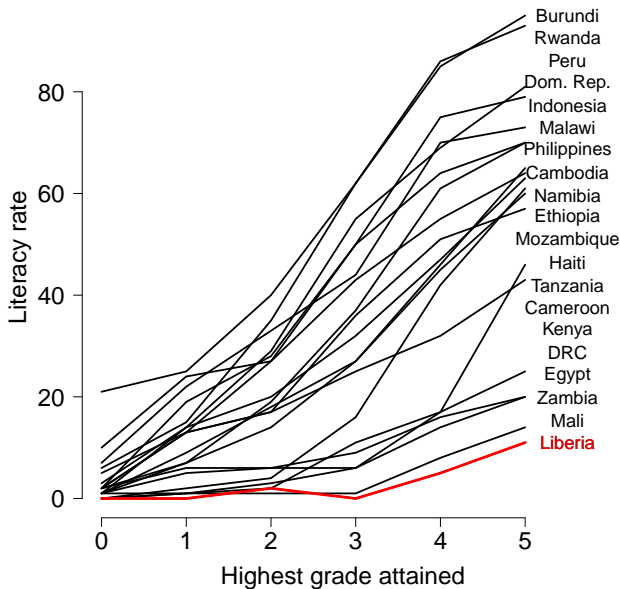


# Outsourcing Service Delivery in a Fragile State: Experimental Evidence from Liberia

Mauricio Romero (ITAM)  
Justin Sandefur (CGD)  
Wayne Sandholtz (UCSD)

6 August 2018

# Schooling $\neq$ learning





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Tina Rosenberg

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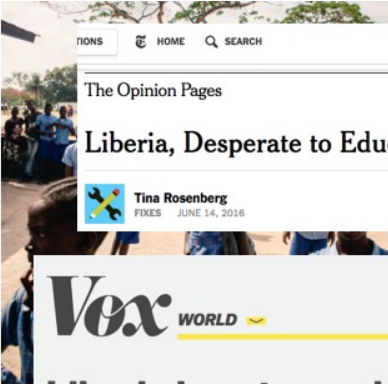
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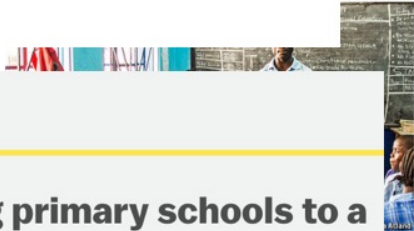
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Liberia, Desperate to Educate, Turns to Charter Schools


rtter schools

 Tina Rosenberg  
FIXES JUNE 14, 2016









**Vox** WORLD

**Liberia is outsourcing primary schools to a startup backed by Mark Zuckerberg**

Updated by Jennifer Williams on April 8, 2016, 8:20 a.m. ET @jenn\_ruth jennifer@vox.com

# Outline

The experiment: private management of public schools

Results: learning gains

Important caveats: high costs and unintended consequences

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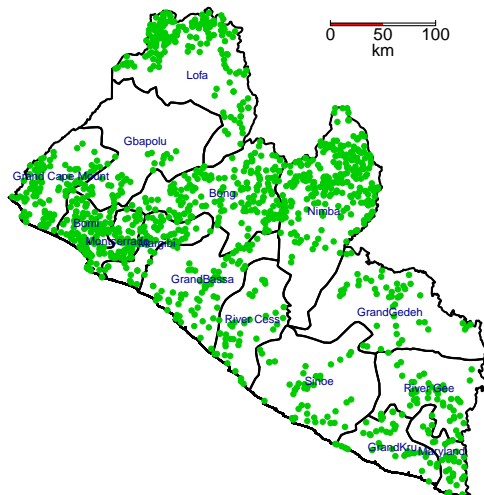
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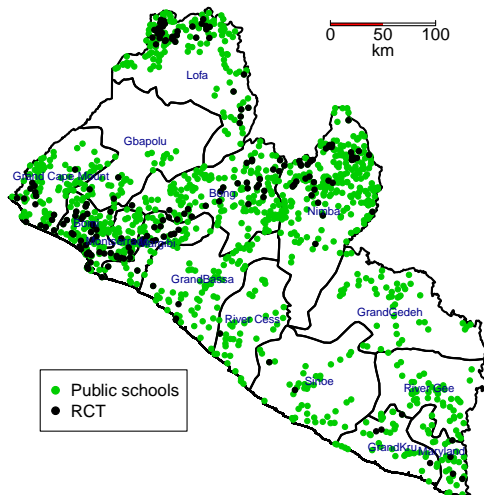
- ▶ 93
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- ▶ staffed by teachers on government payroll
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- ▶ with a \$50 per pupil subsidy



