GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP
for EDUCATION
quality education for all children

Print poverty, information starvation, and textbook sustainability

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For the educational books workshop

GPE: Supporting education in lowest-income, conflict-affected countries

Financial Advisory Committee of the Global Partnership for Education approved grants this week for

South Sudan

Chad

Burundi

Democratic Republic of Congo

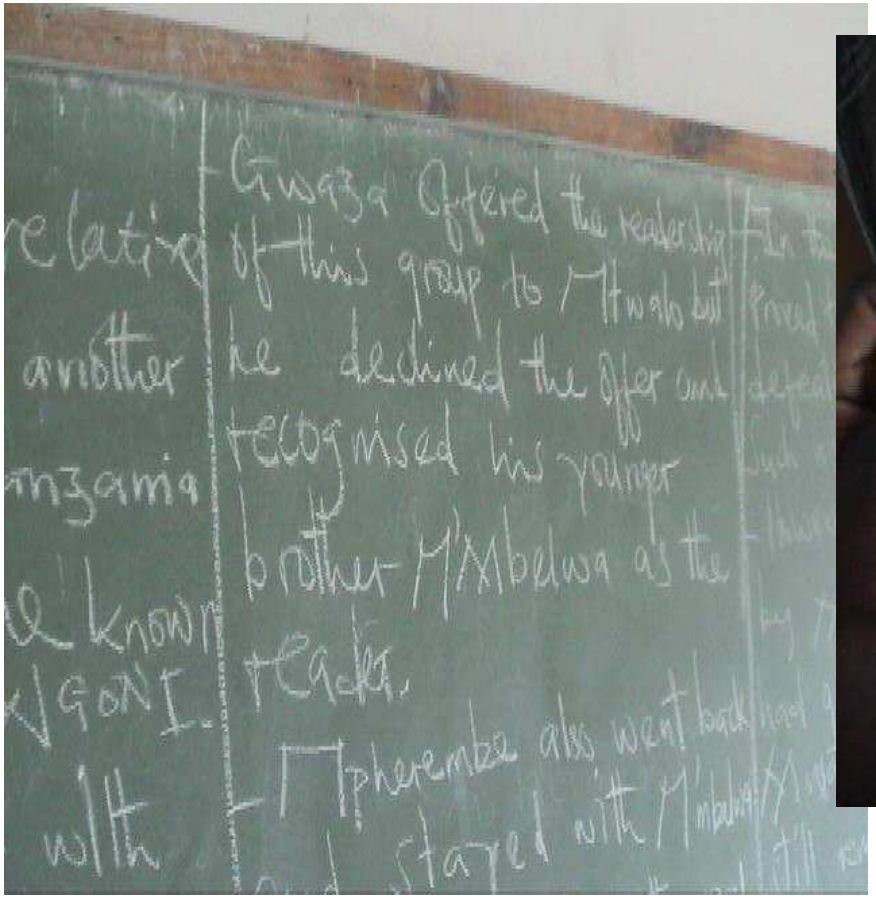
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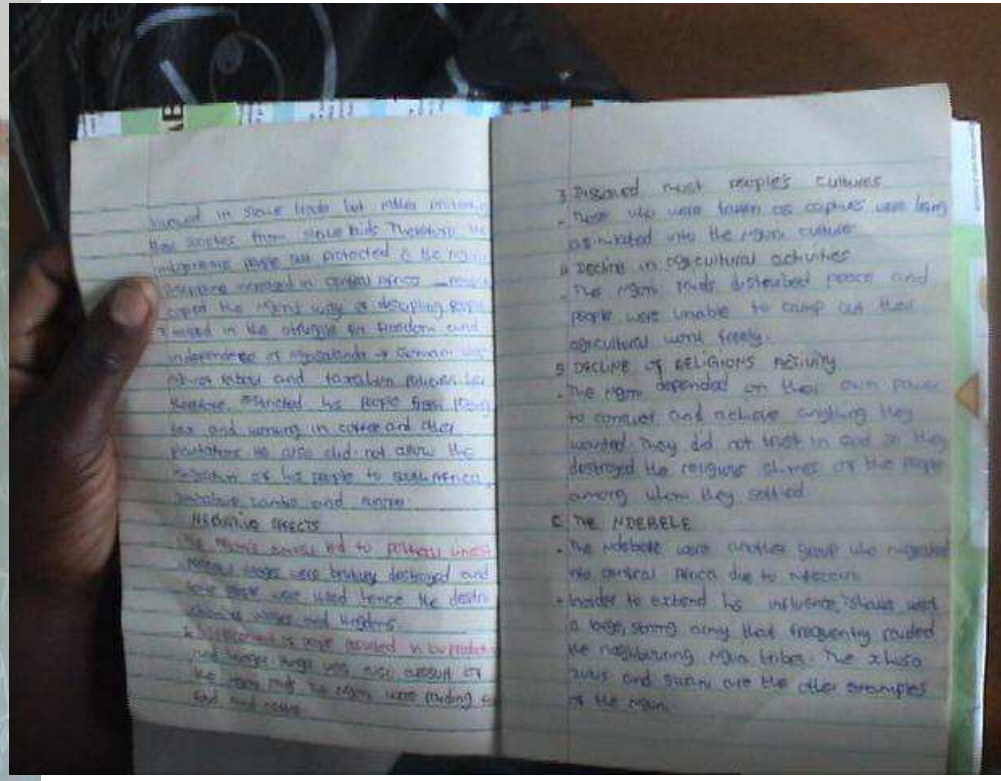
Educate girls?
This girl seems to be just copying !



