

ETHIOPIA

EDUCATION SECTOR

2005 E.C. (2013 G.C.)

JOINT REVIEW MISSION



ON

**TEXTBOOK DEVELOPMENT, PRINTING, DISTRIBUTION AND
UTILIZATION**

May 2013

Table of Contents

No.	Content	Page
	Outline /Contents/	<i>ii</i>
	Acronyms and Abbreviations	<i>iii</i>
	Executive Summary	<i>iv</i>
1	Introduction	<i>1</i>
1.1.	General Objectives	<i>1</i>
1.2.	Specific Objectives	<i>1</i>
1.3.	The Approach Used (Methodology)	<i>1</i>
1.4.	Limitation/s of the Report	<i>3</i>
1.5.	Structure of the Report	<i>3</i>
2	Major Findings	<i>3</i>
2.1.	Overall Progress	<i>3</i>
2.2.	Textbooks Development	<i>5</i>
2.3.	Printing	<i>5</i>
2.4.	Distribution	<i>6</i>
2.5.	Utilization	<i>7</i>
3	Good Practices	<i>9</i>
4	Challenges	<i>9</i>
5	Recommendations	<i>12</i>
	<i>References</i>	<i>17</i>
	<i>Appendices</i>	<i>18</i>
	<i>Terms of Reference (Annex I)</i>	<i>18</i>
	<i>Institutions Visited by the JRM Group (Annex II)</i>	<i>23</i>
	<i>Guiding Question for Field Visit (Annex III)</i>	<i>25</i>
	<i>The JRM Team Reports (Annex IV)</i>	<i>26</i>

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABE	Alternative Basic Education
DFID	Department For International Development (UK)
EMIS	Educational Materials and Information System
EMPDA	Educational Materials Production and Distribution Agency
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JRM	Joint Review Report
KETB	Kebele Education and Training Board
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGOs	None Government Organizations
PTAs	Parent Teacher Associations
REB	Regional Education Bureau
NRS	National Regional State
TOR	Term of Reference
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEOs	<i>Woreda</i> Education Offices

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background Information

The objective of the 2013 JRM was to assess the performance of ESDP IV implementation in terms of textbook and teacher guides development, printing, distribution and utilization (See annex I). The sample regions selected for the joint review mission (JRM) of this year consists of three National Regional States (Amhara, Somali and Gambella). The field visits were conducted from April 01 - 05, 2013. The mission had 18 members, which include 4 individuals from MoE, 12 individuals from development partners (2 DFID, 4 UNICEF, 2 JICA, 1 British Council, 1 USAID, 1 World Bank, 1 Finland Embassy), 1 individual from a local NGO (Kelem) and 1 JRM local consultant. The JRM members were divided into 3 teams (each team consisting 4 to 9 individuals) representing different organizations. The teams were accompanied by individuals (educational officials, process owners, key experts) working at the regional and *Woreda* levels. Each team did introduce itself to the REBs before commencing the field visits and had debriefings after completing the field visits. Overall, 3 Regional Education Bureaus, 7 *Woreda* Education Offices, 1 Town Administration Education Office, 6 secondary schools, 8 primary schools, 1 teachers education college and 1 ABE were visited by the JRM members of 2013 (See Annex III). Prior to this, the first phase field visits were conducted in Dire Dawa and Harar led by USAID (See the attached brief report).

Key Findings

Overall

- The Federal Government has given due attention to improve the quality of education in all aspects including curriculum, the quality of textbooks and assessment related issues. Manifestly, official documents like ESDP IV did focus on revising curriculum documents in line with the competence-based approach, which include minimum learning competence materials for pre-primary, primary and secondary education up to grade 12, content flow charts, syllabuses and quality textbooks for all subjects (MoE, 2010) and consequently this has been under implementation in the past couple of years (during ESDP IV). The development of textbook policy at the national level and the efforts made to adapt and use it by the regions were among the major developments unveiled.

- The JRM members and teams recognized that all the Regional Education Bureaus visited have their own textbook policy, guidelines and plans adapted from the textbook policy of the Federal Government (MoE).
- The job that has been accomplished by the Federal Government (MoE) in providing high quality color printed textbooks were highly appreciated by all actors - regional, *woreda* and school levels.
- The endeavors made in terms of improving student textbook ratio have been found encouraging, although considerable differences have been observed among regions and within a region - among *woredas*.
- Despite the differences observed within and among regions and *woredas*, the efforts made by the Federal and Regional Governments to improve the development, printing, distribution and utilization of textbook and teacher guides were found considerable. This was partly manifested by the huge budget allocated for the purpose/s along with the practical responses made to alleviate the problems of textbook and teacher guides.
- The student textbook ratio (in most subjects) has reached 1:1 in all the regions visited. Access to teacher guides and their distribution were also reported improving. Nonetheless, there are still textbook provisions that are far from 1:1 ratio. This includes, among others, textbook and teacher guides produced at the regional levels. The findings of the first phase visits were also similar with above findings.

Textbook development

- Secondary school textbooks are developed by the Federal Government while all the textbooks prepared by the local languages are developed at the regional level. Overall, as reflected by different actors, the quality of textbooks produced by the Federal Government is undoubtedly superior to those produced at the regional level.
- The whole process of textbooks development was very slow at the regional levels. It was also reported that the textbooks produced at the regional level lack both horizontal and vertical integration which was also described as a problem for the textbooks developed nationally.

