

Zolberg IRC Fellowship: Palava Project
Focus Area: Intimate Partner Violence

Project Aim: Palava Project's aim is to find new and novel ways to prevent Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Liberia.

Desired range of dates: April - September (6 months)

Project Description: IRC Research & Development (R&D) has partnered with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) to design and test interventions that have a meaningful and sustained reduction in IPV. After conducting initial field research and ideation, the team has developed three concepts to take forward for further prototyping and piloting over the course of the next 6 months. **One of these ideas, which will be the focus for this fellowship, aims to create an aspirational male identity and interest in receiving messaging to achieve that identity.** During IRC field research in Monrovia, Liberia, the IRC found that men and women in Liberia consistently described a good husband as being the "provider" for the home and controlling decisions for the home. Yet in many cases, given the high rates of poverty and lack of employment opportunities, men are unable to adequately provide. Men report feeling frustration for not being able to provide in ways they think they should.

The IRC hypothesizes that by engaging men with an affirming male identity and sending them text messages that include information, practical actions, and reminders in ways that motivate men to think about themselves and their partner in new ways, and to learn and practice new behavior will **(1) Motivate men not to use violence by affirming identity related to positive behaviors, setting goals and (2) Improve men's skills to communicate and regulate their emotions.** Together, the IRC believes this can help reduce violence in relationships.

The Fellow will work with the R&D, IRC and IPA teams in New York and Liberia to primarily support management of the technology platforms that will be used for delivery of messages to users. This includes ensuring that the platform can be set up to perform various interactions, including sending surveys, 2-ways messages, IVR testimonials and enable payment of money through integration of mobile money, among others. The fellow may also be involved in testing content that can lead to successful behavior change. This entails working with R&D staff and consultants to identify and execute testing strategies that can help achieve the above outcomes.

This Fellow would get the opportunity to learn about how technology, media, and behavioral science can be harnessed for social change, and will also learn about how to design and test new interventions using innovation techniques.

Potential travel involved: Potentially to Liberia, TBD (June and July)

Student skillsets sought: STATA, Coding, Design Research/Design Thinking, Communications, Anthropology, Media Research, Measurement, Behavioral Science, Quantitative /Qualitative Research, Storytelling, Identity Research

Reports to: Shirin Ahmed, Senior Project Manager, IRC