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WORLD BANK

Operational

Guidelines

for
TEXTBOOKS
&
READING
MATERIALS

THE WORLD BANK
EDUCATION SECTOR



Textbooks and Reading Materials

Purpose

This note sets out the operational guidelines for textbooks and reading materials. It provides the framework for appraising borrowers' proposals for financing textbooks or reading materials for educational purposes. It also provides the principles the Bank supports in carrying out publishing activities, financed from the proceeds of a Bank loan.¹ It is intended for the guidance of Bank task teams assisting borrowers in defining the scope and identifying specific educational publishing activities for Bank financing.

This statement of operational guidelines clarifies the Bank's position on textbooks and reading materials, within the larger context of general book publishing and educational effectiveness. Many book provision efforts over the last 25 years, some with Bank support, may have achieved their immediate objectives but have been unable to maintain the service over the longer term, which is needed if educational impact is to be sustained.

Articulating educational publishing with general publishing on the one hand and with

education outcomes on the other hand is essential for sustainable book provision and educational outcomes. Sustainability implies that textbooks and reading materials are so provided that they become regular features of the teaching-learning process. Regular provision implies a viable publishing and book-selling industry that provides books in the variety and quality and quantity needed by the educational system. (For its part, the educational system continually assesses curriculum requirements, teaching standards, learning achievements, and appropriateness of textbooks and reading materials.) The viability of that publishing industry is often dependent on a profitable trade in textbooks.

Statement of Operational Guidelines

Textbooks and reading materials are key in achieving pedagogical outcomes at all levels of education and training, which are in turn necessary for developing human resources for economic development and poverty reduction. Accordingly, it is the Bank's policy to support borrowers' proposals for an affordable, sustainable supply system characterized by private sector involvement and the exercise of choice at the lowest feasible level.

¹ "Bank" includes IBRD and IDA, and "loans" include credits, grants, and guarantees.

In appraising such proposals for the provision of textbooks and reading materials the following will be covered:

- Support to good classroom teaching and learning practice, including a coherent program for the provision of teachers' guides and teacher training;
- Adherence to legal and other measures for the protection of copyright and other intellectual property rights;
- Articulation of agreed roles of the public and private sectors in the development, production, and equitable distribution of textbooks and reading materials;
- Maintenance of transparent and competitive processes in the selection or purchase of books for educational use or for contracting publishing or printing services;
- Commitment to longer term financing of book development and provision;
- Assurance that cost will not be an obstacle for poor students' access to textbooks and reading materials.

Since textbooks are critical at every stage of the education process, the Bank will support policies for the provision of textbooks. Such policies should place explicit priority on the key skill-building areas of literacy and numeracy, those aimed at reducing or eliminating cost to students at the level of primary education (usually the first six years of basic education), and provide a need-based, targeted subsidy at higher grades of general education.

Key Issues and Options in the Application of the Operational Guidelines

For many borrowers, putting in place the necessary policy framework will require effort over a longer term, beyond the scope of a single

project. Nevertheless, each project proposed for Bank financing should aim to achieve specific and measurable movement closer to the above-described ideal status of sustainable book provision and improved learning. Consequently, the Bank may finance proposals that provide evidence of adequate consideration, analysis, and substantial action toward the resolution of the issues outlined below.²

Policy Issues and Considerations

Pedagogical objectives. Especially in primary and secondary education, effective teaching-learning processes require that textbooks or reading materials present life situations drawn from the student's familiar surroundings. The content should effectively support good classroom teaching and learning practice. Appraisal should establish that the borrower's proposal includes the introduction and maintenance of a review process for the assessment of the material against educational norms. For textbooks, which provide basic information and help in the development of skills for acquiring further learning, the assessment should include the accuracy of information presented, coverage of or conformity with a prescribed school curriculum, and teachability of the material: adequacy, organization, and sequencing of topics or lessons, matching reading difficulty of the materials to the reading and other skill levels of students. For reading materials, the assessment might include legibility and readability, interest level, literary quality, appropriateness of presentation, and attractiveness of illustration. These materials help to develop reading and comprehension skills and, through an awakened intellectual

² Annex A provides a brief discussion of operational considerations with regard to the publishing industry development. Annex B provides illustrative examples of good practices in recently completed Bank operations.

curiosity, a reading habit that can be further cultivated over a lifetime of reading for information and for enjoyment. This implies actively encouraging students to bring textbooks and reading materials home from school (where provision programs can make books not only accessible but also affordable), to use the school or public library often, and to browse in bookstores to buy books of their choice. Appraisal should also establish that appropriate support is provided for training teachers on the use of textbooks for effective teaching and on creative management of classroom reading programs.