- In spite of the huge budget allocated to the development, printing, distribution of textbooks; shortage of finance has also been reported by all regions. Yet, while some of the *Woredas* allocate adequate budget others did not. This was clearly reported in the case of Somali NRS.
- No systematic reviews and evaluation of textbooks have been made as depicted by the participants who were interviewed and participated in the FGDs held at the school level. Nevertheless, some attempts in reviewing textbooks were reported by the JRM teams like Dire Dawa, Soamli and Amhara National Regional State.

Printing

- Reprinted textbooks lack quality and every so often, they are not visible for reading as described by teachers and students. Overall, though considered as a practical response to solve shortage of textbooks, the qualities of black and white copies are poor and as a result, they significantly distort contents and actual students' learning. For instance, teachers and students often face difficulties to point out colors in a rainbow.
- There are no local level publishers, who are capable of printing textbooks, with the quantities and qualities required by the regions. For instance, as reported by the JRM team of Amhara National Regional State, only few NGOs and adaptive technology centers could be found locally.

Distribution

- Lack of transport, infrastructure and shortage of finance were reported by the JRM teams in general and the NRS of Somali and Gembella in particular. The challenges of textbooks distribution were reported by all the JRM teams even during the first phase of the visit including in Dire Dawa. Among others, delays were described as the common characteristics of textbooks and teacher guides distribution as reported by all teams.
- The collaboration made with the other sectors such as transport and logistics, for textbooks distribution and the establishment of commend posts for the mission were among the practices appreciated by the JRM of the Amhara National Regional State.

Utilization

- In the regions visited, students do not bring their textbooks to the school and classrooms. Among the reasons, the size of textbooks and its weightiness were the major ones. In some schools, teachers were also found reluctant in urging students to bring their textbooks to the classrooms. On the other hand, it was also found that, some of the PTAs and teachers of the sample schools encourage students to bring at least one book for students who share the same desk.

Good Practices

- Initiatives like “one birr for one book” used to purchase supplementary reading and reference materials were highly appreciated as reported by the JRM of Amhara National Regional State.
- As reported by the JRM of Amhara NRS, the execution of strategies such as active learning approach and the framework of one-to-five students’ networking have been creating a tendency good culture of textbook utilization.

Challenges

- As reported by different actors involved in the interviews and FGDs, reprinted textbooks appeared to be less attractive, invisible and tend to create feelings of being disadvantaged among students compared to the color printed textbooks.
- In spite of their color and contents, as indicted above, most of the textbooks were reported bulky (not portable for students to bring to the schools each day). As a result, students become unwilling to bring textbooks to the school. This was vividly reported by the JRM of Somali NRS.
- No adequate trainings and orientations were given to teachers with regard to the new curriculum and textbooks reported all the JRM teams including the first phase visit.
- Though textbooks reviews have been conducted at the school level, there were no systematically organized ways of collecting feedbacks from the school level actors.
- Delays in general and with respect to the textbooks developed by the REB in particular were reported as defy as reported by all teams.

- Some of the textbooks developed by the Federal Government fall short of addressing the regional and local level contexts and cultural orientations. This was exhibited in the case of secondary school English textbooks.
- Problems of compatibility between the textbook and teacher guides, content of the textbooks and the period allotted to teach them, content of the textbooks and pre-service trainings, content of the textbooks and the regional and national levels examination. Moreover, overlaps and redundancies, the lack of strong horizontal and vertical integrations as well as the absence of supplementary reading and reference materials were reported.
- Both the Federal Government and the Regional Education Bureaus reprint textbooks without adequately communicating each other. This was vibrantly reported by the JRM of Somali NRS.
- Shortage of transport and lack of infrastructure (road) were also reported as serious challenges in distributing textbooks in general and the NRSs of Gemballa and Somali in particular.
- Providing textbooks without giving training for teachers, the teaching approaches used by teachers, the scarcity of textbooks, distribution challenges, concerns that are related to the life span of textbooks and the use data were reported during the first phase field visits conducted in Dire Dawa and Harar.

Recommendations

- The overall recommendations synchronized from the JRM of 2013 can be found in section 5 of the main report
- Recommendations by each of the JRM teams can be found in annex I-IV.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. General Objectives

The objective of the 2013 JRM was to assess the performance of ESDP IV implementation in terms of textbooks development, printing, distribution and utilization (See annex I). The distribution, utilization and aptness of teacher guides with textbooks were also at the hub of the JRM of 2013. Overall, the JRM was intended to come up with recommendations that enabled to take corrective actions and thereby contribute to continued qualitative and quantitative improvements in terms of textbooks development, printing, distribution and utilization. The report has been organized using document reviews and the JRM teams field visit reports.