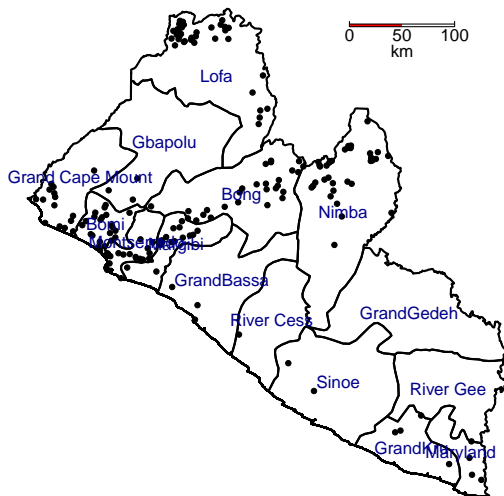
Both Ministry and some operators heavily resisted working in the neediest schools



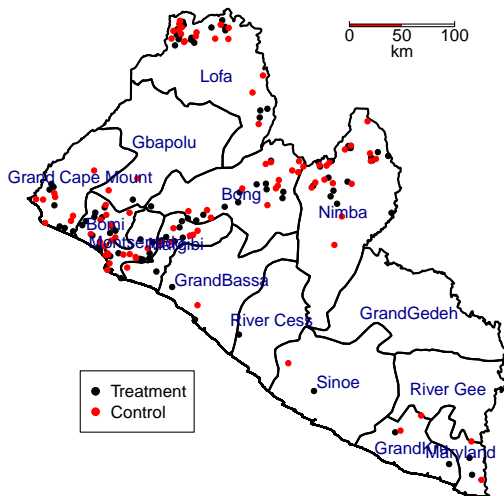
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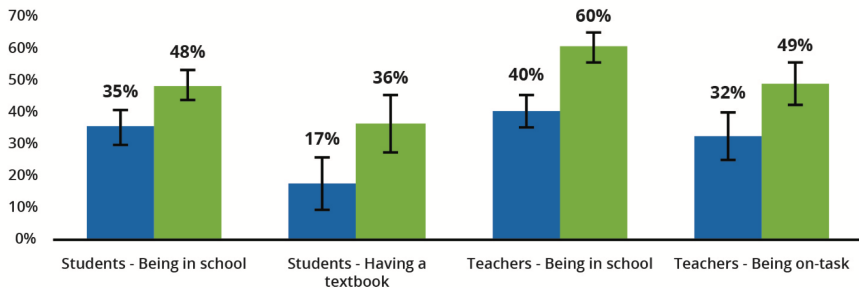
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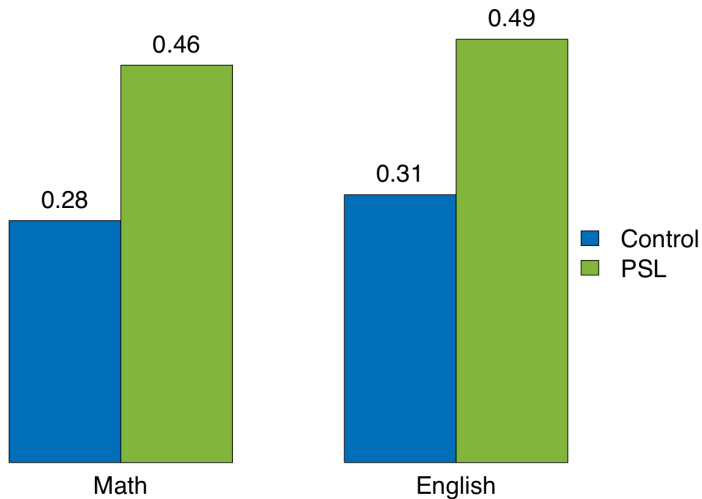
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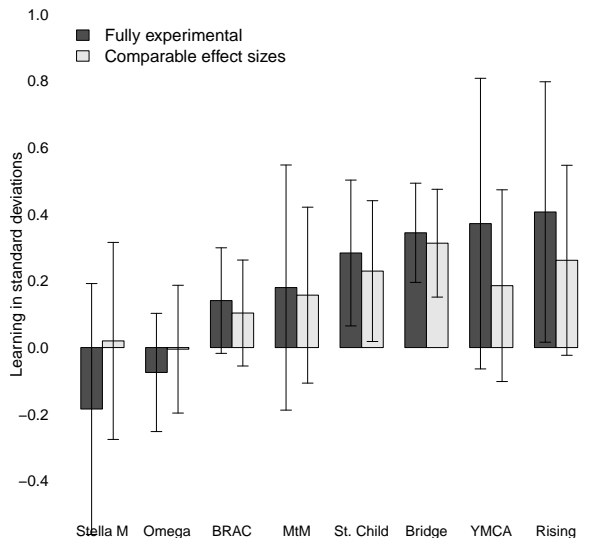
## Results: outsourcing raised the quality of schooling...



