

## Adaptive trials

Last month, the World Bank's Anja Sautmann presented her work on adaptive trials in a [SIEF seminar](#). Adaptive experiments are carried out in waves and adjust the assignment of participants to treatment arms in each wave, after accounting for what was already learned in prior rounds and for the evaluation's specific learning goal. As a result, compared with a standard impact evaluation, an adaptive experiment could be carried out with fewer participants and improve participant welfare by assigning more of them to the most successful treatment arms. In a [seminar last summer](#), the World Bank's Berk Ozler explained how he and colleagues have transformed [a nimble evaluation in Cameroon](#) into an adaptive experiment to learn about the most effective way to encourage contraceptive adoption and adherence among adolescents.

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## New Evidence to Policy note

More people around the world are dying from noncommunicable diseases than ever before, and many of these health conditions also make individuals more susceptible to severe forms of other diseases like COVID-19. A recent [Evidence to Policy note](#) summarizes results from a [SIEF-supported evaluation](#) in Armenia, which estimated the impacts of four approaches to improve preventive health screening for diabetes and hypertension: 1) a personal invitation for patients to come in for screening, 2) a personal invitation that also conveyed statistics on how many of the patient's peers have been screened, 3) a personal invitation with a pharmacy voucher labeled as an encouragement to get screened, 4) a personal invitation and a pharmacy voucher that could only be used after the patient went for screening. After five months, people in the control group had very low screening rates: a mere 3.5 percent of people got screened for diabetes and hypertension. The personal invitation increased this rate to about 18.5 percent, with no additional impact from either the unconditional voucher or from the statistics about peers' screening. The pharmacy voucher that was conditional on screening, however, was the most effective, nearly doubling the percentage of people who got screened to 34.7 percent. Since it was more expensive to implement, however, the conditional voucher and the personal invitation alone were equally cost-effective.



### Teacher incentives in Guinea

[A recent working paper](#) presents results from a SIEF-supported [impact evaluation in Guinea](#) that tested the impacts of two different teacher incentive schemes in a nationally representative sample of 420 public primary schools. In one set of schools, high-performing teachers were rewarded in-kind, with the value of goods increasing with level of performance (from sacks of rice to televisions and generators). In another set of schools, high-performing teachers instead received a certificate and public recognition from the government. After one year, the in-kind program improved learning by 0.24 standard deviations, while the recognition treatment had a smaller and statistically insignificant impact. After two years, however, neither the children assigned to schools receiving the in-kind rewards nor the children in schools with only recognition-based awards could be statistically distinguished from children in schools without a teacher incentive scheme.



