

Zolberg IRC Fellowship: Project Sprout
Focus Areas: Nutrition

Project Aim: Project Sprout's aim is to identify new approaches for preventing and treating severe acute malnutrition, using human-centered design to identify, articulate and test different concepts. To complement design-thinking approaches, we also plan to use big data analytics to quantify the potential of different approaches, estimate the costs and benefits of investing in new innovations, and building a financial case for further innovation in the sector.

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

Project Description: Project Sprout has started a four-month project to address severe acute malnutrition on behalf of the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF). Severe and moderate acute malnutrition affects about 52 million children under the age of 5 with irreversible consequences for many. This is a highly complex issue fueled by a combination of food insecurity, disease, poor feeding practices, poor sanitation, low income, and insufficient services. Severe Acute Malnutrition is also exacerbated by war, conflict, and natural disasters, making both prevention and treatment priority issues for IRC helping families survive and recover from crises.

The project has two goals:

- (1) Drawing from experts, published and unpublished research; input from caregivers and service providers; and our own experiences in the field, **propose 6-8 promising new ideas to prevention malnutrition and prototype some of them.**
- (2) Evaluate the impact of current and promising malnutrition treatment efforts against targets and propose how best to bridge any gaps.

The team will use a design thinking approach in consultation with experts in the nutrition field: a discovery and inspiration phase (including time with clients in the field) followed by ideation, synthesis, prototyping (again, with clients) and ending in refined ideas to present to CIFF.

The team currently consists of a strategist, a design lead, and an international nutrition expert. The Fellow would support this multidisciplinary team by contributing to the creative process, and assisting with the planning and execution of ideation workshops and presentations to stakeholders. This project would give the Fellow the opportunity to learn about the application of both design thinking and quantitative analysis in development and crisis response, program development, and policy influence. The ideal candidate will have experience in developing countries, but health or humanitarian response experience is not required. Optimism (with a side of pragmatism) and a willingness to roll up her/his sleeves are appealing qualities.

Potential travel involved: No

Student skillsets sought: UX or systems design, ethnography, anthropology, behavioral ecology, behavioral science

Reports to: Carla Lopez, Design Innovation Health Lead, International Rescue Committee