... and increased learning by 60%

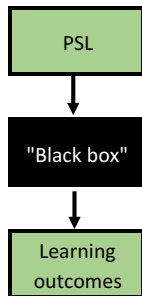


# Learning gains varied by contractor

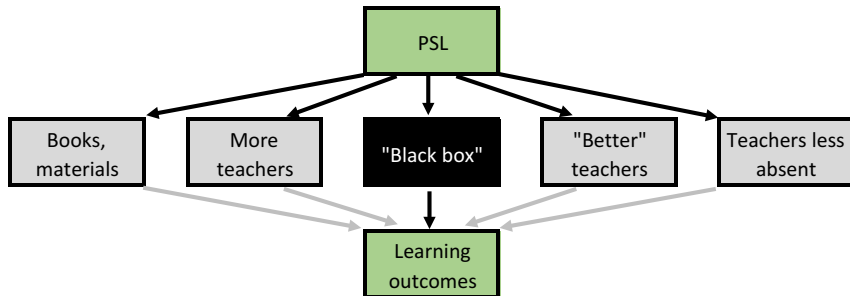




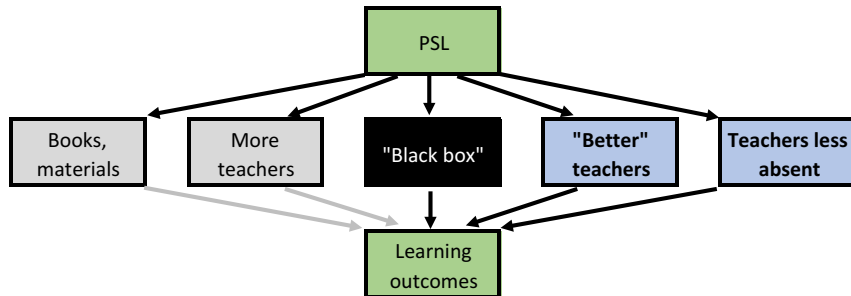
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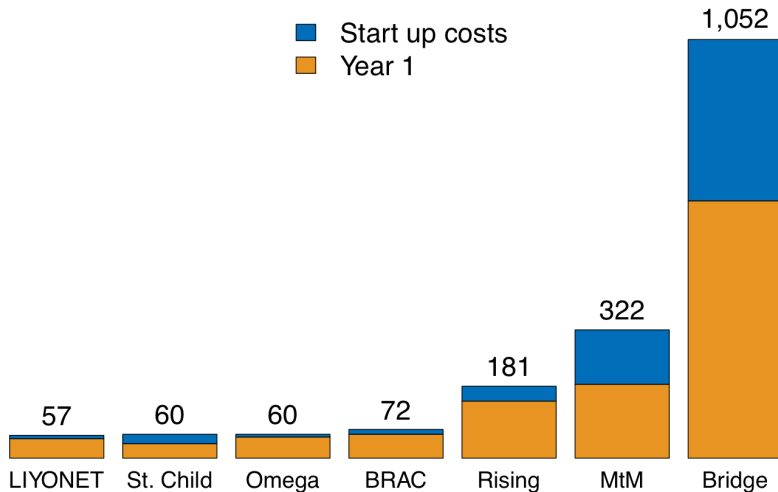
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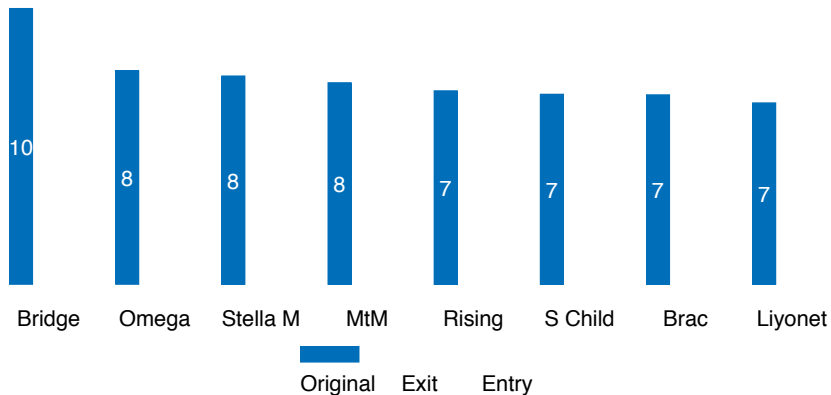
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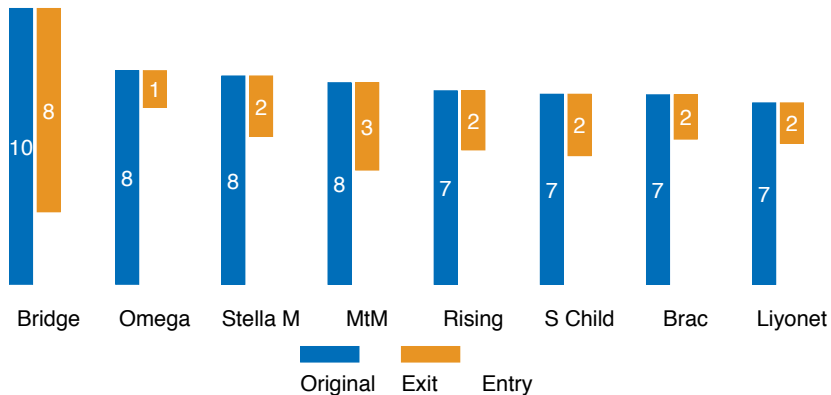
## The program is expensive ...



