



# THE FORD PROGRAM

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*Professor Laura Miller-Graff visits maternity clinics in San Juan de Lurigancho, Perú.*

## Community Partnership: The Driving Force of Ford Program Research

*By Rev. Bob Dowd, CSC, Ford Program Director, Assistant Provost for Internationalization, and Associate Professor of Political Science; and Jaimie Bleck, Ford Program Senior Research Advisor and Associate Professor of Political Science*

The Ford Program has a commitment to community partnerships as a key tenant as we strive to generate the highest quality research. No matter what methodology we employ in our research, we try to consult with local communities throughout the research process, maintain a connection to these communities after publication, and actively think about research outputs that are useful to these partners. This approach is more important than ever as we seek effective ways to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To date, we have assembled a diverse group of partners that include those with a Catholic mission, such as the Congregation of Holy Cross, Catholic Relief Services, and Caritas. We have deep and ongoing relationships with people in communities, such as the Dandora community in Nairobi,

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Kenya and the Canto Grande community in Lima, Peru. We also maintain partnerships with universities and think tanks, such as Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Strathmore University, and the Zizi Afrique Foundation in Kenya, Pontifical Catholic University and Catholic University Sedes Sapientiae in Peru, and Uganda Martyr's University and the Luigi Giussani Institute for Higher Education in Uganda. We've engaged in joint research across a spectrum of methodologies: surveys, focus groups, interviews, and experimental interventions.

A partnership approach requires greater up-front investments of time and money for adequate consultation. This often results in a multi-stage process that relies on iterative research design and longer time horizons. In short, it requires patience. However, this commitment is a core element of a research process that embodies our belief in a holistic model of flourishing rooted in dignity and the full potential of the human person as well as an essential component of quality research.

Partnership and solidarity with the communities we research enables us to better tackle the most pressing problems facing these communities, improve the way that we measure and operationalize concepts, and ensure that we translate our research into outputs that can inform policy and improve livelihoods. It also enables us to continue communication and problem-solving with communities in times of crisis – including the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Many contributions of this update highlight some of these relationships with partner organizations and communities and how they are helping us to better understand the impact of COVID-19. **Jackline Oluoch-Aridi** and **Wyatt Brooks** describe how community engagement has been key to every stage of the research process during a small business mentoring study. These on-going connections to the community have also enabled the team to pivot and examine the impact of COVID-19 using telephone surveys. The research team has just been awarded a



Students Emily Pohl and Natalie Disher train enumerators for their summer studies.

\$45,000 JPAL grant, which will enable them to test the impact of cash transfers to entrepreneurs who are struggling to cope with COVID-19.

**Ilaria Schnyder von Wartensee** describes how her research in the HumanLines Project documents the accompaniment approach that Caritas' Humanitarian Corridors project takes as it welcomes refugees from Ethiopia and Eritrea. She highlights the research team's ongoing engagement with these communities using a documentary project to highlight the voices of refugees as they experience the crisis in Italy.

**Danice Guzman** provides a research update from our partner communities in Uganda as they navigate the global pandemic. She discusses the need for continued solidarity and communication during these moments of crisis. The newsletter includes an essay by Notre Dame undergraduate and recent Truman Fellowship winner **Patrick McCabe**. He draws on his experiences studying abroad in Chile and Jordan, and his work on Ford's Secondary Education and Citizenship Project in Kenya, to discuss the importance of youth voices and vision in addressing global challenges.

Finally, **Clemens Sedmak** writes about the ways that an emphasis on integral human development permeates Ford's research portfolio. He reminds us that "attentiveness and care are at the heart of human development" and underscores that the listening exercises many of our projects are embarking on are critical since crisis "magnifies inequality, privilege, and disadvantage." ■



## A Different Kind of Research

By *Ashley Rowland*, Kellogg Institute Writer/Editor

When *Rev. Robert Dowd, CSC*, started the Ford Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity 12 years ago, he wanted to do research in the developing world that was distinctive – that wasn't about "swooping in and swooping out to collect data," but instead focused on building relationships.