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School life without textbooks
Classes become transcription centers !





Play video - Malawi

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Dictation: Burkina Faso, grade10

It takes 30 seconds to read but 7 minutes to dictate the sentence:

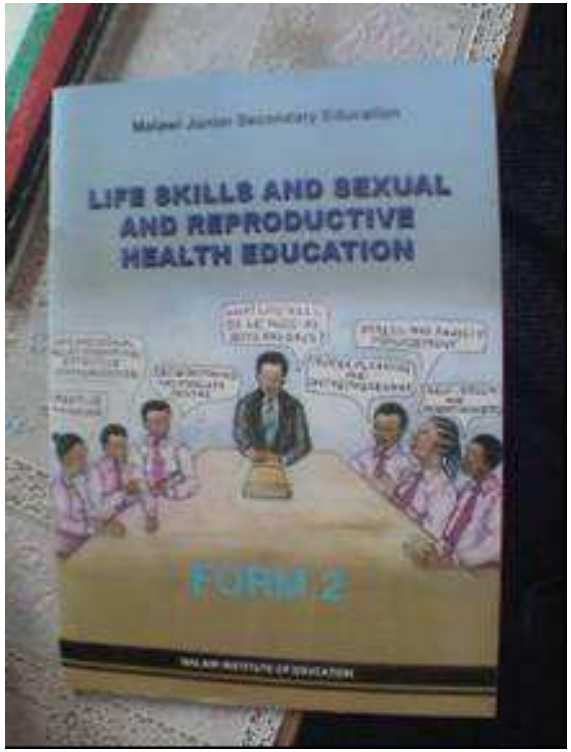
“Les industries Francaises ont connu un développement considerable mais rencontrent des difficultés dans le domain des ressources.. »

Play video – Burkina Faso

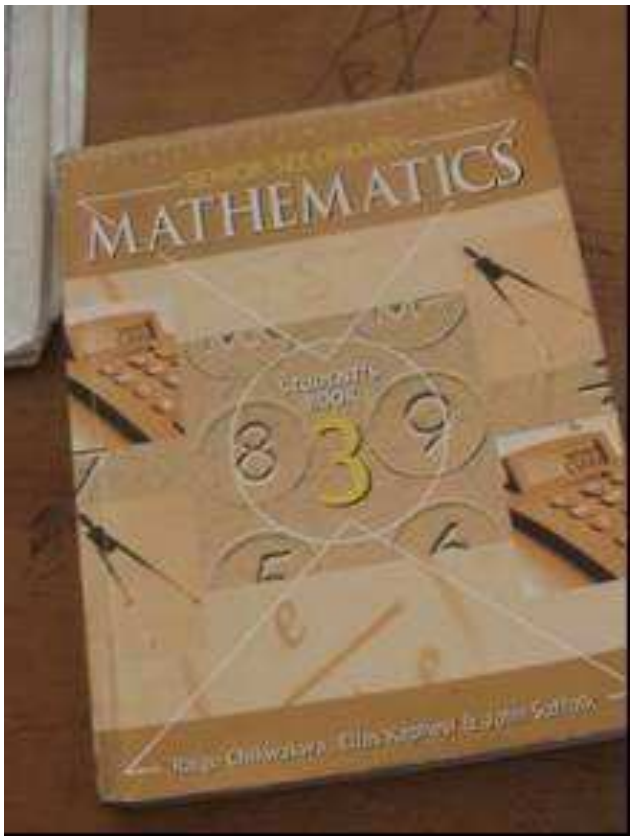
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Unaffordable, scarce, or both