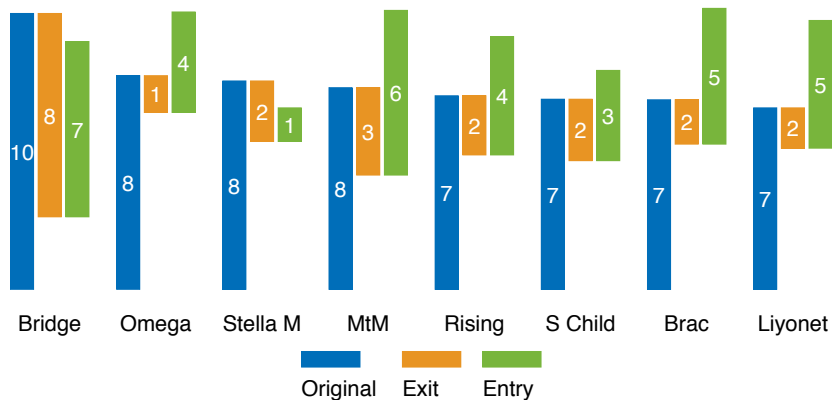
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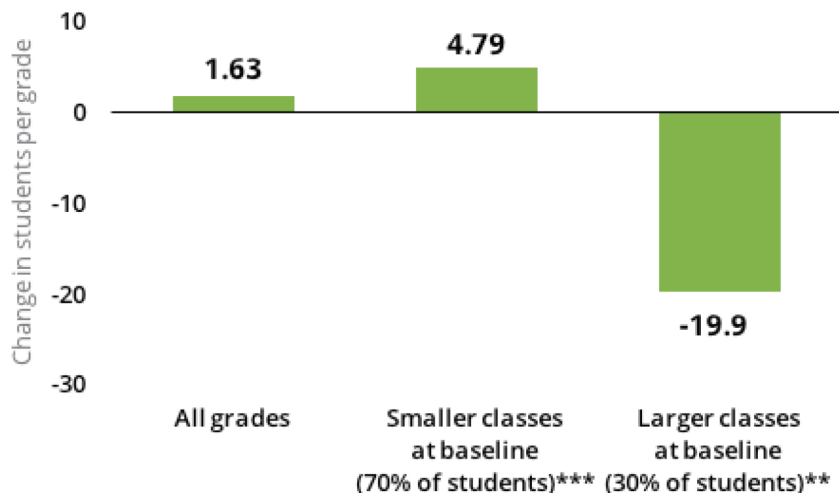


...and staffing levels are probably not sustainable





To reduce class sizes, one operator expelled children from public schools



# Many of these challenges were associated with single-source procurement

- ▶ Bilateral grant funding of extremely high per-pupil costs
- ▶ Selection of better schools
- ▶ Selection of better teachers
- ▶ Firing of teachers
- ▶ Displacement of students

# Conclusions

## Summary of Liberia results

1. Significant learning gains
2. But high costs
3. And some contracting failures

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## Recommendations for designing a PPP

1. If goal is learning gains, don't be overly prescriptive
2. Apply public procurement rules
3. Invest in M & E
4. Think about competition and dynamic incentives

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