



THE FORD PROGRAM

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Interdisciplinary Project on Migration Now Underway

By Kellogg Faculty Fellow A. Niles Fernando, Assistant Professor of Economics

In our new project “Remitting Belief to the Global South,” Faculty Fellow **Jaimie Bleck** (political science) and I are bringing together fieldwork and “big data” methodologies to explore how international migration influences norms and values among migrants and their communities of origin. Our focus is migration from Mali (where Jaimie has previously worked) and Sri Lanka (where I have) to Europe and the Gulf States.

We intend to study differences in values relating to religion, social status, and gender among three groups: migrants currently living abroad, returned migrants, and young people who have not left their home communities. In addition, studying the array of social networks among migrants currently living abroad and among their families at home can help us understand how information flows in relation to

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migration patterns, ultimately influencing these norms and values.

We believe this research is important in developing a better understanding of this additional outcome from international migration – the impact of international migration on such beliefs and norms – as well as of motivations for migration and information deficits that may endanger prospective migrants.

Initial research

In the first stage of our project, we are using focus groups and interviews with Malian youth – both in Mali and among Malian migrants living in Spain – to understand differences in values and perceptions of social status, as well as how information exchange differs. The data we are gathering related to Malian migration will help us understand motivations to migrate, communication between migrants and families at home, and differences in beliefs among migrants and non-migrants.

At the same time, our Ford Program research associate **Ali Lodermeier '18** has been analyzing data from Sri Lanka that reveals interesting patterns about how migrant recruitment operates and the systemic nature of abuse in migrant work places.

A unique administrative dataset from the Sri Lankan Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) allows us to track over 2.5 million individual episodes of labor migration from Sri Lanka and includes information on recruitment sites, job types, destination countries, and cases of migrant abuse. We hope to examine how differences in the origin and destination of these migrant workers relate to changing religious, political, and gender-based beliefs across different regions of Sri Lanka.



Future aims

Our next steps will involve continuing to collect data from focus groups and interviews with Malian migrants and Malian youth while we supplement our data on Sri Lankan labor migrants with corresponding data on religious communities, female labor force participation, and political beliefs. We also intend to apply for external funding for the project.

Through this research, Jaimie and I hope to document how international migration from both Sri Lanka and Mali influences norms and values in these countries. In addition, we expect this project will lead to additional research avenues that target the problem of migrant abuses in the Gulf states and identify policies that can stop these abuses and preserve the dignity of domestic workers.



Clemens Sedmak to Lead Ford Program in Spring

By Ashley Rowland

Kellogg Faculty Fellow **Clemens Sedmak**, a social ethicist, will serve as acting director of the Ford Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity in spring 2019 while Director **Rev. Robert Dowd, CSC**, is on sabbatical.

Dowd called Sedmak “a natural fit” to lead the Ford Program because of his appreciation for different types of research methods across different disciplines.

“I’m grateful Clemens will be working closely with Senior Research Advisor **Jaimie Bleck** to help guide the Ford Program during the coming months,” Dowd said. “He has an excellent understanding of our work in all its dimensions, and he is steeped in Catholic social thought, which is at the core of our mission.”

Sedmak holds a joint appointment at the Keough School of Global Affairs and the Center for Social Concerns, where he is an advisor in Catholic social tradition. A native of Austria, he has held appointments at universities around the world.

In his scholarly work, he studies the social side of human existence – how people get along with one another – in a field that encompasses poverty,



justice, solidarity, philosophy, theology, and human dignity.

Since his arrival at Notre Dame in 2015, he’s been involved in the Ford Program, which incorporates his research interests as well as his focus on community-centered research and spirituality.

“It’s an ethics-driven program where you try to connect theory with practice. It’s not just another program of excellent research at a university,” he said. “It’s about making a change on the ground, making human dignity more tangible.”

‘The big elephant in the room’

Through two current projects with the Ford Program, Sedmak is currently studying one of the world’s most divisive problems: migration.