Malawi 2009:



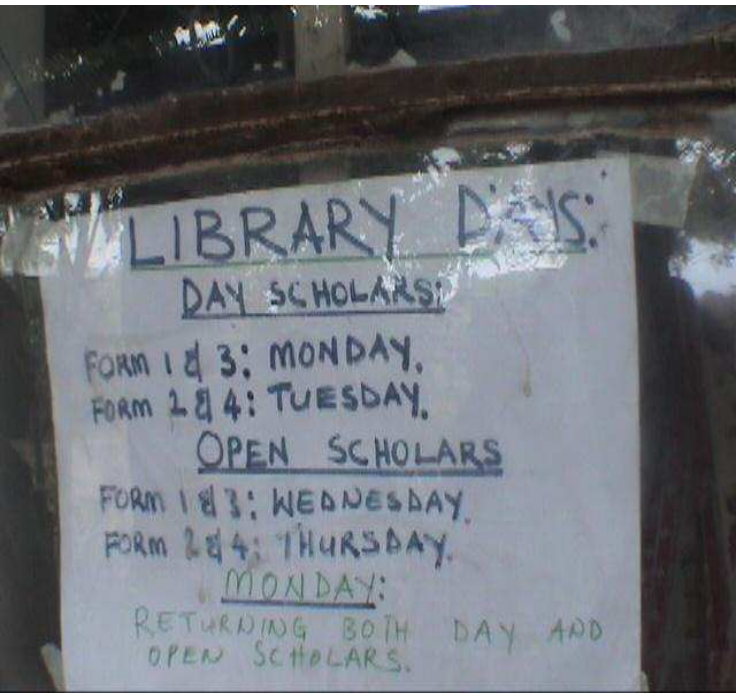
For schools with a textbook revolving fund each book costs 1950 kwacha (US$11.5 for about 100 pages).



For schools with a textbook revolving fund each book costs 1600 kwacha (US$9.5 for about 200 pages).

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Malawi: School budgets could not afford them Insufficient textbooks stay in school libraries Malawi





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Students becoming fluent late
may always read slowly
have limited comprehension

If they finally learn reading in grade 6

- They may read 70 wpm in grade 8
- They get no more books by grade 8

They will read little secondary school

- university or teacher training colleges
- They cannot read fast enough to consult sources
- Or read volumes of text
- At 110 words per minute, it takes 5 minutes per page

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Students need affordable and available books

Textbooks

Reading, educational, reference books

Books in local languages

Dictionaries

Digital content, e-readers in future

They need them for all grades, K-16

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Textbooks in low-income countries: unaffordable

Market prices often prohibitive

Not just primary, also secondary

Higher education textbooks unheard of in some countries

Also chronic, persistent scarcity

Textbooks may be infrequently ordered

not replaced when exhausted

Reading books are similarly scarce

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Learning crisis in Africa?
Look no further than textbook ownership