1.2. Specific objectives

The specific focus of the JRM of 2013 include examining

- ✓ textbooks development (preparations, criteria for selection of writers, contents, illustrations and the availability of guides for textbooks review)
- ✓ textbooks printing (availability of criteria, standards, the quality and size of paper as well as its attractiveness)
- ✓ the distribution of textbooks for end users (distribution plan, provision of orientation for teachers, teachers access to textbooks and teacher guides, the extent to which teachers use textbooks and teacher guides, students attitude towards textbooks and their practices)
- ✓ the utilization of textbooks in the school (availability, ratio and the quality of text books and teacher guides, the availability of text books utilization policy)

1.3. The Approach Used (Methodology)

The approach used in conducting the JRM of 2013 was qualitative - field visits and document reviews. During the field visits, multiple instruments (interviews, FGDs, observations) were used. The joint review mission field visits were conducted in three National Regional States (Amhara, Somali and Gambella). The mission had 18 members who represented various organizations and development partners. Accordingly, 4 of the individuals were from the MoE while 12 individuals (2 DFID, 4 UNICEF, 2 JICA, 1 British Council, 1 USAID, 1 World Bank, 1 Final Embassy) were from development partners. A local NGO (Kelem) was also represented by one individual. Besides, one local consultant was also participated in the field visit conducted in Somali National

Regional State. Overall, members of the JRM were divided into 3 teams (each team consisting 4 to 9 individuals representing different organizations).

During the field visits, the teams were accompanied by relevant individuals working at the Regional Education Bureaus and *Woreda* Education Offices. The sample *woredas* and schools were selected by each of the Regional Education Bureau and the JRM team. Evidently, the Regional Education Bureaus, *Woreda* Education Offices, Secondary and Primary schools were among the major institutions visited by the JRM teams. Each team did introduce itself to the Regional Education Bureau officials, process owners and focal persons before starting the field visits and had debriefings after completing the field visits. In brief, 3 Regional Education Bureaus, 7 *Woreda* Education Offices, 1 Town Administration Education Office, 6 secondary schools, 8 primary schools, 1 Teachers Education College and 1 ABE were covered by the JRM field visits (See the Annex II). The field visits were conducted from April 01- 05, 2013. Prior to this, the first phase field visits were conducted in Dire Dawa and Harar led by USAID.

The JRM was started by defining the thematic area of the mission for the year. As a result, the performance of ESDP IV in terms of textbooks and teacher guides development, printing, distribution and utilization was selected as an important area of examination. Following this, discussions and briefings were made by the JRM organizers and participants with regard to the focus of the mission, the approach to be used; the main issues to be addressed, the regions to be visited as well as the schedules for the mission.

It was also agreed that each team should conduct interviews /discussions/ with the regional, *woreda* and school (both primary and secondary) level actors on issues that are related to textbooks and teacher guides. In view of this, guiding questions (See Annex IV) were developed and given to each team in advance. Accordingly, field visits were conducted from 01 - 05 of April 2013. Results were debriefed at the regional level and lastly reports were developed and submitted by each of the JRM team. Following this, the field reports were synthesized by the JRM local consultant. Ultimately, each of the report and the entire synthesis were reviewed in a consultative meeting to be held from May 30-31. The regions used a sample were invited to this meeting. The regional and *woreda* level actors, school directors (both primary and secondary) and PTAs of the schools used as a sample were invited to the validation meeting. The reports made by each of the field visit team, the comments and reflections made during the workshop are all included in general and the main report in particular (See Annex V).

1.4. Limitation/s of the Report

The sample of the visits were limited to few *woredas*, schools (secondary primary), one Teacher Education College and one ABE. This might not represent *woredas* and schools, which have unique contexts and characteristics. Besides, the main reports that were made by the JRM teams differ both in depth and in focus. For this reason, the blend of the field reports could not pass up the impact of such limitations albeit the efforts made to substantiate the reports by crosschecking with the power point presentations of each team, document reviews and the feedbacks gained from the validation workshop. The field visit reports are annexed to the main report for more, detailed and easy references.

1.5. Structure of the Report

This report has two major parts: executive summary and the main text of the report. The executive summary highlighted the background information, key findings, good practices and challenges. The main text of the report consists of background information (introduction), major findings, good practices along with the challenges encountered and the recommendations suggested. The structure of this report was a derivative of the ToR developed for the JRM of 2013. Consequently, all the major and specific objectives of the mission were considered. Focus was also given to the guiding questions developed by the JRM technical team. Overall, the structure tries to address the intact process of textbooks and teacher guides development, printing, distribution and utilization.

2. Major Finding

2.1. Overall progress

The 2013 Joint Review Mission has recognized and highly appreciated the endeavors made by the Federal Government (MoE) in providing high quality color printed textbooks and this was also echoed by all level actors (regional, *woreda* and the school levels). The mission has also acknowledged that the Regional Education Bureaus have textbook policy, guidelines and plans adapted from the textbook policy of the Federal Government (MoE). The progresses made in terms of improving student textbook ratio were also found encouraging, although considerable differences have been observed among the three regions and within the region (among the *woredas visited*). Despite the differences observed among regions and *woredas*, the Federal and Regional Government commitments to improve the development, printing and distribution of textbooks have been manifested by the huge budget allocated for the purpose. Overall, the

textbook ratios (in most of the subjects) have reached 1:1 in the regions visited. Accesses to teacher guides and their distribution were also reported adequate in general terms. Nevertheless, there are still textbooks that are far from 1:1 ratio. Concerns that are related the quality of textbooks developed at the regional level, delays, scarcity of budget and lack of infrastructure challenges were also reflected. The details will be presented in the subsequent sections of this paper.

