder roads, low-income housing, to creating a microfinance guarantee program for emerging market banks on three continents and helping to establish the Moscow stock exchange and its regulatory framework.

As one of the few non-legal experts involved with Lex:lead, this is best answered by others. However, I think I can say that law can greatly shape how countries and people grow and evolve for the better. In the over 50 countries I have worked in, I have witnessed exploitative working conditions, especially for women and children, public service structures, including education, and social security which benefit the rich rather than those they should be assisting. That better laws provide the underpinnings for sustained economic development is uncontested.

When were you first introduced to Lex:lead and what are your thoughts on the initiative?

I first met Ms. Anne Bodley about 30 years ago in Russia where she was working on a USAID-funded project. She was extraordinarily impressive, long before she went back to school and received her law degree. That she went on to establish this wonderful organization to give an assisting hand to young lawyers in emerging markets speaks to her immense heart. Lex:lead provides a much-needed resource for those who can guide the world into better legal frameworks that have a chance at fostering development.