Only about 42% of the SACMEQ takers had access in 2000 and in 2007

	% at Each Access Level in 2000				% at Each Access Level in 2007			
	No Text	Share 2+	Share 1	Sole Use	No Text	Share 2+	Share 1	Sole Use
Botswana	2.3	5.7	14.6	77.4	3.8	11.1	21.7	63.4
Kenya	2.8	46.1	24.3	26.8	2.2	58.6	21.5	17.8
Lesotho	12.1	16.3	16.3	55.3	7.2	17.4	19.5	55.9
Malawi	4.5	23.8	14.7	57.0	7.9	55.5	9.5	27.1
Mauritius	0.0	5.2	3.3	91.5	5.2	4.2	2.9	87.7
Mozambique	6.3	20.3	20.2	53.2	8.2	24.9	14.1	52.8
Namibia	5.1	18.1	30.1	46.6	5.6	31.1	31.3	31.9
Seychelles	8.0	17.0	28.1	47.0	3.6	6.7	47.4	42.3
South Africa	16.6	17.1	20.7	45.5	10.7	16.1	28.2	45.0
Swaziland	5.8	4.1	15.9	74.2	0.0	0.6	0.2	99.2
Tanzania	35.9	48.2	9.9	6.0	23.1	63.7	9.7	3.5
Uganda	20.6	52.8	11.9	14.7	20.4	47.6	14.5	17.4
Zambia	14.0	44.2	27.5	14.2	17.2	39.4	20.3	23.1
Zanzibar	24.6	62.3	9.2	3.8	2.2	32.9	16.8	48.1
Zimbabwe	7.5	48.5	19.6	24.3	19.3	47.0	19.0	14.7
SACMEQ	11.1	28.7	17.8	42.5	9.1	30.5	18.4	42.0

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Pricing mystery: US$8.75 per book
Why these variations?

Country	Avg. textbook price (USD)	Avg. cost of a textbook set (USD)
Botswana	11.07	99.60
Cameroon	8.95	116.30
Cote d'Ivoire	7.64	61.10
Ghana	5.19	41.60
Kenya	3.80	57.00
Lesotho	18.75	150.00
Malawi	7.06	84.70
Nigeria	4.61	32.69
Tanzania	4.25	25.30
Togo	9.92	59.50
Uganda	15.00	155.19
AVERAGE	**8.75**	**80.27**

DFID 2011, table 2

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Donors and governments rightly tend to focus on content, substance

But the “devil” is in the operational details

These are the “phonics” of textbooks

just like students who can’t comprehend text without letter knowledge

This workshop backtracks into the multiple sources of potential inefficiencies

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Goal of this workshop:

Staff involved in book provision should use textbook basis for better decisions

Asking probing questions; questioning the answers

Finding solutions to problems

Sharing info about textbook-related issues

Clarifying what donors finance and through which governing rules

GPE: Content preparation for a new generation of textbook specialists

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From financing to students' minds: Textbook chain in brief

Funding availability

Textbook policy
Textbook creation
Publication
Printing
Distribution
Reading

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Challenge:
The labyrinth of the textbook chain

Multiple specialties involved

Multiple stakeholders, often with conflicting agendas

Some issues are controversial

- Bribes, kickbacks all along the chain

Unclear demand at the consumer levels

- Like building a house with shifting specs?
- and intended resident cannot use ? !

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Government strategies in acquiring educational books

Middle income standards vs. low-income reality

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Workshop will backtrack from product to government policies

How are books made?

Therefore how are they costed?

How do publishers operate?

Who must be paid along the way?

How much?

How do final prices evolve?

A team of very qualified specialists will address various topics

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Quality and physical specifications of books

Cheap books burden the recurrent budget

What is the optimal in book quality?

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“Standard model” of textbook provision: Purchase at a bookstore

- In middle income countries, books are sold in bookstores at affordable prices
- Governments have limited involvement with textbooks
- Textbook specialists often urge lower-income countries to attain this model

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Low-income countries face more direct involvement with textbooks

- Where there are few bookstores and purchasing power, governments must become publishers
- May have to generate textbooks from "scratch"'
- By contrast, better off countries that could do this more easily do not have to

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In principle governments should only be contractors

Should control publishers, who will then execute

Powerful governments, e.g. Brazil, can do this and induce publishers to promote their policies

Weak governments may give copyrights to publishers, pay high fees

Multiple govt staff may demand bribes

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Dilemma:
Turn-key textbook projects or retailing?

Bundling publishing, printing and distribution may cost more

e.g. Printers may have to give 40% commission to publishers

Government as a publisher, “retailer”

must put more effort, have suitable staff

e.g. “framework contracts”

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Should every country really need separate textbooks?

