



THE FORD PROGRAM

in Human Development Studies & Solidarity



KELLOGG INSTITUTE | KEOUGH SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS

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Faculty Research Highlights

Focused-PPC Model Improves Women's Post-Partum Knowledge and Health

Joyce Adams' [research on maternal health](#), which was co-funded by the Ford Program, was recently featured in Notre Dame's "[What Would You Fight For.](#)" This project tested the Focused Postpartum Care (Focused-PPC) model in Tamale, Ghana, through a yearlong randomized trial. The group-based approach integrated clinical assessments, education, and peer support for new mothers. Findings showed that Focused-PPC significantly improved women's knowledge of post-birth warning signs, confidence in recognizing complications, mental health, and adoption of healthy behaviors. For more on this research, please see the recent publications below; additional findings are currently under review in various journals.

Adams, Y.J., Agbenyo, J.S, ***Lau, E., Young, J., & Haas, D. (2025). "Randomized Trial of Group Postpartum Care Model Improves Knowledge and Clinical Outcomes." *Nursing Research*, 74(3), 171-178.

<https://doi.org/10.1097/NNR.0000000000000814>

Faculty Research Highlights (continued)

Hope Walks: The Life-Changing Impact of Clubfoot Treatment

A new study co-funded by the Ford Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity reveals the transformative impact of early clubfoot treatment in low-income countries. Conducted in Ethiopia and published in *Health Economics*, the research followed 564 children and found that untreated clubfoot severely limits mobility, mental health, social inclusion, and education, reducing overall human flourishing by 132%. Using the low-cost Ponseti method (about \$500 per child), early treatment, especially within six months, restored up to 91% of mobility and 79% of overall well-being, enabling children to fully engage in family, school, and community life. Despite the potential, access barriers persist: most families are unaware of treatment options, live far from clinics, or cannot afford care, highlighting the urgent need for early detection and expanded access through organizations like Hope Walks. The study, led by **Bruce Wydick, Gianna Camacho,** and **Patrizio Piraino**, shows that this intervention is three times more impactful than many other global health treatments. The full article can be found in the link below:



Wydick, B., Camacho, G., & Piraino, P. (2025). "Hope Walks: The Impact of Clubfoot Treatment on Human Flourishing in Ethiopia." *Health Economics*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hec.70040>

Other Work, Published in Cambridge University Press



The Ford program also played a role in the work done by **Abby Cordova** and collaborator Natán Skigin, which is now appearing in an upcoming book with Cambridge University Press:

Cordova, Abby, and Natán Skigin. (2026). *Dangerous Stereotypes: Correcting Misperceptions about Undocumented Immigrants to Promote Inclusionary Preferences*. Cambridge University Press, Elements in Politics and Society in Latin America.

Ford-supported work by **Richard (Drew) Marcantonio** also is forthcoming with Cambridge University Press:

Marcantonio, Richard. (2026). *The Environment in Conflict*. Cambridge University Press.

Faculty Research Highlights (continued)

Ford Program Faculty Funding Advances Research in Zambia



We are pleased to announce the Ford Program has awarded funding for two Zambia-based research initiatives advancing evidence on human development.

The first, led by [Isaac Mbiti](#) (above, left), supports the development of high-quality student learning and cognitive assessments for an RCT evaluating Healthy Learners' comprehensive school health program, which aims to improve health, attendance, and learning outcomes for primary school students across six districts in Zambia.



The second, led by [Brenda Samaniego de la Parra](#) (above, right) and other collaborators, evaluates whether data pooling through a mobile phone app can raise retail productivity by enabling small shops in Zambia to make more informed stocking and pricing decisions; the project tests how data-driven recommendations influence firm behavior and profitability in fragmented retail markets. These awards strengthen policy-relevant research on human capital formation and economic opportunity in Zambia, in alignment with the mission of the Ford Program.

New Partnership Expands Ford's Faculty Funding Opportunities

We are pleased to announce faculty funding opportunities offered in partnership with Notre Dame's Global Catholic Research Initiative. This new collaboration aims to support research that advances the Ford Program's mission of promoting integral human development. Projects that align with GCRI's focus on Catholic social thought and global solidarity will be eligible for additional funding from the GCRI. Details on eligibility and submission guidelines [can be found here](#).

The **deadline** for spring semester faculty research funding call for proposal is **March 31, 2026** with decisions communicated by April 30, 2026.

