On October 22-24, 2015 at the University of Notre Dame, the Kellogg Institute will host its second international conference on human dignity and human development. The event is part of a larger research initiative of the Kellogg Institute on the meaning of human dignity in the context of development, and the implications of a comprehensive respect for human dignity for the methods and measures of development practice. The 2015 conference follows on the achievements of a similar conference held in Rome, Italy, in October 2014, and aims to focus and deepen the insights gained there and in subsequent workshops and discussions, by again bringing together a prominent group of scholars and practitioners in the field of development.

The conference will take place on the heels of the UN Summit to adopt the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. In the synthesis report *The Road to Dignity by 2030*, the UN Secretary-General endorses human dignity as one of the six essential elements for delivering on the sustainable development goals, and development theory and practice more generally have increasingly appealed to human dignity as an outcome or aim of development. It is far from clear, however, how an emphasis on human dignity relates to a variety of contemporary approaches to development that all aim to foster more comprehensive understandings of human flourishing.

This conference therefore aims to engage several leading frameworks for the understanding and practice of development, including in particular human development and capabilities perspectives, human rights-based approaches, and recent work related to multidimensional understandings of poverty, happiness, and wellbeing. Through sustained and systematic dialogue across these paradigms, the conference aims to deepen understanding of the relationship of human dignity to development generally, and of the idea of human dignity as a common “connector” among a variety of important current development approaches. More specifically, the conference will focus on several specific areas in which these approaches would appear to intersect fruitfully with one another and with our deepening and dynamic understandings of human dignity. These themes include:

- The *integral* nature of human development, reflecting a recognition of the human person as having complex and interrelated needs constitutive of flourishing.
- The centrality of human *agency* to our understandings of dignity and development, and the need to consider more deeply whether dignity implies an emphasis on certain types of agency – e.g., individual vs. collective, or relational vs. autonomous.
- How *participation* in relationship and in community relates to human development, the practice and aims of development, in ways that range from “community engagement” and “participatory decision-making” to “encounter” and “accompaniment”, and even including participation in political communities and development policy through democratic forms of governance.
- The need to account for ways in which *institutions*, including especially political and legal institutions, are necessary to help protect and advance human dignity and
human development, and the challenge of reconciling (macro-level) institutional approaches with an emphasis on (micro-level) indicators of personal flourishing.

In each of these areas, the conference is designed not only to deepen our conceptualization of the connections between development and human dignity, but to operationalize them: to examine how these understandings should affect the methods and practice of development, and to determine how best to measure and assess development outcomes relevant to human dignity. As was the case in the inaugural 2014 Rome conference, this discussion and research aims to make connections across certain boundaries: to combine scholarly discussion with the best experience emerging from the practice of development; to bring together diverse disciplinary perspectives; to bring rigorous social science research and normative reflection into robust conversation; and to bridge divides between religiously-grounded traditions and secular thought.

A further aim of the conference is to generate practical guidelines for how development practitioners and policymakers might best move forward in implementing the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, and its emphasis on human dignity.