2.2. Textbooks development

Documents have shown that the curriculum for secondary school textbooks and teacher guides were newly developed, printed and distributed to all regions by the Ministry of Education. Moreover, primary education second cycle (grades 5 to 8) textbooks such as Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Social Science and Basic Science, were also part of the package that was centrally developed, printed and distributed to the regions. On top of this, the development and printing of Civics and Ethical education, and English textbooks and teachers guide for all grades were done by the Ministry Education. The development, printing and distribution of textbooks and teacher guides for the remaining subjects are produced by the respective regions. For instance, as reported by the JRM team of Somali National Regional State while secondary school textbooks and teacher guides (except the Somali Language) are produced at the Federal level, while primary school level subjects such as Environmental Sciences, Integrated Science and Somali Language were produced by the local languages at the regional level. In a similar way, Anguak, Opo and Komo were prepared by the local languages in Gembella while Awigna, Himtigna and Afaan Oromo textbooks were prepared at the regional level in Amhara National Regional State - on top of environmental science G 1-4 and integrated science G 5-6 textbooks and teacher guides developed by the region. Overall, the development of textbooks and teacher guides can be seen from two angles. The first one refers to the textbooks and teacher guides developed at the federal level while the second goes to the textbooks and teacher guides produced at the regional level.

In sum, as reflected by all level actors, particularly the school level actors (school principals, teacher, students and PTAs), the textbooks produced at the Federal level are venerated. They were described as attractive, quality and well organized. The extent of participation by the regional level experts was also reported high. Nevertheless, editorial problems, fall short of addressing the regional and local level contexts and cultural orientations (example English textbooks), have

problems of compatibility (between the text books and teachers guides, content of the textbooks and period allotments, content of the textbooks and pre-service trainings, content of the textbooks and the regional and national levels assessment /examinations/ and in consistencies were reported as serious weaknesses. In addition, overlaps and redundancies, lack strong horizontal and vertical integrations as well as the absence of supplementary readings and reference materials were boldly reported.

Textbooks and teacher guides produced at the regional level were also characterized by delays, editorial problems, flawed wordings and inconsistency in general terms as reflected by the percipients. As reported by the JRM of team of Gambella National Regional State, the core reason for this problem goes to capacity (serious shortage of qualified and experienced manpower). In Somali, as reported by the JRM team of Somali National Regional State, the Regional Education Bureau did use Teacher Education College and curriculum development experts of the REB to alleviate similar problems. Private experts (hired from the market) were also used for activities like illustration. As reported by the JRM of Gambella, the absence of systematic reviews was also reported in all regions. Nevertheless, in regions like Gambella, though 75% of the schools visited reported their practices in conducting evaluation, no system of feedback were primed to report to the regional and national levels. As reported by the JRM of Somali National State, only little has been done in conducting textbooks evaluation except in school like Jijiga Secondary and Preparatory School. The challenges were reported more complicated in regions like Gembella as textbooks are produced in several local languages demanding more financial mobilization and having qualified and experienced experts who know the local languages.

2.3. Printing

The printing and binding of the textbooks and teacher guides produced by the Federal Government were described as quality and up to standard. In regions like Somali, *woredas* allocated budget for the development, printing and distribution of textbooks and teacher guides. As a result, while some of the *woredas* allocate adequate budget, others fall short to do so. Therefore, the types and quantity of textbooks that *woredas* receive each year from the federal or regional levels depends on the amount of budget they allocated for the purpose.

2.4. Distribution

The distribution of textbooks and teacher guides were reported as a serious challenge over years. In recent years, the Federal Government has started to transport textbooks and teacher guides up to the *woreda* level. Nevertheless, shortage of budget and the challenges faced owing to infrastructure remains serious problems in general and in the National Regional State of Gambella and Somali in particular.

In terms of timing, though improvements were made in 2005 E.C., there were also delays, for instance, the textbooks distributed by the Federal Government did reach the school level three months after the commencement of the academic year as reported by the JRM of Gambella National Regional State. The delays were created at the Regional level as the centrally distributed textbooks and teacher guides were kept in the warehouse of the REB for four months after their delivery from the MoE. Worse than this, even schools in the capital did not receive them as observed by the JRM team of Gambella National Regional State. Problems that are related distribution were also reported during the first phase visits.

Table -1: Textbooks Distribution

Region	Secondary	Primary	ABE	Remark
Amhara	1:1	1:1	—	
Gambella	1:2	1:3	—	✓ Not exact because no official records and actual data were available
Somali	1:2	1:4	1:4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Physics and English 1:5 ✓ No textbooks and teachers guides were there for Somali Language 11-12 ✓ No teacher guides for Somali Language at all ✓ Somali Language ratio 1:5 ✓ No HPE text books (G 5-12) ✓ No amharic text books (G 3-8) ✓ No textbooks for art, music and sport (G 5-8) ✓ No text books for art science (G 1-4)
Dire Dawa		1:1		✓ Afan Oromo 1:2