Enrollment size and language of instruction have a direct bearing on the unit cost of books to be provided. Ideally, learning materials in the earliest level of instruction are in the student's mother tongue. While evidence suggests that learning is more effective in the learner's own language, the cost of providing materials in minority languages, as well as parents' preference for the language in which their children will be taught, should be carefully assessed. For non-international languages, building textbook publishing capacity in-country will encourage the development of other forms of local book publishing.

Authorship and intellectual property rights. The enactment of copyright legislation and its enforcement as well as membership in international copyright conventions should be promoted and encouraged. Copyright may recognize an individual's right to derive benefit from his or her own creation, provide financial or other incentives to stimulate individual creativity for the benefit of society, or prescribe a compromise between an individual creator's rights and society's need to benefit from the same creation. Copyright protection is key to encouraging authors to write and publishers to produce and market books. Where curriculum units of public education

departments or ministries are authors of textbooks, copyright ownership needs to be clarified, so that appropriate contractual arrangements may be made, as for outright sale of copyright, its assignment, or payment for the use of copyrighted material.

The political environment. Although frequently claimed to the contrary, textbooks will never be completely free of political content or influence. Especially in social studies, the textbook can be an effective tool for teaching love of country, respect for authority, and the state's expectations of its citizens, among other things. In content and presentation, the textbook can also promote social cohesion, improve majority-minority and gender relations, and help to eliminate local political biases or negative ethnic or gender stereotyping. The Bank cannot be expected to appraise the appropriateness of political content in every lesson in every textbook or every piece of reading material. However, it is expected that book provision programs financed by the Bank subscribe to the principles expressed in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Bank reserves the right to withdraw funding for books which can be shown to breach some provisions of that declaration. Further, appraisal of book provision programs must establish that a transparent process is in place for the fair evaluation of the pedagogical, social, and economic value of the book or reading material proposed for Bank financing.

Curriculum concerns. The textbook is limited in that it is not the full curriculum. However, in countries where teachers are not well trained and where no other learning materials are in school, the textbook effectively becomes the curriculum. A related (but separate) program for curriculum development and review is beneficial to book provision programs and provides a sound basis for independent review and approval of text-

books. A process should be in place for curriculum evaluation or at least the early identification of risks, e.g., that curriculum developers might prescribe topics and activities too costly or burdensome to undertake in typical school situations. The process should provide for consultation with teachers (and possibly teachers' unions) who are the principal stakeholders in delivering the curriculum. The process should also consider training to provide teachers with the skills to critique, evaluate, and recommend texts on the basis of rational and relevant criteria. The process should finally provide guidance on the necessity, practicality, and affordability of frequent change of curriculum or of parts of the curriculum.

Complementarities with other interventions.

The provision of non-textbook reading materials as well as of other print materials including workbooks is also part of an effective teaching-learning environment. The establishment and maintenance of school libraries and of classroom reading corners is therefore to be encouraged. Indicators should be identified to point to the educational benefits of broad reading brought about by providing access to appropriate materials. Further, the impact of textbooks on students' learning achievement is enhanced by related interventions such as interactive radio lessons or inservice teacher training, especially if focused on orienting teachers on the effective use of the books. Evidence should be sought in the appraisal that cogent links between the textbook and teacher training, testing and assessment have been established.

Manufacturing specifications. Optimal book life is determined by a number of factors. Setting very high book manufacturing standards, for the quality of paper, printing process, the use of color, and book cover and binding, may result in very costly textbooks as

well as very sturdy books that could outlast the curriculum. Setting low standards for paper may yield more mileage and produce more books, but durability of the product may be low, requiring sooner than planned and even more costly reprinting. In general, a reasonable set of specifications should target a physical book life that will be either coterminous with the curriculum or allow economical resupply during the life of the curriculum. Specifically, however, standards for the durability of books may vary with the type of utilization for which the book is being designed. Loan or free book provision for the lower grades, implying reuse, will require durable books. Where books are not loaned free of charge (except to the poor), as for the upper grades, options of selling or renting will require different materials and manufacturing standards. Selling prices of books with short shelf lives may be kept at affordable levels only by adopting lower quality standards, while rental programs or a profitable second-hand book trade may demand higher quality standards. Aside from physical specifications, the immediate environment and the level of training on book care influence the physical life of the book.