He called it “the big elephant in the room,” ruining civilized political discourse and hastening the shift toward right-wing populism in both Europe and the United States. The fight over migration has almost reached a breaking point in the European Union and has fractured the political climate in the US, he said.

And those tensions are only poised to grow.

“Migration is a not going away,” Sedmak said. “It’s one of these topics that will become huge because of climate change, as more and more people are forced to move.”



With Dowd and other researchers, he is examining the role religious attitudes, nationalism, and ethnic identity play in migration, both on the part of migrants and those in their host communities. Beginning in Italy, the team plans to expand the project to Germany and Austria.

“It’s good to have a research perspective on migration because there are so many heated emotional debates about it,” he said. “Even if you are not religious, 80 percent of world’s population is connected to some religious tradition, so you have to take its impact seriously.”

Sedmak is also studying a “humanitarian corridor” in Italy, in which the government provided safe passage and visas last year to 500 people in Ethiopian refugee camps, along with housing and resettlement assistance.

He and co-researcher **Ilaria Schnyder von Wartensee** will collect the narratives of migrants and host community members over a five-year period to evaluate whether the effort could serve as a model for migrant integration and inclusion in Europe.

“The humanitarian corridor is promising in that it’s an alternative to illegal entry and to dangerous entry to a country,” he said. The project will also assess how religious beliefs and institutions affect integration.

Participating migrants were carefully selected in UN refugee camps and, unlike most migrants, were well prepared for the transition to Italy. However, initial findings show that migrants and hosts often have divergent expectations on everything from

entitlements to whether the migrants will integrate or stay in Italy only temporarily.

“If the expectations don’t match, you have a source of tensions and misunderstandings,” Sedmak said.

Advancing integral human development

As acting director, Sedmak expects to hold a “placeholder” role in Dowd’s absence, continuing to solidify Ford’s international partnerships.

He called the Ford Program a leader in research that promotes integral human development – a concept at the heart of the missions of both the Kellogg Institute and the Keough School.

“The Ford Program is in a good position to develop this concept and connect it with experiences on the ground,” he said. “It helps us understand what it means to take human development seriously.”



Making Research Plans a Reality in East Africa: Oluoch-Aridi Helps Build Ford Research

By Elizabeth Rankin



As the Ford Program makes major strides towards its goal of high-quality, community-based research in the developing world, Regional Research Programs Manager

for East Africa **Jackline Oluoch-Aridi**, who opened the program's first field office in Nairobi five years ago, is playing a key role.

"Jackie has been crucial to our efforts to expand and deepen our research profile in East Africa," says Ford Program Director Rev. **Robert Dowd, CSC**. "She has done a wonderful job of working with our faculty and students, connecting them to communities at the grassroots, to faculty and students at local universities, and to other organizations so that their research may be informed and impactful."

"We are doing rigorous, evidence-based research while transforming the community at the same time," Oluoch-Aridi affirms. "I'm really proud that we are able to do those hand in hand."

She currently works with eight Notre Dame faculty members as well as students and other researchers to implement and manage research projects in Kenya and Uganda. Her focus is helping faculty who have received Ford research funding "to think through a project and work through the steps – the many, many steps – to implement it in country."

Among those undertaking Ford projects are Faculty Fellows **Wyatt Brooks** and **Terence Johnson** (economics), **Ann Mische** (sociology), **Vania Smith-Oka** (anthropology), and **Jaimie Bleck** and **Dowd** (political science). Much of the fieldwork has centered in Dandora, a sprawling section of Nairobi.

Implementing field research in Dandora

Implementing complex research protocols in an unfamiliar area notorious for crime and violence – and halfway around the world from the principal investigators – is no easy matter.

Brooks and Johnson both say Oluoch-Aridi's participation in several of their randomized controlled trials in Dandora has been critical.

"Jackie was invaluable in solving the day-to-day issues that arise in field projects that are just impossible to fix from afar," says Brooks. "Having someone available who we trust is crucial."