"We wanted to do a different kind of research," said Dowd, an associate professor of political science and a concurrent associate professor at the Keough School of Global Affairs. "We wanted to make sure that we weren't simply extracting information to further our academic careers. Instead, we wanted to address the challenges that people themselves – our so-called research subjects – consider significant and to do research that is respectful of their communities."

"We wanted to build partnerships with local institutions and invest in long-term relationships with communities in Africa and other parts of the world," he added. "We wanted to turn Notre Dame outward in a new way."

Dowd is stepping down as director of the Ford Program at the end of June to work full-time at Notre Dame International (NDI), where he has been serving since February as assistant provost for internationalization. But his imprint on the Ford Program – and his influence on the larger mission of the Kellogg Institute for International Studies, its home within the University of Notre Dame – remains.

"Fr. Bob and his vision for the Ford Program have been key in shaping Kellogg's core identity over the last dozen years," Kellogg Director *Paolo Carozza* said. In particular, he cited the Ford Program's



emphasis on human development, a topic that, along with democracy, is one of the Institute's two primary research themes.

Carozza will serve as acting director of the Ford Program during the search for Dowd's replacement – a decision Carozza said represents the Ford Program's importance to the Institute as a whole.

"Through the Ford Program, Kellogg has started to take human development much more seriously and in a deeper way," he said. "The Ford Program has been the portal through which the great majority of our programming and scholarship toward international development has begun and taken shape. And because of Ford, the Institute has engaged a broader section of faculty at Notre Dame who are interested in human development."

Dowd is known among faculty and students for his devotion to human dignity and integral human development, with a deep concern for alleviating poverty in the developing world.

"Like few others, he represents the best in what Notre Dame is and could be: a commitment to the Lord and to His poor," said Faculty Fellow **Joe Kaboski**, the David F. and Erin M. Seng Foundation Professor of Economics.

The Ford Program was endowed by a gift from the family of Notre Dame alumnus and Trustee Emeritus W. Douglas Ford '66 to conduct research that addresses the challenges of development confronted by those living in extreme poverty. Its annual Ford Family Notre Dame Award for International Development and Solidarity recognizes substantial contributions to human development; previous recipients have included Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus and Partners in Health.

Ford projects have studied everything from the impact of religious beliefs on migrant integration in Europe to how remote communities in the Brazilian Amazon are affected by improved market practices.

The program's unique approach seeks to respect the norms, values, and experiences of the communities where it conducts research while producing rigorous, impactful scholarly work.

"I'm proud of the way the Ford Program has raised the profile of human development, and specifically integral human development, within Kellogg and the Keough School, and at Notre Dame more generally," Dowd said.

Today, the Ford Program is an interdisciplinary research organization with faculty in anthropology, economics, psychology, political science, sociology, and theology.

Among them is Faculty Fellow **Laura Miller-Graff**, who called Dowd a "central force in bringing the Ford Program to life."

Ford offers a "lived commitment to integral human development" through its focus on relationship-building and its financial and intellectual support of projects that promote human dignity, she said.

Miller-Graff, an associate professor of psychology and peace studies and a core faculty member of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, runs Ford-supported research in Peru that examines how families and pregnant women experience violence. Her work is done in collaboration with the local Holy Cross Instituto de Pastoral de la Familia (INFAM) – a partnership that highlights the Ford Program's emphasis on community engagement.

"Building these relationships and conducting community-based research is necessarily a long-term endeavor, but I firmly believe that taking the time to foster healthy partnerships not only contributes to a more strongly interconnected global community, but also facilitates more rigorous and more interesting research," she added.

Dowd is an Africanist who has conducted extensive research in Uganda, Nigeria, Senegal, and particularly in Kenya, where much of his work has taken him to the sprawling Nairobi slum of Dandora.



*Dandora, Nairobi, Kenya*

The area is essentially a giant dump site for the city, and is known for its political violence as well as gang fighting over scrap metal and other refuse. It's also a crossroads for Kenyans moving into Nairobi and has presented a number of opportunities for Notre Dame scholars to study poverty in an urban environment.

