

# Rwanda



Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. We design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications together with decisionmakers to ensure that the evidence created is used to improve opportunities for the world's poor. In the ten years since IPA was founded, we have worked with over 250 leading academics to manage over 400 evaluations in 51 countries. Future growth will be concentrated in focus countries, such as Rwanda, where we have local and international staff, established relationships with government, NGOs, and the private sector, and deep knowledge of local issues.

## More Evidence

In Rwanda, we have continued our global tradition of rigorous, applicable research by building foundational research capacity and conducting evaluations in areas of pressing national concern. Examples of our work below offer promising insights into everyday issues that affect the lives of the Rwandan poor.

### HEALTH

#### **Community Health Clubs seek to improve health through education and community participation.**

Community health workers (CHWs) have been identified as key agents for improving health in developing countries. IPA is currently evaluating a program that trains CHWs to lead weekly health club meetings to educate participants about safe hygiene, sanitation, and other health behaviors. The ongoing study of 9,000 households

in 150 villages will generate evidence about the health and economic impacts of health clubs on households, with a focus on the impact on children age 5 and under. Our findings will help to inform the Government of Rwanda's efforts to scale up the program nationally.

### FINANCE

#### **Committing funds for future spending needs.**

Existing mobile money products in East Africa have reduced the costs of sending and receiving money for many households, as well as provided an alternative place to store small amounts of money. More recently, policymakers and mobile phone operators have been interested in using mobile money as a device to allow clients to commit funds until some pre-specified date in the future, as an alternative informal place to save. Researchers are collaborating

### IPA RWANDA

Since 2013

#### FOCUS SECTORS

Education  
Finance  
Health

#### RESEARCH PROJECTS

1 Completed, 5 in Progress

#### KEY PARTNERS

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, IGC, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, World Bank – DIME

#### KEY RESEARCHERS

Jeanine Condo (University of Rwanda – School of Public Health), James Habyarimana (Georgetown University), Jessica Goldberg (University of Maryland), Andrew Zeitlin (Georgetown University)

with a mobile phone operator in Rwanda that recently created a mobile savings product, using an RCT to study whether marketing messages and price discounts affect take-up and usage. In collaboration with IPA, the research will include household surveys to understand the impact of the product on household savings and other measures of well-being.

Other on-going work includes a study conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Education which will examine the impact of teacher performance incentives on student learning outcomes and teacher recruitment.

# Better Programs & Policies

IPA evidence has already contributed to improving millions of lives. Now, with ten years of evidence to build on, our programs are increasingly focusing on government and partner collaboration to translate evidence into better programs and policies.

**Building the capacity of Rwandan government officials and researchers to interpret and apply rigorous evidence in policymaking.** In March 2014, over 37 policymakers from eight ministries attended a two-day policy workshop hosted by IPA and our close partners at the Jameel Latif Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) Africa in Kigali to learn about methods of impact evaluation and critically using evidence in the policy decisionmaking process. An additional 19 researchers attended an extended three-day session to develop their skills in research design and execution. IPA and J-PAL will work with attendees to advance their ideas for new research and deepen partnerships for scaling evidence-based programs.

## AGRICULTURE

**Commitment savings accounts may help farmers increase their investment in agricultural inputs.** The savings accounts have been implemented through Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) and farmers had the opportunity to calculate their expected input expenses for the coming year. IPA is partnering with Ministry of Agriculture and the World Bank (DIME) to investigate the impact of these accounts on agricultural productivity and socio-economic outcomes.



## Our Future

IPA Rwanda is at an inflection point in its growth. We are transitioning from our early status as a young nonprofit working in the development space into a go-to resource for evidence-based insights for government, nonprofits, and the private sector. As we navigate this transition, we are focusing on two goals. They are to:

- » **Reinforce IPA's status as a known source of high-quality research.** We continue to bring our expertise in high-quality impact evaluations to Rwanda, providing the capacity to run rigorous evaluations across sectors. We work together with knowledgeable government and academic partners through the concept and design stage to ensure that the evidence provides rigorous, meaningful results for decisionmakers.
- » **Partner with decisionmakers to seek, generate, and apply evidence at scale to help the poor.** IPA will work together with J-PAL to provide training to policymakers on why we randomize, how our RCT methodology generates rigorous evidence, and how to use that evidence to guide programs and policies. We seek to work together with Rwandan and international researchers to provide local academics with opportunities to build their skills and apply their research capacity on studies that generate evidence for Rwandan and global decisionmakers.

Building a world with **More Evidence** and **Less Poverty**.