"Jackie is indispensable," Johnson agrees. "She serves as the bridge between the Notre Dame researchers, partner institutions, and our surveyors and community mobilizers."

Oluoch-Aridi consults on research design, obtains ethical review and research permits, coordinates local field teams, connects with local partners Strathmore University and Catholic University of Eastern Africa, arranges for local dissemination of research – and solves problems on the fly.

"Whether it's ensuring the finances line up, translating surveys, or figuring out how to keep things on schedule when a surveyor just shattered a project phone's touch screen, Jackie is the one making the research plans a reality," explains Johnson.

Building and supervising research teams is central to Oluoch-Aridi's work. She selects and trains both local university graduates and Dandora residents to collect qualitative and quantitative data.

"The surveyors are conscientious and build rapport with people," she says. In an area where frequent market research scams have conditioned community members to be suspicious, trust facilitates high-quality data collection.

"Our teams can navigate research in a responsible way, explain the benefit to respondents, and tie it back to the community engagement that we have invested in with Holy Cross Parish."

In Dandora, the Ford Program's connection with the local parish is vital. Residents trust the parish and extend that trust to Ford researchers.

"The parish allows us to do research not many people can do," says Oluoch-Aridi.

"Our affiliation with the parish is special," she reflects. "Our engagement with the community through our 2011 listening project was key in enabling us to do research in the parish. And we work hard to maintain the connection."

Passionate about development and research

Oluoch-Aridi came to the Ford Program through her interest in health care. With an MPA in international health policy and management from New York University, she returned to her native Kenya as a Millennium Development Goal policy officer, overseeing community health worker program sites in six countries.



"I was able to see how development works," she recalls.

What appealed to her about the Ford Program was its "upfront attempt to listen to the voices of the people we were working with, to see what their solutions were for problems, and to infuse

research to answer these challenges," she explains.

Now, in addition to her full-time job with Ford, Oluoch-Aridi is working part-time toward a PhD at Strathmore University. The Ford maternal health project in Dandora is a jumping-off point for her dissertation research.

"It gives me great joy to collect data on an important policy issue – how women make decisions on where to deliver their babies," she says. She hopes the study will inform resource allocation in Kenyan health policy at both the county and national level.

Moving forward

Oluoch-Aridi is proud of the evolution of the Ford Program's East Africa research efforts and envisions a continued expansion.

"We have modeled community-based projects and found faculty who can do research that is meaningful to them and to the community," she says. "It is wonderful to get that balance that meets people's needs – not just research for the sake of research."

"I would like to see Ford continuing to use field research as a tool to meet global challenges – and to transform communities in a sustainable fashion at the same time."

10 Year Anniversary: Celebrating the Ford Program

By Elizabeth Rankin

Welcomed by University President **Rev. John I. Jenkins, CSC**, and Keough School of Global Affairs Dean **Scott Appleby**, friends of the Ford Program celebrated its first decade at a dinner on Sept. 7.

Gathering scholars, students, project participants, and donors from near and far, the evening shone a spotlight on the many individuals touched by the program through its focus on rigorous, community-based research that aims to meet global challenges.

Director **Rev. Robert Dowd, CSC**, noted that Ford Program research encompasses the work of 14 faculty fellows in eight countries in Africa, Europe, and, now, Latin America.

Rev. Aníbal Niño Loarte, CSC, who directs the Holy Cross Instituto de Pastoral de la Familia (INFAM) in Lima, Peru, explained how a Ford Program evaluation will allow INFAM to better serve parish families. Then, in a new video, Faculty Fellow **Laura Miller-Graff** discussed her new Ford-funded research project that aims to reduce violence by empowering pregnant moms. (View video at kellogg.nd.edu/lima).

Corey Robinson '17, **Natalie Disher '20**, and **Ellie Buerk '20** spoke of the importance to students of a program that allows them to make a tangible difference in the world.

Faculty Fellow **Clemens Sedmak**, who will serve as acting director in the spring, closed out the evening by underlying the value of the solidarity fundamental to the Ford Program's work.