From a research perspective, Dowd's knowledge of Dandora and his network of connections there have been invaluable to the Ford Program, according to Faculty Fellow **Wyatt Brooks**, the Joe and Deborah Loughrey Collegiate Chair in Economics and Human Development and a concurrent assistant professor at the Keough School.

"Fr. Bob cares a lot about the people there," said Brooks, who studies mentorship among female business owners in Dandora.

"The fact that he knows so much about a specific location and has brought so many Notre Dame researchers there – it's a really unique situation.

Having that incredible insight into Dandora has been a real benefit to our work at Notre Dame."

Dowd, meanwhile, said one of the Ford Program's biggest accomplishments has been expanding the geographic scope of the program from its initial focus on East Africa to different parts of the world. Another has been maintaining its emphasis on relationships, which he said "leads to better research."

"Our work is better informed because of that," he said. "Our research is focused on the questions that are most relevant. The data and the information we collect is more accurate and, in the end, the research product is more valuable and more useful."

Dowd said serving as the Ford Program's director has been a "huge blessing" and he is grateful to those who have supported its work.

"I know that the Ford Program's best days lie ahead, and I will continue to be its biggest cheerleader," he said. ■

## Extending the Benefits of Mentoring to the Wider Dandora Community

By **Wyatt Brooks**, Joe and Deborah Loughrey Collegiate Chair in Economics and Human Development, and **Jackline Oluoch-Aridi**, Regional Research Programs Manager for East Africa

In 2014, we at the Ford Program, together with three professors from the Department of Economics at Notre Dame, partnered with Strathmore University Business School to work on a study aimed at establishing the most effective strategies for improving small business profits in Dandora, a settlement in the east of Nairobi made up of low-income housing that struggles with widespread poverty.



Jackie Oluoch-Aridi, left, interviews a woman entrepreneur as part of the mentorship research project.

This study was initiated in response to a yearlong community engagement process that identified growing profits of small businesses as one of the key challenges faced by the Dandora community. Conducted in partnership with the Holy Cross Congregation parish in Dandora and the Ford program's community engagement office, the study focused on female entrepreneurs, who are the majority of small business owners in Dandora.

The team tested known strategies comparing classroom training sessions, where women were given classes by trainers from Strathmore University, and mentoring, where women were met weekly with more experienced female entrepreneurs from their own community to learn insights based on their experiences in business. At the end of the study in 2016, results showed that the mentoring process improved profits by almost 20% more than in-class training. After 17 months of the project, 45% of the

mentors were still meeting. The study also noted that as the pairs dissolved, the effects faded. The results of the study were published in the *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, a leading peer-reviewed academic journal.

With a view to extending these benefits to a wider population, the team is now working to expand the study in two ways.

First, we are exploring the effects of having mentees later become mentors for others. We are testing whether or not learning something from a mentor allows a young entrepreneur to pass it along to others so that business knowledge becomes more widely available in the community. The answer to this question is critical to understanding the full extent of the benefits of mentorship as a potential scaled policy intervention.

The second element of the study is to try to find how to best match mentors and mentees. For this, the researchers used machine learning techniques to learn the mentor and mentee characteristics that predicted the best results in the 2014 study. This information then allows us to match mentees to the mentors that we can predict will give the best results. Again, if this improves upon the results from matching mentors



Machine learning may help in better matching mentors and mentees.





*Enumerators prepare for data collection in Uganda.*

and mentees at random, it will give us confidence to continue to use machine learning to further refine the match procedure in the future.

A baseline study establishing mentor and mentee pairs is ongoing and continues even with the COVID-19 outbreak, though we now encourage mentors and mentees to talk by phone. We believe that a difficult time like this may be a period when mentorship is particularly valuable, as less experienced entrepreneurs may not have developed strategies for how to cope with such a challenging situation.

We continue to collect data on how businesses are doing in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic locally through phone interviews. As of mid-April, businesses continue to operate in the midst of a partial

lock down, where they are allowed to operate until 5 pm. Business owners have commented that it has slowed down their businesses because people have been asked to stay indoors. Life within the parish community continues to remain the same.