The case of Gambella National Regional State was somewhat very serious as compared to the other two regions. For one thing, the discrepancies in ratio vary from, for example, 1:1 in schools of Gambella town, to almost no textbooks in Makoy Woreda. Batgdol primary school in Makoy *woreda* (which is only five kilometers away from the Woreda town) and did not get textbooks and consequently teachers had to travel to schools in other *woredas* (Lare and Jikawo) to get one textbook for each subject. Similar problems, but less acute, also exist in Gambella town where a school had to borrow grade nine Geography textbooks from another school in the neighboring *woreda*. To be more specific, the education system of Gambella National Regional State has been

characterized by shortage of textbooks and inequitable distributions (some schools and *woredas* have surplus text books while other do not) and thus the shortage was aggravated by the absence of strong follow-ups and the use of inaccurate data (EMIS) of the earlier year. This implies that text books are not distributed using the actual number of active students in the schools. For example, the JRM team confirmed a sizable surplus in Dalkoch School while other schools had serious shortages. The distribution of textbooks and its management were characterized by poor planning, communication, record keeping and monitoring system. Overall, there were no system in place (both at the regional or *woreda* levels) that help to keep track to define exactly which schools have got textbooks and in what quantities or of exactly how many students are actually studying in the schools. The region was also confronted with shortage facilities – almost all the *woredas* visited and most of the schools have no store or rooms to keep the textbooks.

According to the report made by the JRM of Somali National Regional State, the distribution channel of textbooks to the region has been in two ways. The first one was direct from Federal to zones/*woredas* while the second one is from Federal to REB and then to zones/*woredas*. As reported by the team, the distribution of textbooks to *woredas* have been followed and controlled through the practice of supervision. It was also conducted by asking school principals (when they come to the REB) or when experts travel to *woredas* or by making phone calls to the *woredas* and school to crosscheck the textbooks and teacher guides that are actually distributed compared to the distribution lists received by the REB.

Overall, there were no systematically organized controlling and monitoring system. Among others, serious shortages of were observed in textbooks that are produced at the regional level (Integrated Science, Environmental Science, Somali Language). In schools like Lefisa Primary School, some of the textbooks and teacher guides (example biology) did not reach the school level at all. Additionally, there were no Somali Language textbooks and teacher guides for grade 11-12. Basically, subjects like art (1-4 grades), music (5-6 grades), Amharic (3-8 grades), Social Studies (5-8 grades), sport (5-12 grades) textbooks and teacher guides are not there at all.

2.5. Utilization

The utilization and management of textbooks vary from region to region. What is common to all is no well organized and planned orientations were given to the school level actors mainly teachers and students. In Gembella NRS, only one of the visited schools tried to provide orientation for

students. In Somali NRS no systematic orientations were given to teachers and students. Seen overall, the attitude of school principals, teachers, students and PTAs was found positive towards the textbooks and teacher guides produced by the Federal government. Both the textbooks and teacher guides were described quality in all aspects (paper, ink, color, illustrations, binding etc., design and contents in spite of the editorial problems, the difficulties of addressing contexts and cultural orientations, problems of compatibility (between the text books and teachers guide, content and period allotments, content of the textbooks and pre-service trainings, content of the textbooks and the regional /national/ levels assessment /examinations/, inconsistency, overlaps, redundancies and lack of strong horizontal and vertical integrations.

Worse than this, the attitude of teachers and students towards the text books produced at the regional level was not positive. Some of the teachers and students justify this by comparing the quality of reprinted and regional produced textbooks and teacher guides with the textbooks and teacher guides produced by the Federal Government. Students do not bring their textbooks to the school and classrooms. According to the reflections of the school level actors, a number of reasons were reflected - among which the size (most of the textbooks were described as not portable - bulky), the number textbooks required to bring to school each day, the hot weather conditions which is not comfortable to carry a number of books each day, the reluctance exhibited by teachers to urge students to bring their textbooks to the school, lack of bags as well as the teaching methods used by teachers (more of chalk and talk) were the major ones. Most of the students do not bring their textbooks to the school or only bring selected textbooks to the school as reported by JRM reports mainly the JRM of Somali NRS.

The system of text management includes the involvement of actors after it has reached the school level. The school storekeeper receives textbooks and teacher guides. Following this, homeroom teachers withdraw the textbooks and distributed to the students. The family or caretaker of students signs agreement (guarantee) that the student will return the textbooks they borrowed at the end of the year otherwise to pay in cash. Subject teachers are expected to persuade students to bring their textbooks during the lessons in the classroom. Finally, the homeroom teachers recollected the textbooks and submit to the school storekeeper - at the end of the year. This is true in all the sample schools of the regions visited, though in some localities, for instance, in Jejebe Primary School of Gambella Town parents refuse to sign such a guarantee for students as they fear that the textbooks would be mismanaged or lost by the students. In most cases, teachers borrow teacher guides directly from the storekeeper. Overall, there were no carefully designed systematic

monitoring system for the management and utilization of textbooks. The other concerns raised by teachers include the mismatch between the textbooks they teach and teacher guide (example biology), conceptual and editorial errors (example geography), the invisibility of reprinted books, the unfit nature of textbooks and plasma lessons, redundancy (example History) as well as the absence of laboratory manual for teachers. In addition to the above, in ABE center such as Lo'maqaris there were no mathematics textbooks (neither the old nor the new), as the old books were in English and while ABE students are expected to learn in their mother tongue.

3. Good Practices

The commitments that have been shown by allocating huge budget for textbooks development, printing and distribution by regions and some selected *woredas* (for instance in Somali) manifests the attention given to the quality of education. The collaboration created among the different sectors (education, transport) and the assignment of commend posts for textbooks, and teacher guides distribution was reported as exemplary as by the JRM of Amahra National Regional State. Initiatives like “one birr for one book” reported by the JRM of Amhara National Regional State (Este *Woreda*) to purchase supplementary materials was highly appreciated. As reported by the JRM of Amhara National Regional State, the execution of strategies such as on active learning practices within the framework of one-to-five students’ networks has created good culture of textbook utilization.