Part of the University's Strategic Framework, Notre Dame's [Global Catholic Research Initiative](#) mobilizes the University's intellectual and institutional resources to advance scholarship on Catholicism as a global and dynamic tradition. It supports interdisciplinary research on how Catholics, Catholic institutions, and the intellectual, social, artistic, and cultural expressions of Catholic life have circulated – and continue to circulate – across regions, nations, and cultures, shaping and being shaped by the local contexts in which they take root.

CEIDS: New Funding and the Latest Workshop at Notre Dame

The Ford Program is delighted to introduce the Belcher Excellence Fund for the [Collaborative for Econometrics and Integrated Development Studies](#) (CEIDS). This vital new fund aims to bridge the gap between academic rigor and on-the-ground service by supporting partnerships with faith-based development organizations worldwide. Under the direction of the Ford Program, these resources will provide the critical infrastructure and personnel needed to help our partners evaluate and scale their work. We are grateful for this investment, which ensures we can continue to strengthen faith-based organizations and their capacity to serve.

convening a multidisciplinary cohort of 27 scholars and development professionals from 17 institutions. The theme this year, “Researchers and Practitioners Together,” underscored the conference’s focus on bridging the divide between rigorous development-economics research and its real-world application in pursuit of integral human development. Across three days, participants presented work on topics including building program evaluation into routine operations, assessing respect for human dignity in programs, and more that [you can find here](#). If you are interested in joining us in CEIDS, do let us know.

In early June 2025, the Ford Program hosted the 4th Annual CEIDS Workshop at Notre Dame,

New Faces at the Ford Program

We are also pleased to share news of our 2025-2026 [Ford Program undergraduate student research assistants](#), supported through the *Donnelly Family Human Development Research Endowment for Excellence Fund*:



Adam Scott is a fourth-year architecture student with a minor in real estate who is passionate about the social and environmental dimensions of design. His research has explored topics ranging from sustainable urbanism in Asia to equitable community development across the US Northeast. His project experience is diverse, spanning contexts from immersive haunted house designs to large-scale commercial spaces in Washington, DC. **“I joined the Ford Program to contribute to research that addresses meaningful global challenges and aligns with my commitment to purposeful, human-centered design.”**

Hope Adero is a junior majoring in economics. She is involved with the Powerful Means Initiative (PMI) at the Mendoza College of Business where she conducts primary research in Uganda with a partnering vocational school in northern Uganda that trains young women in entrepreneurship and skills-based trades such as fashion and design/tailoring and hairdressing. Having read about the Ford Program’s work in Kenya and Uganda in the Kellogg Institute newsletter, Hope, who comes from Northern Uganda, was inspired to join an organization making impactful differences in communities similar to those where she grew up. **“At the Ford Program, I want to apply my background in economics to development research and continue to expand my understanding of human development and social impact.”**



New Faces at the Ford Program (continued)



[Ada Austin](#) is a junior majoring in business analytics with double minors in real estate and social entrepreneurship and innovation. On the social impact side, she previously served as a PATH teacher with the Alliance for Catholic Education Program, where she taught 8th-grade writing and Home Economics to students preparing for high school. In the business space, she has had the opportunity to consult with multiple organizations through various projects, including conducting market analyses for two nonprofit organizations over the summer. **“I chose to join the Ford Program because I believe deeply in making a meaningful impact through one’s work. The Ford Program’s global approach to fostering human dignity and development aligns with my desire to contribute to positive change while building and refining my skills along the way.”**

Team Members Returning...

This fall, we are excited to welcome back [Khadijat Atere](#) as our new pre-doctoral research associate. Khadijat recently completed her Master of Global Affairs at the Keough School of Global Affairs, where she focused on sustainable development. She holds a bachelor’s degree in forestry from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Her research interests lie at the intersection of education, sustainable development, and data-driven policy. At the Ford Program, she will support ongoing research projects that use data to inform practice and advance human development goals.



... and Embarking on New Journeys



[Natasha Jha](#) has completed her postdoctoral tenure this fall with the Ford Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity and has started a new position as assistant professor at the [Centre For Advanced Financial Research and Learning](#), an independent body set up by the Reserve Bank of India. During her time with the Ford Program, Natasha worked on various projects in development and labor economics, focusing on human capital formation, gender disparities, and the role of social norms in shaping economic outcomes.