Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy nonprofit that discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. IPA brings together researchers and decision-makers to design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications, ensuring that the evidence created is used to improve the lives of the world’s poor. Since our founding in 2002, IPA has worked with over 575 leading academics to conduct over 650 evaluations in 51 countries. This research has informed hundreds of successful programs that now impact millions of individuals worldwide. Future growth will be concentrated in focus countries, such as Sierra Leone, where we have local and international staff, established relationships with government, NGOs, and the private sector, and deep knowledge of local issues.

**More Evidence**

**A truth and reconciliation program increased forgiveness, but worsened mental health.**
A community-based reconciliation program increased forgiveness toward perpetrators of crimes and significantly increased trust in ex-combatants, but it also worsened psychological wellbeing—including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety.

**Exposure to political debates bolstered voters’ knowledge and changed voting behavior.**
Watching debates substantially increased political knowledge, policy alignment, and vote shares for higher-quality candidates. The debates also encouraged politicians to invest more in their constituencies, both during the campaign and one year later.

**A community driven development program helped establish village organizations, but after nearly four years had not changed institutions or decision-making.** The program led to positive short-run effects on local public goods provision and economic outcomes, but no sustained impacts on collective action, decision-making processes, or the involvement of marginalized groups like women in local affairs. Given that institutional change can take a long period of time to become visible, researchers have conducted a follow-up in 2016, with results from this survey expected in 2017.
IPA evidence has already contributed to improving millions of lives. Now, with eight years of evidence to build on, our programs are increasingly focusing on government and partner collaboration to translate evidence into better programs and policies.

**PEACE & RECOVERY**
**Youth Readiness Initiative**
In partnership with the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Harvard School of Public Health, and the World Bank, IPA is evaluating the effects of a cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) intervention, developed over the past ten years through intensive research in Sierra Leone, on psychometric measures as well as youth employment outcomes. The CBT intervention will be delivered alongside an existing Youth Employment Opportunities Program scheme which aims to link training and cash transfers to jobs.

**HEALTH**
**Social Incentives**
IPA has partnered with the Ministry of Health & Sanitation in Sierra Leone to evaluate the effects of social incentives, in the form of visible colorful bracelets, on improvements in timely visits for maternal care for pregnant women as well as reducing the drop-off rates for immunization of newborn babies. The Government of Sierra Leone and partners from the UN meet on a quarterly basis in Technical Working Groups organized by IPA and the lead researcher to discuss progress and updates, as well as challenges in running evaluations in under-resourced clinics.

*Read more about this research at [www.poverty-action.org/country/sierra-leone/studies](http://www.poverty-action.org/country/sierra-leone/studies).*

**Our Future**
IPA Sierra Leone 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.** As one of the only organizations in Sierra Leone with the skills and capacity to conduct high-quality impact evaluations, we are in a strong position to merge our deep knowledge of local issues with our unparalleled research capability.

- **Partner with decision-makers to seek, generate, and apply evidence at scale to help the poor.** Our IPA research affiliates and our local staff are a rich source of deep expertise and established relationships with local development organizations, academic institutions, and government agencies. We are working to expand those relationships by building policy considerations into all study designs, communicating what we know, and collaborating with partners in government and the private sector to apply it.

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

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