



# THE FORD PROGRAM

## In Human Development & Solidarity



KELLOGG INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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### Highlights

- **Ford Launches New Research Projects**
- **CEIDS Update**
- **New Faces at the Ford Program and Outgoing Associates and Research Assistants**

### Ford Launches New Research Projects



One of the Ford Program research projects launched this year was the research of Professor [Joyce Adams](#) on integrated postpartum care, education, and support for women in **Ghana**. This research tests the impact of an innovative integrated group postpartum care, education, and

support model for postpartum women up to one year after delivery. Focused postpartum care (PPC) was implemented as a randomized controlled trial in four health centers in Tamale, Ghana. Led by trained midwives, women enrolled in Focused-PPC received postpartum clinical assessments and standardized education for the first six weeks and continued to receive standardized education, measures of vital signs, and peer support for 12 months postpartum. Focused PPC sessions were held for 1-2 weeks, six weeks, and monthly thereafter for up to one year following the Ghana Health Service (GHS) postnatal care and child welfare clinic schedule. Control group participants received usual care following the same schedule. The study findings will illuminate the relationship between standardized postpartum education and improved maternal and child health outcomes, especially for women at risk of (*cont'd*)

postpartum depression and maternal mortality. Findings from this research also have practical impacts, particularly building capacity among midwives to provide the highest quality of care to mothers and providing evidence that helps policymakers to set forth a standard of care that most effectively reduces maternal morbidity and mortality. I invite you to join us (in person or virtually) on September 20th, 2023, when Joyce will present her work in the [Ford Seminar Series](#).



A second project launched in the Spring of 2023 is the study of whether a management intervention targeting school leaders can offer a cost-effective way of improving schooling

outcomes in **Uganda**. The researchers, led by Professor [Joseph Kaboski](#), test whether offering external expertise and personnel to support school principals (by engaging community leaders) can increase re-enrollment among dropouts, general enrollment among primary school-aged children, and test scores. This project is quite timely for Uganda, a nation that has experienced significant learning loss due to the extended school closures occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, like other low-income countries, Uganda faces abundant obstacles to quality education delivery, including limited funds, citizen engagement, and talent acquisition. The study seeks to add practical and theoretical contributions to educational governance by examining how a program that alleviates constraints on principals' time, budgets, and limited expertise, through fellows and community leaders can improve service delivery, school enrollments, and learning outcomes. Moreover, understanding the precise process of how and when students drop out and the timing of this process is important in designing interventions that can address this global challenge. The study was launched in 300 rural schools across the country.



A third project that also started in the spring of 2023 is the research on the use of a novel eye health smartphone application among children and adults through community health workers in **Kenya**. The study is carried out by a team that include Prof. [Bernard Nahlen](#), Prof. Rev. [Bob Dowd, CSC](#) (founding director of the Ford Program) and Dr. [Jackline Oluoch-Aridi](#). Building on the Ford Program's long-established relationships in Dandora, Kenya, this eye health study assesses the effectiveness of the new application and builds the technical capacity of the local community health workers to address vision problems in the local community. The project offers significant potential for long-term community engagement and capacity for improving learning outcomes, employment opportunities, and quality of life. An essential outcome of this project is building a primary care approach to eye health that has been absent in Kenya, and through its development, it could support the Ministry of Health's strategic goals related to eye health. With a grant from the Ford Program, the project has been able to initiate its baseline activities and set up the full research architecture, including the recruitment of clinicians. This project is in partnership with colleagues from Northwestern University's Department of Ophthalmology and from the University of Notre Dame's Eck Institute for Global Health and Notre Dame International.



A fourth project co-sponsored by The Ford Program this year, also in **Uganda**, is Prof. [Emmanuel Katongole's](#) research on integral ecology and peacebuilding. The

research seeks answers to three broad questions relating to the conceptualization, application, and impact of integral ecology, examining how it relates to other themes in Catholic social tradition. Can it be applied, and how? What is the impact of its application? In addressing these questions, Katongole employs a scholar-practitioner methodology, which involves working and studying one model of integral ecology application: Bethany Land Institute. In this research, he seeks to demonstrate integral ecology in practice and the value of developing young peoples' skills in sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation, and peacebuilding in Uganda.



Finally, a new pilot starting this fall in **South Africa** is the research on mental health led by former Ford postdoctoral fellow [Sylvia Blom](#) in collaboration with [Patrizio Piraino](#), the Ford

Program director. Working with J-Pal Africa at the University of Cape Town, the research project seeks to measure the prevalence of depression and anxiety among adult men and women, identify the primary stressors associated with poor mental health, and investigate how poor mental health interferes with daily activities, long-term goal setting, and investments in child development. The research adopts a longitudinal approach to follow individuals residing in under-resourced communities in Cape Town to identify opportunities for interventions that could improve economic and mental well-being.

## Collaborative for Econometrics and Integrated Development Studies (CEIDS) Update

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, this initiative leverages lessons learned during Covid-19 and the opportunity to breach physical barriers to reach communities outside the University of Notre Dame. This innovative community brings together international development researchers from Africa, the United States, and Latin America for collaborative work on global challenges aligned with our mission. CEIDS members are diverse, ranging from senior to junior faculty and from doctoral students to practitioners in faith-based organizations. This diversity in composition affords the network opportunities for mentorship and coaching. More information about CEIDS teams and research projects is on [our website here](#).

In June 2023, the Ford Program convened the second annual CEIDS workshop. The meeting brought together 30 participants, including distinguished professors, practitioners, mid-and early-career faculty, and doctoral students to examine the theme of holistic measurement. Participants also discussed how to use their skills in applied research to support the efforts of faith-based organizations to increase their impact for the benefit of vulnerable populations. The workshop participants explored significant value questions, methods, and the impact of development economics in addressing the critical challenges to integral human development. Participants identified critical research categories and formed sub-committees for further research (health and nutrition, immigration and integration, education and literacy, faith, labor economics, and development). CEIDS members also established mentorship groups that include bi-weekly meetings focused on individual research and devised a strategy to engage not-for-profit institutions in empirical research.

## New Faces at the Ford Program and Outgoing Associates and Research Assistants



This fall, we are excited to welcome our new postdoctoral research associate, **Natasha Jha**, who recently earned her PhD in economics from Cornell University. Natasha will serve as a key researcher, collaborator, and scholar-facilitator for the research activities of the Ford Program at the Kellogg Institute.

We are also pleased to share news of our outgoing postdoctoral research associate, **Sylvia Blom**. Having completed two years of engagement with us, Sylvia has taken on a new role in Oxford, UK, and will continue to collaborate with Ford on the mental health project in South Africa.



We are also pleased to share news of our student research assistant **Madeline Johns**, who recently graduated from Notre Dame with a pre-medical major and a minor in international development studies. Madeline has joined the London School of Tropical Medicine and Health to pursue a Masters in Public Health.

And there is no better way to end this update than by sharing fantastic news about **Oneile Baitlotli**, who worked with Ford for two years as a graduate assistant and graduated in May 2023 from the Keough School's MGA program. Oneile is the recipient of the Hesburgh Fellowship and has joined a national non-profit in Botswana as a project manager supporting early literacy and health for underprivileged children.