In principle, regional textbooks ought to be common

In reality, they are very rare

Unwillingness to accept common curricula creates much duplication in certain regions

Can reluctance somehow be overcome?

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Authorship and copyrights

Need for qualified authors

Who should hold the copyrights under various conditions?

- Government
- authors
- Publishers
- Are copyrights respected? Piracy?

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Distribution gridlock for all

- International publishers may need exclusive representatives in each country
  - Otherwise their books get no attention
  - But prices rise
- Books in local languages get little market distribution
- Distribution from a central depots to schools often unreliable
- Little storage capacity, ability to know inventory
  - ease of thefts
- Textbooks may never reach schools
- Booksellers often little-educated, trading in stolen books may seem normal

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Textbook choice: Single or multiple titles?

Middle class philosophy vs. realities

What complexities are introduced

Cost implications

Actual ability of schools to choose is uncertain

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International or local printing?

Printing is a very complex, hi-tech business

Public-private partnerships important

International printing may give value for money

But there are arguments favoring the development of local industry

Pros and cons?

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Should e-books be financed instead of print?

In principle, a lot of content can be made available through e-books

Readability and utility of e-book readers in various grades?

Particularly if students read slowly

Procurement issues of e-readers?

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Procurement principles applicable to acquisitions

- World Bank is often the supervising entity
- Many governments have adopted World Bank procurement rules
- Other donors have similar systems

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How to plan for textbook procurement

- What donor staff can do to ensure effective and efficient procurement
- Assess market and implementation capacity
- Identify likely corruption along the way
- Case studies of more and less successful countries
- e.g. Rwanda, Timor Leste, Burundi, Albania

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Governance issues

What some publishers don't want you to know !

Donor staff should be aware of signs



Can textbooks survive without donor funding?

Are big publishers organized to soak donor funds?

Issues of ongoing financial sustainability

How well have textbook rental funds worked out?

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Once the textbooks reach students, can they be used?

Typically written in English, French, Portuguese and aimed at native-level speakers from day 1.

Even teachers may have limited knowledge

Some textbook evaluations have shown disappointing results

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Why are textbooks often unsuitable? Curricular and content issues

- How well are textbooks aligned to national curricula?
- How usable are textbooks given students' prior knowledge?
- How well do they cover and "elaborate" the material to be taught?
- Content issues: Gender equity, political issues

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Textbook revision dilemmas

Periodical curricular revisions often invalidate textbooks

But continuous need for reprints, revisions, error correction

If there are no textbooks, curricula cannot be covered

Then they seem to be irrelevant, too loaded, etc

Chicken and egg situation…

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Book readability for beginners

How should books be formatted for easiest reading?

What is the importance of

font sizes

Colors

Pictures

Why these features matter so much for the weaker students

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There is practically no research on textbook-related operations

Prevalence is of “good practices”

Many issues are subject to personal opinions

Real research needed on stakeholder decisions and textbook-related outcomes

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Governments need clear textbook policies

Which officials make decisions on ….

Curricular revisions

Need for new or revised textbooks

Textbook acquisition strategy

Authorship, illustrations, manuscript development

Manuscript evaluation and approval

Cost estimates and financing

distribution

Teacher training

Textbook evaluation after use

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This encounter is only the start

World Bank will issue a study around December 2012

Discussions can be held online

Meetings can be held in other parts of the world

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Need to develop a new generation of textbook specialists

An e-course could be the start

Apprenticeships, internships, participation in missions involving textbooks?

Some apprenticeships in printing industry?

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Your feedback, experiences are needed!

Which strategies will produce:

Affordable and available textbooks

- May be procured once every several years

How to build local printing capacity?

- And will this guarantee procurement awards?

How to minimize corruption?

How to distribute for greater sustainability?

When and how to include booksellers?

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A billion of thanks to the dream team that set up this workshop

In alphabetical order:

Arijeta Blakqori-Mjekiqi
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Alexandra Humme
Mary Nyingi
Zoie Tesheira
Punthip Chindalat
Patrick McCarthy
Technicians in the room

Apologies to all those connected through Adobe Connect for participation limitations

Thank you all for coming !



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