

Zolberg IRC Fellowship: Reducing Violence in Schools with Behavioral Science
Focus Areas: Education and Violence

Project Aim: Since 2015, IRC has been studying how behavioral science could improve humanitarian practice, with our partners from the [Behavioural Insights Team](#). One of our ongoing projects is studying the use of violence in the Nyaragusu refugee camp in Tanzania, the world's fifth largest refugee camp (see [BLOG](#) and [REPORT](#)). This research led to large-scale behaviorally-informed intervention to the effectiveness of different strategies to reduce favorable attitudes towards corporal punishment, implemented in early 2017. We are now working on an accompanying impact evaluation to assess whether a program for teachers building on our earlier findings could make a difference in teachers' behavior, reducing physical discipline and replacing it with more positive methods.

Desired range of dates: November 1st - May 31st (6-7 months)

Project Description: In our latest round of research, IRC and BIT collected data on social networks. We asked 1,040 teachers in the camp to name their main social referents -- the teachers that they trust most and get advice from most often. We also have data on teachers' attitudes towards the use of physical discipline in the classroom. This is potentially a very powerful resource to understand how to improve the quality of education in the camp, how best to support for teachers in our educational programs, and how to leverage existing social networks. If we are able to harness this data, we could potentially understand where teachers go for information, how to communicate optimally with teachers, and what might be barriers to changing or improving teaching norms within the camp school system today.

However, before we can harness this data in program design, we must first be able to understand and manipulate the data in the aggregate. The goal of this project is to take the raw data set collected by the research team from IRC and the Behavioral Insights Team, convert it into a usable format, and illustrate it in ways that make it easier to understand, including the following:

- (1) Develop and execute an approach to cataloging, storing, and interpreting the data set of 1,040 teachers' social referent and their attitudes towards the use of violence.
- (2) Propose a way to map or illustrate social networks among teachers in Nyarugusu and build the proposed model
- (3) Using the data set, develop recommendations for the design of new interventions that draw on behavioral science principles - potential new interventions we could develop include improving teacher practice, and new ways to reduce corporal punishment and other forms of classroom violence.

Additionally, this project may have the opportunity to support new thought leadership on using social referents in the design of social programs and behaviorally informed interventions. Findings from this book may be included in future books or publications by the IRC or the Behavioral Insights Team.

Potential travel involved: None

Student skillsets sought: Data visualization, ethnography, anthropology, behavioral ecology, behavioral science, a background understanding of education, humanitarian contexts, and/or violence reduction and protection fields is a plus.

Reports to: Katherine Rodriguez, Program Officer at IRC Research, Evaluation, and Learning

Note: *This role has the opportunity to work closely with behavioral science specialists from the Behavioural Insights Team as well.*