Other technologies. Where great distances hamper field-testing, teacher training, or textbook distribution to remote schools in scattered locations, the feasibility or cost-effectiveness of electronic publishing and transmission of materials through telecommunications should be explored. Worldwide communication on computers linked to the Internet has the potential of making knowledge accessible to users most anywhere in the world. Distance education programs, aided by well-designed self-instructional modules, can also transmit high-quality information to remote students. The appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of employing these technologies is country- and context-sensitive and must be carefully appraised.

Policy Options

After consideration of the above issues, the appropriate options, briefly described below, should be appraised:

Selection or choice. Governments at any level may opt for one textbook for use in the entire education system or may authorize more than one textbook (multiple adoption). The smaller the number of users, the costlier it becomes to offer choices. The selection process must be transparent to maintain credibility before producers (publishers) and consumers (schools and communities). Where choice is possible, it should be encouraged at even lower levels, so that school heads and teachers who intimately know the learning needs of their students may be encouraged, through the provision of appropriate training and training manuals, to seek the appropriate textbooks and reading materials with which to address those needs. Book choice can also lead to the adoption of more and better quality books and can reduce friction between foreign and local publishers.

Government or private sector. Private sector initiative and competitive processes for the development, production, and delivery of textbooks and reading materials are indispensable components of sustainable book provision systems. Where this state has not yet been achieved, transitional measures may be put in place, for options to purchase (usually from private sector) or to produce (usually as a government publisher). In either case, capacity to carry out the provision program should be confirmed: skilled and creative authors, reliable and experienced editors and specialists in book design, desktop publishing (or conventional typesetting and page preparation), illustration, a working printing and distribution network. Where the government requires textbooks to be produced or distributed by a state monopoly or a parastatal agency, the cost of

compliance with such a requirement should be calculated. A thorough financial analysis of the agency should be made, as the agency may not be operating economically. The issue should be raised as a serious constraint to Bank support. Cost-effective pragmatism, rather than political dogmatism, and movement away from uneconomical public enterprises toward more efficient contracting with the private sector should be in evidence for Bank financing to be offered. Whether government- or privately operated, the program should also be appraised for adequacy of proposed anti-corruption measures.

Relevance vs. publishing origin. In primary and secondary education, concern for the appropriateness of reading materials for students is usually expressed in terms of degree of local content, favoring locally developed materials, or a percentage of the curriculum which can be determined at the district or school level. Further, developing local publishing capacity provides reading materials to audiences beyond those of the school system, reinforcing the reading habit. If books will be acquired only from local publishers, the educational benefit derived from such local acquisition should clearly be shown to outweigh the possibly higher prices, which represent the extra cost of protecting local industry. The benefit should also outweigh the loss of opportunity to benefit from the new materials and innovative teaching approaches offered by international textbooks, especially those in subjects that “travel” well, such as science or mathematics. In postsecondary education, the economies of provision may favor the purchase or adaptation of international materials, with only limited opportunities for local provision. As book publishing continues to internationalize, the benefits from partnerships between international and local publishers should be explored. Such partnerships can develop over the long term, building on mutual respect and benefit,

including the provision of training and export opportunities for the local publisher. Appraisal must establish that publishing origin notwithstanding, the appropriate material, in terms of content and physical manufacture, will be acquired at the least cost to the individual student or to the government.

How to distribute? A key policy objective is ensuring the timely availability of the textbook or reading material in bookstores or schools. Experience with textbook provision schemes has shown the government, especially if highly centralized, to be ineffective in providing sustainable textbook distribution solutions which tend to be complex and costly. However, where little or no private sector capacity exists as an alternative, a transitional strategy may be necessary. The strategy may include provision of the service by state agencies but subject to frequent monitoring and clear measures of accountability, and capacity-building as an incentive to promote private sector participation. The following areas require appraisal:

quality and timeliness of school data especially enrollment; bookselling (wholesaling and retailing) networks or other order fulfillment systems, including mechanisms for discounting and payment; book warehousing, staging, and inventory control at national, regional, and local levels as well as programs for textbook maintenance and repair. Care must be taken that working distribution mechanisms, especially nascent bookselling trade in town centers or during market days in far villages, are not needlessly duplicated by a costly and unsustainable public system. Innovative ways should be sought, including shifting government subsidy or assistance from the producer (the publisher or printer or distributor) to the consumer (the student's family) and involving book wholesalers, bookstores and other retailers in the distribution process.

The most appropriate method of procuring the goods or services needed for undertaking the publishing activity can then be identified.³

³ See Procurement Technical Note on the procurement of textbooks. Annex C provides a matrix of educational publishing activities and corresponding public- or private-sector roles.

