



April 17, 2017

Dr. Shannon May, Chief Strategy Officer
Bridge International Academies
304 Larna House
116 Commercial Street
London E16NF

RE: Bridge response to RESULTS Report 29 March 2017

Dear Dr. Shannon May:

Thank you for your interest in RESULTS' research on World Bank International Finance Corporation investments in basic education and for your letter in that regard. The attached appendix includes specific responses to the issues raised in your letter.

RESULTS engaged various levels of BIA staff throughout the research process. RESULTS and BIA's then Director of Public Relations agreed to pause communications in June 2016 following the arrest of Canadian education researcher Curtis Riep. BIA indicated it would keep RESULTS updated on its efforts to improve communication with the research and civil society communities. RESULTS did not receive any communications from BIA thereafter.

Before the release of the report, RESULTS shared an early final copy to BIA as a courtesy. Further opportunity for case study subjects or interviewees to review and amend research findings is not standard practice and diminishes objectivity. As previously indicated, we are happy to receive any updated information from the time of writing of the report and include such information in discussions around its release. To that end, we will post BIA's letter on the RESULTS website alongside the report and this response.

As I noted in the foreword to the report, this is not a question of public versus private provision of education, but rather a question of how donors such as the IFC can direct its investments to best increase education access and quality for the very poor. We hope the report will be a constructive contribution to answering that question in support of achieving SDG4 and the right to education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanne Carter". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Joanne Carter
Executive Director
RESULTS/RESULTS Educational Fund

APPENDIX

Pg 8. RESULTS states that Bridge International Academies charges about \$9 per month in school fees reaching as high as \$20 per month.

The figure of \$9 per month is based on the schedule of BIA fees presented to RESULTS by a BIA academy manager and posted at a BIA school. It is the average of fees charged from class 1 to 8. BIA's figure of under \$7 per month is described as the average cost to send a child to BIA. While uncertain, this discrepancy may be the difference of what is charged according to the schedule of fees (all classes 1 to 8 treated equally in averaging) versus what a child/parent is paying on average (if BIA enrollments are higher in the lower/cheaper grade levels).

Pg 33. RESULTS states that Bridge uses a cellular phone platform that provides real time information to teachers as to whether their students have paid their fees and whether they are allowed in class. The payment of fees is linked to teachers' salaries, which are to be deducted if "non-allowed" students are still in the classroom.

This is the process as explained to RESULTS at length by a BIA academy manager.

Pg 34: RESULTS states that Bridge's educational materials had not been approved by the government "because it did not meet standards as expected by KICD," and its schools were almost entirely unregistered.

This is a direct quote from a Kenyan government official stated to RESULTS. Interviews with government officials, school associations, and BIA indicate that BIA schools are largely unregistered but are in the process of doing so, as is likewise indicated by BIA's letter in response to the RESULTS report.

Pg 34: RESULTS states that Kenya and Uganda order closures of Bridge due to regulatory violations. Bridge has filed an appeal against the Ugandan government.

BIA contests the Kenya aspect of this line. The High Court of Kenya upheld the decision of the Busia County Education Board to close ten BIA schools for failing to meet education standards. This has been widely reported in the media and was stated in BIA's own [press statement](#) on the matter. It is incorrect to say, "Despite the claims of the RESULTS report, which reassert Brussels-based Trade Union findings, Bridge schools have not been closed in either Uganda or Kenya." The RESULTS report discusses various court rulings to close BIA schools; it does not state that BIA schools have been closed. We are also unclear as to which "Brussels-based Trade Union findings" BIA is referring and welcome more specificity and transparency in regards to this assertion.

Pg 37: RESULTS states that Partnership Schools Liberia (PSL) consists of 92 government primary schools. Bridge runs 23 Government schools.

These figures have continually changed since the establishment of PSL and may have changed again between the time of writing and publishing. BIA is now indicating that PSL currently consists of 94 schools, with BIA running 25 of them. We are happy to provide this updated information on the RESULTS website. We also suggest that BIA, in its efforts to clarify incorrect information, update all of its own publicly available information in this regard, as one [BIA fact sheet](#) states “From September 2016, Bridge will provide a free public education in 50 primary and nursery schools in Liberia” and [another](#) reports “Starting September 2016, Bridge provides free public education in 25+ primary schools in Liberia.” As recently as March 28, 2017, Dr. Shannon May gave [oral evidence](#) to the UK Parliament's International Development Committee that BIA is working in 23 government schools in Liberia.