Moreover, we presently are trying to implement an emergency intervention to make direct cash payments to these businesses during the month of April as this crisis is beginning to come to Kenya. We believe that this cash may be valuable as a way of giving people the option to work less, to maintain consumption as their profits decrease, or to access needed cleaning products and medical treatments if necessary. We will study the effects of this intervention in order to understand its efficacy in case of another dangerous outbreak in the future. ■

## HumanLines

By *Ilaria Schnyder von Wartensee*, Ford Family Research Assistant Professor (pictured right, far right)

Since January 2018, *Clemens Sedmak* and I have been conducting the Humanitarian Corridors research project. Following the establishment of “humanitarian corridors,” i.e., legal and safe pathways toward citizenship, Caritas Italy has arranged for more than 45 Italian host communities to receive a small group of refugees for a minimum term of one year. The Ford Program, with its expertise and track record in migration studies and religious studies, was invited as the exclusive research partner in analyzing, tracking, and evaluating the integration experience of 498 refugees into Italian society over a period of five years. Clemens and I designed and are conducting the scientific monitoring and in-depth qualitative research for this humanitarian corridors project.

In our research, I directed the creation of an innovative “web documentary” site called HumanLines to capture and communicate authentic refugees’ experiences. For this site, I am managing a team of six content and web developers, 7 students, and 20 additional collaborators that include translators, illustrators, and technical consultants. Among them is photographer Max Hirzel, who has developed a vast portfolio of migrant and refugee photo stories in Italy.

The goal is to narrate the stories and relate the dynamics, faces, beauty, and difficulties that make up and distinguish the Humanitarian Corridors project.



The project is unique in that it provides an alternative vision to the current system of receiving vulnerable migrants with diverse characteristics. For this reason, the Humanitarian Corridors project involves an ambition and complexity that are difficult to grasp at first glance. We have chosen to tell microstories that strive to provide insight into some fragments of this complexity, with the hope of creating a coherent, honest, and reliable mosaic of experiences. We have chosen tools that allow us to relate these experiences through personal stories – contributions rooted in the everyday lives of the people involved in the project, including beneficiaries, workers, volunteers, and mediators. The portal will also host reports, academic articles, and other information that we believe will be helpful for various kinds of users.

### HumanLines has five main goals:

1. To give voice to vulnerable people as refugees and to people that normally are working hard behind the scenes, such as volunteers;
2. To humanize the perception of and narratives about vulnerable people, such as refugees, by providing concrete and authentic descriptions of their daily lives;
3. To communicate and sensitize in a direct and emotional fashion a broader audience on the complexity of integration in the society;



*HumanLines web documentary drawing by Roberto Abbiati*





4. To act as a platform for stakeholders for the exchange of experiences and dialogue and provide background information based on our research;
5. To use a combination of different tools in a creative and original fashion (drawings, videos, photos, research interviews and observations, etc.), putting together the work of researchers, journalists, media makers and artists.

Unfortunately, the launch day set for this online publication ended up coinciding with a dramatic emergency: the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning, the HumanLines team wanted to express heartfelt closeness to all affected families and the most heartfelt thanks for those who are on the front line every day to defeat the virus. We decided not to postpone the launch, but to follow how the different protagonists reacted and lived through these difficult moments. With roots in real life, the documentary captures and communicates our project's efforts to take note of what happens day by day, line by line.

In recent weeks, we posted videos about “accompaniment during the COVID-19 pandemic” featuring program directors, social workers, and volunteers sharing about how the pandemic has affected them, the program, and the refugees.

We interviewed Tekle (pictured above), an Eritrean man living with his family in Nonantola who is able through his drawing to describe how the COVID-19 has affected his life.