Though no system is in place, teachers borrow books and teachers guides from the nearest located schools in order to overcome the challenges created due to a somber shortage of textbooks and teacher guides. This was observed both in Gembella and Somali National Regional State schools (Jijiga Secondary and Preparatory School, Dalkoch Secondary School and Batigdol Primary in Makoy).

4. Challenges

- As reported by different actors that were involved in the interviews and FGDs, the reprinted textbooks appeared to be less attractive, invisible and tend to create feelings of being disadvantaged among students compared to the color printed textbooks.

- In spite of their color and contents, most of the textbooks were reported bulky (not portable for students to bring to the schools each day). As a result, students become unwilling to bring textbooks to the school.
- No adequate training and orientation were given to teachers with regard to the new curriculum and textbooks as reported by all the JRM teams. In fact, some of the JRM teams had come across very few teachers who took training on the management of textbooks though; the trainings were not cascaded. Above all, teachers should get training on the new contents included in the revised textbooks which otherwise appeared to be a grave confront for them to teach their students accordingly.
- Though textbooks reviews have been conducted at the school level, there were no systematically organized ways of collecting feedbacks from the school level actors.
- Shortage and delays textbooks and teacher guides in general, and with regard to the textbooks developed by the REB in particular were reported as serious defies by all teams. For instance, as reported by the JRM team of Amahra National Regional State, the newly prepared textbooks for primary textbooks (prepared in mother tongue languages such as Awigna, Himtigna and “Afaan Oromo” did not reach the school level. Similarly, as reported by Somali NRS team subjects like integrated science, environmental science, Somali language and history were found among the textbooks characterized by serious shortage along with their respective teacher guides. Worse than this, no textbook and teacher guides were available in Somali Language (grade 11-12).
- Some of the textbooks developed by the Federal Government fall short of addressing the regional and local level contexts and cultural orientations. Evidently, this was exhibited by the English language textbooks prepared for secondary school level.
- Problems of compatibility between the text books and teachers guides, content of the textbook and period allotments, content of the textbooks and pre-service trainings, the content of the text books and the regional /national/ levels assessment /examinations/. Overlaps, redundancies, lack horizontal and vertical integrations, the use of vague and difficult terminologies, the absence of user-friendly supplementary readings and reference materials were also reported.

- Both the Federal Government (MoE) and the Regional Education Bureaus conduct reprinting textbooks without communicating each other adequately. This was vividly reported by the JRM of Somali NRS.
- Shortage of transport and lack of infrastructure (road) were also reported as serious challenges in distributing textbooks in general and the National Regional States of Gemballa and Somali in particular.
- The absence of capable, competent and adequate number of publishers at the regional level was reported as somber challenges for textbooks and teacher guides printing and reprinting.
- The budget constraints at the regional level (to develop, publish and distribute quality textbooks and teacher guides), the low attention given to textbooks and teachers guide by some *woredas* (in terms of budget allocation) as well as the lack of transport, storage and road facilities were also reported.
- Textbooks and teacher guides development, printing and transport is allocated by the *woredas* and REBs have no control over the allocation of this budget. Hence, in regions like Somali some of the *woreads* allocate adequate budget while other do not.
- Delays, shortage and total absence of some of the textbooks and teacher guides – often attributed to shortage of budget, very long printing process, weak distribution, the inferior quality textbooks and teacher guides (primarily the textbooks and teacher guides produced at the regional level) as well as the dearth of teachers participation in the development of new curriculum and textbooks (from the very start) were reported daunting challenges
- The absence of communication and coordination between the MoE and REB in reprinting the textbooks and teacher guides might lead to the duplication of efforts - as reported by the regional level actors – for instance in the case of Somali National Regional State.
- Regardless of the efforts made by few schools (among visited), the absence of systematic reviews, evaluation and feedback gathering for future actions were not there.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the field reports and document analysis, the following recommendations were suggested for action. The recommendations suggested could be addressed by one or more the echelons (Federal, Regional, *Woreda* and School) both in the short run and in long run accordingly.

A. Federal level (including development partners)

- Most of the text books developed at the Federal level was reported bulky (not portable). Hence, in the long run the MoE should consider the redesigning of portable text books in order to alleviate the problem.
- The MoE Education in consultation with the REBs should redesign strong and workable monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms whereby feedbacks could be systematically collected for future improvements. Efforts should also be made to strengthen the activities of supervision across the various echelons of the system.
- There should be strong communication and information exchange system in reprinting text books and teacher guides hence duplication of efforts and wastage of resources could be alleviated
- The MoE in collaboration with the Regional Education Offices should work towards addressing the major problems or concerns that are identified in relation to the textbooks and teacher guides developed at the Federal level. These concerns include the incompatibility between textbooks and teacher guides, the contents to be covered and the period allotted them, the contents of textbooks and teachers' pre-service training, the contents of textbooks and the assessment /examination/ set at the regional and national levels. The endeavors made in this regard should also address problems that are related to redundancies, lack of horizontal and vertical integrations, the use of vague and difficult terminologies and the absence of user-friendly supplementary reading and reference materials.
- The MoE should initiate, encourage and put into effect the provision of trainings and orientations for teachers with regard to the new textbooks and teacher guides so that teachers can teach their students with adequate understanding of the subject matter or lessons presented in the textbooks and use teacher guides with better understanding. The need for a new system

of providing teachers training was also suggested as an option to alleviate problems that are related teachers training as reflected by the first phase JRM field report.