Annex A

Operational Considerations for the Development of the Publishing Industry

The manner of provision of textbooks and other reading materials most appropriate for the above purposes is one that strives for quality within the constraints of affordability and sustainability. Achieving the desired manner may require a long-term process of affecting the provision initially with limited participation of the publishing industry, or parts of it, in the private sector. The process should progressively lead to developing capacity in the publishing industry to affect the entire book provision, with supportive supervision of the government.

Educational publishing and general publishing are frequently interdependent. However, in purpose or practice, those two publishing domains may sometimes be in conflict with each other. In project proposals seeking Bank support, where measures to meet the needs of educational publishing immediately may be the primary concern, such measures should be consistent with the borrower's vision of the growth of other forms of publishing. Statements of national book policy and strategies or programs for the development of the book publishing sector provide the bases for the Bank's appraisal of those specific publishing measures within the context of overall publishing in the country.

It must also be recognized that the differences between those two forms of publishing are fundamental. The government's education ministry usually runs textbook and other educational publishing by fiat for a specific clientele, the school system. In contrast, general book publishing and selling happen in the private sector as a high-risk enterprise, the success of the business determined largely by public consumption, an anonymous market. The former complies with curriculum requirements, the latter responds to opportunity and demand. Textbook shortages need to be filled immediately, while the development of a complex industry (involving capital formation, employment and training, equipment importation, tax incentives, encouragement of competition, standards-setting) seems timeless. In many book provision schemes for schools, the publishing industry, frequently nascent and therefore with limited service capacity, is bypassed by a government rushing to produce textbooks for schools over the short term.

There is need for clear-headed policy-making by governments. It would not be realistic to require governments to articulate a policy and develop a strategy of timely textbook provision through investment for the develop-

ment of the general book publishing industry in the private sector. Nevertheless, governments and lending or aid agencies should acknowledge that emergency textbook procurements tend to be detrimental to the sustainability of book programs in education systems. When in some cases the government may need to maintain some of its publishing activities, such as the research and writing, editorial, and book design functions, a time-bound action plan should be agreed for relinquishing those functions to service suppliers in the graphic arts industry.

The borrower should satisfactorily demonstrate commitment to policymaking, within an agreed time-frame, in the following areas: (i) the role of publishing in national development; (ii) the role of the public and private sectors in publishing; and (iii) the role of lending and aid

agencies in the development of publishing in the country.

To meet the time-constrained demands of educational publishing, the government should contract with individuals and commercial groups for those very same services. Writing contests can yield new and imaginative manuscripts from non-governmental writers. Contracting with highly creative outside groups the set of production services including book design, typesetting, illustration, page layouting, prepress filming or encoding, can relieve the government of this difficult phase of publication. Most attractive to the private sector will be industrial-volume contracts: quantity purchases of finished books, printing paper supply, manufacturing (printing, binding, packaging), and distribution (warehousing, freight handling, delivery).

Annex B

Noteworthy Practices

Privatizing Textbook Provision

TANZANIA: The *Education Planning and Rehabilitation Project* (Credit 2137-TA) 1990–98, supported the privatization of the production of textbooks. The Institute of Curriculum Development (ICD), the governmental agency originally mandated to develop and produce textbooks, was renamed the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) and prepared for its new role in reviewing commercially produced textbooks for use in public schools. The move also involved scaling down the curriculum unit's original building plans to conform to the policy of moving textbook publication from the Government to the private sector. Textbooks under the new privatization policy began to appear in the market in 1998.

In spite of the successful institutional shift, it is still necessary for the Ministry of Education and Culture to work closely with the TIE and the private sector publishers, to ensure that relevant textbooks and reading books are published regularly and reach schools. The TIE also needs to continually update the curriculum, which is the basis for future textbook selection.



Improving Textbook Printing Quality

JORDAN: Prior to the *Human Resources Development Sector Investment Project* (Loan 3106-JO) 1989-97, textbooks were published *ad hoc*. Authors were commissioned to write manuscripts, which were officially reviewed and approved, for use in public schools. The critical production of final manuscripts, including typesetting, illustration, and page layouting, was left to the bidders who had won contracts for printing the textbooks.

Through the project, the Government aimed to revise the curricula and to provide new or substantially revised textbooks and teachers' guides for all grades and in all subjects. In order to improve production quality, the Government (through the project) established some publishing capacity in the Ministry of Education (MOE) to prepare manuscripts camera-ready for private publishers to print. Expertise had to be developed in illustrating, page layouting, and in desktop publishing. The Government also refined the printing specifications in printing contracts.

Production targets were ambitious, and many schedule adjustments had to be made. To ease the pressure on manuscript preparation and pre-printing review, many textbook

titles were redesigned for publication in two volumes, one per semester.