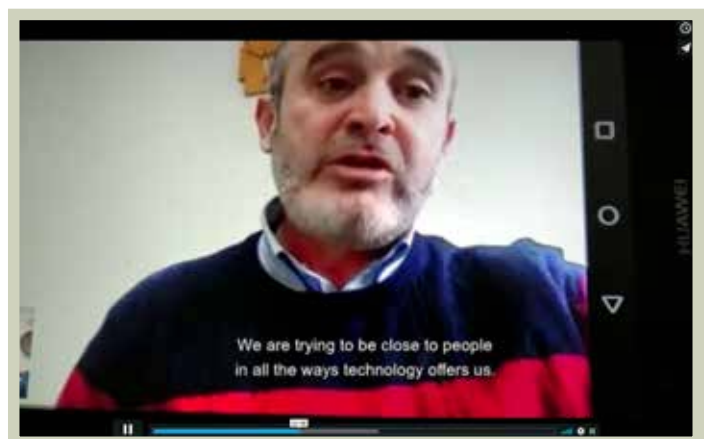
Domenico Leggio (pictured below), director of Caritas Ragusa, affirmed that it was important for them to inform the refugees families about the government's instructions regarding the pandemic, noting that “the closure of the schools made [the families] truly perceive the risk, the danger.”

“An element of further work has been with the volunteers, encouraging volunteers to keep in touch with the refugees and, above all, giving [to them] their strength,” explained Emanuele Cappello, a social worker of Caritas Asti.

“We are talking to our welcomed people by phone... and it is an intense experience,” shared social worker Giuditta Serra from the cooperative Kemay (Caritas Brescia). “The only adjective that comes to me is heartening.”

“I wake up every morning with four or five messages from boys, girls that we have welcomed, asking how I am, how my parents are,” she continued. “They send me all the blessings of the world...it is strong and moving. I honestly didn't expect it.”

One of the most difficult issues that refugees are facing concerns their autonomy and their possibility to work. Many recently started an internship or a job that they had to stop because of the closure of many activities, such as restaurants or hotels. Many Italians have lost their jobs too. One of the main concerns for the after-COVID-19 future would be a new start for everybody. ■



## Savings and Lending Project Updates

By **Danice Brown Guzmán**, Ford Program Research Associate

In central Uganda, Economics faculty **Wyatt Brooks** and I are in the midst of a study of village savings and lending groups. Project CLOC, which stands for Community Lending and Outside Capital, is a three-year project which aims to study the effects of providing community savings groups (SILCs) with additional capital to manage and lend internally.



*Project CLOC manager Francis Ssekijjo, Professor Wyatt Brooks, and researcher Cindy Mical prepare to meet with a SILC group.*

Our project was to have one year of baseline data collection, from November 2019 to November 2020. Each month we would interview community members from about 5-10 savings and lending groups who were starting a new cycle that month, half of which would be assigned to receive additional funds to share and lend to their members, and the other half of which would serve as a comparison group, before receiving the funds in the following year. This would be followed by one year of endline data collection, beginning this November, and then a final year to recover the capital from the comparison group.

Now, about halfway into the baseline study, we have paused the study due to COVID-19. The country has forbidden people to meet in groups of five or more. Therefore the SILCs cannot continue their regular weekly meetings. Furthermore, as the interviews

were conducted face-to-face, our team cannot be deployed to conduct interviews at this time. Finally, Uganda Martyrs University, which serves as the local research partner, is temporarily closed. So both the intervention and the research is on hold. The research team will create a contingency plan to address this, when we know the extent of the delay.

We've been keeping in touch with our contacts in the community to learn about the changes to the intervention, but also to learn about how COVID-19 is affecting the communities of Mpigi District. We've learned from Francis Ssekijjo, our project manager, that the shut-down is very concerning for the community members, who are mainly farmers. The closure of commerce in Uganda has hit during the planting season, making seeds, fertilizers, and day laborers scarce and difficult to secure at a crucial time. Other community members who run small roadside businesses have been forced to close. And those who sell products in larger cities are facing a lack of transit and labor to help them get the products they need to larger markets, which presumably would be closed anyway. Finally, with the shutdown of major cities, the population in the rural areas is increasing, placing an even greater need on an area with few resources. Francis warns us that many of these families will be in danger of not meeting their needs when lean seasons arrive.