- The MoE should revisit some of the textbooks (for instance secondary school English textbooks) so that they would address the national and regional contexts accordingly.
- The MoE should re-evaluate the capacity of the REBs in handling the intact process textbooks and teacher guides procurement, development, printing, reprinting and the distribution and thereby technical and professional supports to the regions accordingly.
- Overall, the MoE in collaboration with the REBs should conduct further specific scrutiny on the extent to which the promises made in ESDP IV and the objectives stated in the national textbook policy (2005 E.C) (with reference to the curriculum and provision of textbooks) has been accomplished. To mention few, the provision of sufficient number of textbooks and teacher guides, aligning student assessment and examinations with the new curriculum and textbooks were the major ones (MoE, 2010).

B. Regional

Development and Preparation of textbooks

- The quality of textbooks and teacher guides were described as questionable particularly when compared to the textbooks and teacher guides produced by the Federal Government. Hence, the region should search for competent professionals or build the capacity of scriptwriters, editors and proofreaders' would help improve quality textbooks and teacher guides developed at the regional level. The capacity building efforts should also include pedagogic principles, horizontal and vertical integration, using appropriate kinds of illustrations, minimum learning competencies, gender sensitivity and the like. Indeed, a need assessment could be used to identify the actual skill gaps before launching capacity-building efforts.
- The Regional Education Bureaus should design and in place, workable system of textbooks and teacher guides evaluation and thereby incorporate the feedbacks gained from the various actors for future improvements. In addition, the Regional Education Bureau should gather feedbacks from the *Woreda*, school level actors and thereby communicate the weaknesses and strengthen of the textbooks and teacher guides developed by the Federal level (MoE).

- In Gambella, the REB should adapt the central government textbooks development, printing, distribution and utilization guideline to its contexts.
- The REBs should endeavor to maintain the standard and qualities set at the national level for textbooks and teacher guides development, printing and utilization.
- The REBs should also insist and encourage *woredas* to allocate adequate budget for textbooks development, printing, distribution, monitoring and evaluation. They should also encourage possible efforts to engender the support and involvement of different stakeholders (for instance development partners, NGOs, private sectors and the like including alumni).
- Record keeping, data and information exchange system should be strengthened among the various echelons of the system and hence the distribution of textbooks and teacher guides should be based on more realistic figures and inventories.
- The Regional Education Bureau (REB) should take the initiatives, explain, convince and work closely with *woredas* in an effort to allocate adequate budget for textbooks and teacher guides development, printing and distribution. There should also be strong link and communication between the REBs and MoE to benefit from the synergy of working together in planning, organizing, monitoring, controlling, distribution and capacity building such cascade training along the ladder of the hierarchy to the school level.
- The REB should design a well-built controlling mechanism with regard to the distribution and management of textbooks and teacher guides.
- REB needs to have a knowledge management system in order to document comments, questions and all the other concerns raised pertaining to the content, format, approach and attractiveness of textbooks and teacher guides for future improvements.
- Efforts made to develop new curriculum, textbooks, teacher guides should encourage active participation of the school level actors mainly the school principals and teachers from the very start.
- The REBs, in collaboration with the MoE and WEOs should launch systematic textbooks and teacher guides review that should be conducted by independent external evaluators (commissioned consultant/s) so that the future reprints (2nd editions) would correct errors and respond to the comments given by different actors. This review should also address examining the utilization and impacts of the new textbooks on students learning outcomes.

- The REBs should make effort to synchronize examination systems with the direction of the new curriculum, strengthen the linkage between teacher trainings and the new curriculum so that teachers could be equipped with the contents and methodology of the subject matter they are expected to teach or to deliver the curriculum using the new textbooks and teacher guides.
- The planning, development and delivery of textbooks and teacher guides as well as the overall teaching and learning materials should give due attention to special needs education
- The REBs should set up distribution centers at strategic locations; strengthen textbooks management information system to help forward planning and accurate projection of demands.
- The REBs should initiate the development of supplementary learning materials and preprimary school textbooks in order to strengthen the effectiveness of O- classes. This can be done by forging strategic partnerships between and among the regional governments, development partners, private organizations and teacher training colleges. To this end, the experience of CTEs engagement in adaptive translation of textbooks and other instructional materials in nationality languages, signals the need for creating and/or strengthening local language development/enrichment centers/units within such institutions.

C. *Woreda*

- The *WEOs* in collaboration with school level actors should conduct textbooks and teacher guides evaluation and write formal reports or share the comments (feedbacks) with the REBs for corrective actions during textbooks and teacher guides revision.
- The *WEOs* should develop dependable recording system (number of students, number of teachers, number of textbooks and teacher guides) and communicate reliably data with the REB accordingly.
- Textbooks and teacher guides inventory, auditing and control should be made from time to time with the intention that shortage or extra textbooks and teacher guides could be located and corrective measures could be taken on timely basis.
- Ad hoc and periodic reports should include the situation of textbooks and teacher guides availability, distribution and utilization. These reports should be shared with the REBs and used as an input for further actions both at the regional and *woreda* levels.