By separating publishing from printing functions, the project produced textbooks and teachers' guides of higher graphic quality. And because the printing contractors did not have to prepare final manuscript themselves, manufacturing became more efficient, and textbooks reached schools on time.



Textbook Liberalization

UGANDA: A bold measure was taken in 1993 when the textbook sector was liberalized. The National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) no longer had monopoly over textbook publishing at a time when private sector presence in publishing was minimal, and the book market had collapsed. Within two years, however, there were a dozen publishing companies consisting of local firms and joint ventures with international publishers. Within five years, more than 70 bookshops had opened in 19 of the country's 45 districts.

Under the new textbook policy, schools are allocated book budgets based on enrollment and allowed to choose books from an approved list. The books are reviewed against the curriculum by a committee of teachers, head teachers, and NCDC, education ministry, Uganda Examinations Board, and other officials whose identities are kept confidential. School orders are consolidated by the center and negotiated with the publishers. Distribution of books to schools are contracted to the private sector.

To sustain the provision system, a separate budget line has been created for textbooks, currently amounting to 3% of the recurrent education budget. To achieve greater economy and efficiency, key improvements are planned: (i) the number of books to be reviewed to be reduced to 3 or 4 per subject and grade, and the textbook vetting to be coordinated with

the curriculum reform cycle; and (ii) the textbook procurement cycle to be made more regular, to reduce uncertainties which contribute to increased costs and prices.



Involving Local Stakeholders

MEXICO: Both the *Initial Education Project* (Loan 3518-ME) 1992-97, and the *Primary Education Project* (Loan 3407-ME) 1991-98, supported the participation in the project of stakeholders at the local level.

To maintain uniform and consistent messages in initial (early childhood) education, the project used experienced educators at the central level, printed instructional materials and guidebooks, supporting audiovisual aids, and operational handbooks. At the local level, using local funding, the project promoted a community-based program to incorporate the views of parents and local community leaders for increasing awareness about early child development.

In the primary education project, national-level educational development and indigenous education agencies collaborated with state-level education agencies to develop and produce textbooks and exercise booklets for the lower primary grades in eight indigenous languages, the first such materials developed in the country. The involvement of state-level agencies in the development phase helped in the distribution phase of the project. Parents, teachers, and students participated in the design of the textbooks. For example, community members discussed stories to be included in the texts, and students participated in the selection of the illustrations which would accompany the text of the reading books. Experience from the textbook and other materials provision is being evaluated, to derive lessons for a possible next phase of textbook publishing in indigenous languages.

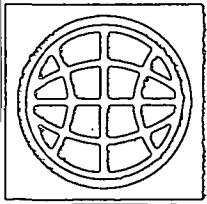
Annex C

Key Roles in the Publication of Textbooks and Reading Materials

EDUCATIONAL OR PUBLISHING ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS
Curriculum research, planning, writing, and testing Curriculum implementation and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government's education ministry • Private schools
Call for development of textbooks or notice of intent to buy textbooks and/or reading materials Selection from textbook titles available in the trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government's textbook agency • School heads or teachers
Planning of book program or series or individual titles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publisher: editors, marketing directors
Recruitment and contracting of authors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publisher's editors, legal staff
Manuscript development: writing, testing, revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Author(s), working with the publisher's editor(s) and book designers
Evaluation and approval of books for development or purchase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government's textbook agency
Costing and estimating Editorial services: book planning, content review, copy editing, manuscript preparation for production, acquisition of rights and permissions Production services: book design, illustration, photographs, other graphics, desktop publishing or typesetting, page preparation, filming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publisher's production planners and sales and marketing staff • Publisher's editors, reviewers or referees, rights-and-permissions legal and technical staff • Graphic designers (publisher's staff or contracted service from graphic arts industry) • Illustrators, photographers, other creative and technical services providers (publisher's staff or free-lance artists)

(continued)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typesetters, page layout artists, proof and final page or film processors (publisher's in-house production or services purchased from graphic arts industry)
Manufacturing: paper procurement, purchase of printing-binding-packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper mills and paper merchants Printing and binding companies Wrapping and packaging service companies
Marketing and sales Distribution: warehousing, order fulfillment, shipping and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publisher's marketing and sales staff Warehousing and freight-forwarding companies Bookselling industry's wholesaling and retailing companies Government's purchasing agency School heads, teachers, parents
Teacher orientation on the use of the new materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's inservice teacher training agency Private schools Publisher's marketing representatives
Impact evaluation Curriculum revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's testing agency Government's education ministry Private schools



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