Our research team is staying informed of these changes in order to understand how our research will change, but also as a way to remain in contact with our teams and exercise solidarity with them during these difficult times. It is our hope that the resources we provide to the SILCs will help some of the members weather these crises. ■



*Volunteering with a TEDx event highlighting young leaders in Amman helped Patrick McCabe (far right) realize the important contribution of youth voices.*

## Hearing the Voices of the Young

By **Patrick McCabe '21**, Kellogg International Scholar

How do young people make their voices heard and translate their perspectives into substantive change? That question served as a common thread over this past year, tying together my experiences while studying in Chile and Jordan and assisting with research on Kenyan education and citizenship through the Ford Program.

While studying in Santiago, Chile, in the fall of 2019, I observed leaders my age mobilize a mass protest movement determined to reshape a vastly unequal society, fractured by excessive privatization. During my time studying Arabic with the Boren scholarship in Amman, Jordan, in the spring of 2020, I had the opportunity to volunteer with a local TEDx event, where young leaders in Amman presented their visions for innovative development strategies and their initiatives that were transforming their aspirations into action. Through researching how new Kenyan national high schools that integrate students from diverse regions and ethnic groups have affected the perspectives of young people on citizenship, I was able to work with a team of passionate researchers who engage with youth voices on issues shaping Kenya's future. The following three lessons wove these experiences together.

Young people want to be heard, and not only on the issues that pertain directly to their own lived experiences. This first lesson was clearest in Chile, where the students who mobilized the first waves of protests did so over a rise in metro fares that did not even apply to their student transit passes. Along with protesting an education system that was failing young people and a minimum wage that left working families in poverty, student voices also protested the privatized pension system that failed to provide for older generations of Chileans. A sense of intergenerational justice pervaded the movement, as student leaders brought to the forefront an array of injustices from which they were not currently suffering.

In Jordan, young leaders in Amman made their voices heard in front of hundreds of listeners through the TEDx platform, and did so while discussing innovations ranging from healthcare to preserving traditional Bedouin sounds in modern Arab rap music.

In the Kenya secondary school survey, students were presented the opportunity to write letters to the cabinet secretary of education. Young people wrote both about their own challenges of balancing the pressures of academic excellence and mental health within the school system and of desiring an education structure that better prepares them for opportunities after graduation, but also about the needs of their peers who cannot afford school fees or who are treated unequally in the system.

Young people also want a seat at the table to showcase their own work and policy solutions. In Jordan, speakers presented business plans to meet opportunities in the modernizing economy, block-chain solutions for managing logistics for local organizations, and women's rugby leagues as an avenue for strengthening leadership skills. In the Kenya national school survey, students petitioned the cabinet secretary to create opportunities for them to work directly in the ministry, serving as a link between student voices and the larger bureaucracy.





*Enumerators participate in training for Kenyan secondary school study in Nairobi.*

Young people also responded to the survey with detailed suggestions of curriculum models implemented by other countries that could allow the education system to better prepare students for emerging sectors of the economy.

The most critical lesson from my experiences has been that developing forums through which young people can make their voices heard is critical for development. In creating the survey instruments for the Kenya secondary schools survey, the Ford Program team focused intently on how to design a survey instrument that encouraged students to

present the challenges they face as well as the ideas they have on the issues of education and citizenship in the country. The most exciting part of reading through hundreds of responses over the past month has been getting to hear the voices of other young people as they reflect on universal challenges that I can relate to while also communicating with a level of nuance specific to their own reality.

At the start of this past year, I set my overarching goal as language fluency in Spanish and Arabic, but through my experiences, I have also come to realize the vital need to listen to and lift up youth voices. ■



*Patrick McCabe '21 is a political science and Arabic major with a minor in peace studies from Vienna, Virginia. Through the Kellogg International Scholars Program he serves as a research assistant to Jaimie Bleck. He was recently named a Truman Scholar, through which he hopes to pursue a master's degree in public affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University.*

## Integral Human Development

By **Clemens Sedmak**, Professor of Social Ethics  
(pictured right)

Having a strong connection to a place and to the people living there, and doing research with these ties in mind, is an aspect of integral human development. Caring about a refugee's spiritual wellbeing (do you have a community you can pray with?) is an aspect of integral human development. Being concerned with the long-term health and safety of women who have been exposed to domestic violence is an aspect of integral human development. Entering long-term relationships with community partners is an aspect of integral human development.

