

Can Outsourcing Improve Liberia's Schools?

**Preliminary Results from Year One of a Three-Year
Randomized Evaluation of Partnership Schools for Liberia**

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Abstract

After one year, public schools managed by private contractors in Liberia raised student learning by 60 percent, compared to standard public schools. But costs were high, performance varied across contractors, and contracts authorized the largest contractor to push excess pupils and under-performing teachers onto other government schools.

Keywords: Public-Private Partnership; Randomized Controlled Trial; School Management

JEL Codes: I25, I28, O13, L32, L33

Online appendix: https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/partnership_schools_for_liberia_online_appendix.pdf



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Online appendix

This appendix provides supplementary material for Romero, Sandefur, and Sandholtz (2017, Center for Global Development working paper #462), "Can outsourcing improve Liberia's schools?" The main text is available online at <https://www.cgdev.org/publications/partnership-schools-for-liberia>.

A Extra tables and figures

Table A.1. External validity: Difference in characteristics between schools in the RCT (both treatment and control) and other public schools (based on EMIS data).

	(1) RCT (treatment and control)	(2) Other public schools	(3) Difference
Students: ECE	142.68 (5.46)	112.71 (3.99)	29.97*** (5.77)
Students: Primary	151.55 (9.62)	132.38 (2.95)	19.16* (10.18)
Students	291.91 (11.36)	236.24 (3.46)	55.67*** (12.15)
Classrooms per 100 students	1.17 (0.12)	0.80 (0.04)	0.37*** (0.13)
Teachers per 100 students	3.04 (0.10)	3.62 (0.26)	-0.58** (0.28)
Textbooks per 100 students	99.21 (7.08)	102.33 (3.49)	-3.12 (7.88)
Chairs per 100 students	20.71 (2.08)	14.13 (1.05)	6.58*** (2.38)
Food from Gov or NGO	0.36 (0.04)	0.30 (0.01)	0.06 (0.04)
Solid building	0.36 (0.04)	0.28 (0.01)	0.08* (0.04)
Water pump	0.62 (0.04)	0.45 (0.01)	0.17*** (0.04)
Latrines/toilet	0.85 (0.02)	0.71 (0.01)	0.14*** (0.03)
Distance to M/E (in KM)	153.25 (7.32)	186.99 (2.71)	-33.74*** (10.41)
Observations	185	2,420	2,605

This table presents the mean and standard error of the mean (in parentheses) for schools in the RCT (Column 1) and other public schools (Column 2), as well as the difference in means across both groups (Column 3). The sample of RCT schools is the original treatment and control allocation. ECE = Early childhood education, M/E = Ministry of Education. Authors' calculations based on 2015/2016 EMIS data.

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

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After one year, public schools managed by private contractors in Liberia raised student learning by 60 percent, compared to standard public schools. But costs were high, performance varied across contractors, and contracts authorized the largest contractor to push excess pupils and underperforming teachers onto other government schools. (Download the full paper at the right, and online appendix from lower button).

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