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New Book Shares Challenges Faced During Lundy Foundation's Evaluation Work in Tanzania

DENVER, CO – The Lundy Foundation's groundbreaking evaluation of a Tanzania children's center is among the model case studies featured in a new book for graduate students and professionals.

Evaluation in Action: Interviews with Expert Evaluators goes behind the scenes to explore the challenges and choices professionals face in the field. The Lundy Foundation's assessment of Godfrey's Children's Center, which it supported in Idweli, Tanzania, until December 2007, is the only international case study among 12 in the new book.

"We are honored to have the Children's Center evaluation included in this important new book," said Victor Dukay, PhD, president of the Lundy Foundation. "It helps us reach the people who can best use what we've learned: evaluators and those training to become professional evaluators."

While evaluating the impact of programs is common in the United States, it is unusual in international and multicultural settings, Dukay said. For the Children's Center study, the Lundy Foundation, in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation, assembled a team of 14 evaluators from the United States and Tanzania. Lundy created a rigorous research program to interview villagers in their native language to assess the center's impact on orphan and vulnerable children's well-being. The AIDS epidemic had left 300 orphaned among Idweli's 2,500 residents.

"Our evaluation also goes beyond the norm in that it gave voice to the children and their caregivers, especially the women," Dukay said. Allan Wallis, PhD, associate professor of Public Policy in the University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs and one of the Children's Center evaluators, said the team's work broke new ground. It was culturally appropriate, used a well-trained international evaluation team, and measured the children's psychosocial well-being as well as nutrition and physical health, which are more commonly used yardsticks.

"We have shown that it is possible to do this kind of empirical evaluation and then use those results to inform future investment in international programs," Wallis said.

Wallis also praised Dukay's work in helping convince Congress to include evaluation requirements in this summer's reauthorization of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which provides \$48 billion to fight HIV/AIDS in the developing world. The Children's Center results were instrumental in showing lawmakers that impact evaluations could and should be done, he said.

Including the Children's Center evaluation in the book gave it an extra dimension, said Jody L. Fitzpatrick, the book's co-author and associate professor in the University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs.

"This case study involves a great team coming together with different areas of expertise and working across cultural boundaries," Fitzpatrick said. "It demonstrates the importance of good leadership and flexibility when working in an international setting."

Fitzpatrick's co-authors are Christina Christie, Claremont Graduate University; and Melvin M. Mark, The Pennsylvania State University. *Evaluation in Action* was published in July 2008 by SAGE Publications. ISBN: 9781412949743

About the Lundy Foundation *The Lundy Foundation was created in 1991. It was active in HIV/AIDS issues for the first four years of its life, and has focused since on leading an international effort to develop research protocols for assessing the effectiveness of aid programs targeting orphaned and vulnerable children in East Africa. Godfrey's Children's Center was supported by Lundy and Africa Bridge (an Oregon nonprofit) and was built and operated by the village of Idweli. For more information, visit www.lundyfoundation.org.*