Integral human development is the development of each person and of the whole person. The idea dates back to Pope Paul VI and his encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, where he talked about authentic human development: Development “cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be well rounded; it must foster the development of each person and of the whole person.”

This thought, as well as the entire encyclical, were inspired by Joseph Lebert's work. Lebert, a French Dominican economist, had worked with sea fisheries in France and later on with many communities in Latin America; he had observed the negative effects of certain economic developments on people and coined the term ‘human economy,’ i.e., an economy that would be “favourable to human development,” to “a fully human life.” Denis Goulet, one of Lebert's students, characterized the point of human-centered development with the words: “Societies are more human, or more developed, not when men and women ‘have more’ but when they are enabled to ‘be more.’ The main criterion of development is not increased production or material well-being but qualitative human enrichment.”

“Human enrichment” is the concern behind the Ford Program's research on mentoring to help women's



business start-ups succeed; human enrichment is the concern behind the research in citizenship education (how can schools promote good citizens?). The Program's support of a social enterprise project in Uganda shows a commitment to human enrichment – as does the research on the inclusion of youth in East Africa. Supporting persons in strengthening the sense of their own dignity is clearly a contribution to a vision of “being” more.

Integral human development, with its focus on qualitative human enrichment, has been chosen to be the defining motto of the Keough School of Global Affairs. Even though the Keough School was only officially opened in 2017, a commitment to integral human development has existed much longer at Notre Dame. For more than a decade, the Ford Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity has been engaged in research with a special commitment to human dignity and the most vulnerable.

Current Ford Program research continues to show this concern with integral human development. The project in Sri Lanka to promote the dignity of migrant workers by looking into the role of recruitment agencies is one example. The project on the design of maternity spaces with a holistic view of health and the person in the maternal-child health centers in Nairobi, Kenya, is another one.

These projects show a concern for the person in her many dimensions. They make an effort of including all, of not leaving anyone behind. They reflect a concern for what is important to people. Integral human development is value-based; it encourages a view that there is no value-neutral development, a view expressed by Amartya Sen with the words: “What is or is not regarded as a case of ‘development’ depends inescapably on the notion of what things are valuable to promote.”

What people value depends largely on their desires, choices, commitments and dreams; the most convincing way to understand these value landscapes is listening to people, getting to know them. The Ford Program has built strong relationships with local communities, especially in East Africa, but also in Italy and in Mali. These relationships allow for respectful listening to understand who people want to be, what people want to do. The first step in the journey towards integral human development is attentiveness and care.

Attentiveness and care have become more especially precious goods in these difficult times of a global pandemic. A commitment to integral human development has become more challenging and more urgent at the same time. The Ford Program, with its sensitivity to vulnerabilities, could invite us to look at those most negatively affected by the pandemic. Even though the virus does not recognize borders, does not travel with a passport, and does not seem to make social distinctions, there is a clear social divide in risk exposure.



There is a major concern with the burdens carried by women. Women are more affected by school closures due to the uneven distribution of caring responsibilities. In many societies, women are more likely than men to be caregivers for the sick, for children as well as for parents, at home as well as in health care settings. In short, women are bearing the brunt of the global health crisis.

There is also a major concern with the urban poor (many of whom are women!). We received a report from Uganda on Easter, sharing, “Here in Uganda things are pretty under lockdown – no movement, no gathering, no business, just stay at home! The lockdown, now in its 10th day, is taking its toll, especially on the urban poor, who have to earn their daily bread. Many are literally starving!”

Attentiveness and care are at the heart of integral human development and at the heart of the Ford Program. They have to be at the heart of our efforts now: a crisis magnifies inequalities, privileges, and disadvantages. A crisis can deepen these gaps and divides. More than ever, we need integral human development with a commitment to leave no one behind. ■