- The *Woreda* education office should prepare a temporary store to keep textbooks and teacher guides until they distributed to the schools.
- The *Woreda* education office should collect data on each subject and grade levels in relation to student textbook ratio, to make sound decisions at *woreda* and regional levels.
- *WEOs* should involve in cascade training so that they can provide training for the school level actors accordingly.

D. School

- Schools should develop textbooks and teacher guides distribution and utilization guidelines based on the guidelines prepared at the regional and *woreda* levels.
- Schools should develop mechanisms that encourage and urge subject teachers and students to use textbooks during the actual lessons in the classroom.
- School principals, homeroom teachers and subject teacher should encourage and urge students to bring their textbooks to the school and classrooms. Context based arrangement could be made accordingly. For instance, the strategy used by some schools – at least one book on one desk for each subject could easy a number of difficulties if any.
- Schools in collaboration with the Parent Teachers Association (PTAs) and Kebele Education and Training Boards (KETB) should create awareness among parents and students on the importance of textbook utilization and its handlings for the knowledge, skill and attitude development of children - above all their learning.
- Schools should create a strong system that encourage and empower parents' involvement in the entire process of textbooks management and utilization in general and by their children in particular.
- Schools should advocate and enforce textbooks utilization as an integral part of child-centered learning approach.
- Borrowing of textbooks should be flexible and should consider the context of the local community without compromising the safe handling and returning of textbooks.
- Schools should prepare or improve storage facilities that are conducive and protective for textbooks and teacher guides as an effort to augment their utilization and lifespan.

REFERENCES

- MoE. (1994). **Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia**. Addis Ababa: EMPDA.
- (2010). **Education Sector Development Program (ESDP IV)**. Addis Ababa: MoE.
- ____. (2011). **Education Statistics Annual Abstract**. Addis Ababa: EMIS.
- ____. (2013). **Textbooks Development, Printing and Distribution Guideline**. Addis Ababa.

Appendices

Annex I

Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Education Sector Development Program IV

Joint ESDP IV JRM - Field Visits 2013

1. Introduction

The education and training policy acknowledges that the integration or interventions of governments, communities and development partners is vital for the realization of the policies and strategies of the country. Assessing the performance of the previous three education sector development programs, the ESDP IV has been developed and is under implementation. Improving quality, increasing equity and access, and expanding adult education with specific attention to Functional Adult Literacy/FAL, special support program for the emerging regions, School Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Community Participation are priority areas of the program for the general education.

Realizing the overall achievements made so far in increasing coverage and improving equity, the Ethiopian government has shifted its direction to ensure the quality of education since ESDP III. In line with this, the MOE has developed a General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP) to support the implementation the six components of the GEQIP. One of these components is curriculum, textbook and assessment. Within teaching and learning material subcomponent 128 titles of textbooks, including teacher guides (86 primary and 42 secondary) have been developed and distributed. Textbooks for subjects in primary curriculum were required to be developed in the five major languages of instruction (Amharic, Oromifa, Tigrigna, Somali, and English). The main theme of ESDP IV 2013 JRM will be textbook development, printing, reprinting, distribution and utilization.

To assess the performance of the ESDP IV implementation as was the case with previous ESDPs, the Ministry of Education in partnership with Donor Partners supporting the program has planned to conduct a joint field visit in **March 2013**. Development partners (DPs) working in the area of education have supported the Ministry's efforts to contribute to the Ethiopian Government's endeavors to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE). One of the mechanisms for supporting the Government's effort is to organize and conduct Joint Review Mission (JRM) focusing on specific burning thematic issues so as to come-up with recommendations that can help to achieve the overall goal of the Ministry. The focus of the

field visit in March 2013 will thus be on key elements of the teaching and learning materials including textbook development printing, reprinting, and distribution and utilization program.

One of the critical inputs to improve the quality of education is improving the teaching learning process at school level through providing inputs that enhance students' performance, including the provision of textbooks. Guiding questions are developed to aid the field visit team gather information from the beneficiaries and a wider group of actors involved in textbook management during discussion with stakeholders. Exit conferences will be held by the field supervision teams with Regional and woreda authorities to provide immediate feedback. From the Regional reports, one final JRM report will be consolidated with key recommendations for further actions to be taken by Ministry for Education.

2. Objectives of JRM

The overall objective of the 2013 JRM is to assess the performance of the textbooks and teacher guides and provide general observations and recommendations to the Ministry regarding the distribution, use and effectiveness of the textbooks available in Ethiopian classrooms. Through document reviews and field visits the JRM will thereafter come up with key-recommendations that can contribute towards continued qualitative and quantitative improvement of the implementation of the textbooks program at school level. These recommendations will also feed into the Annual conferences for education.

2.1 Specific objectives

The primary focus of the field visit will be to review the following 4 major interventions:

1. The development process of the textbooks

- The practice of text book development, edition and manufacturing
- **Criteria for selection of writers, contents, illustration of the textbooks**
- **the availability of guides to review the textbooks**

2. Printing of the textbooks

- The guides to meet the required standards for all grades
- whether there are standards/criteria for printing
- the quality of textbooks in terms of paper quality, size,
- The extent to which textbooks are attractive to learners and are full of illustrations

3. Distributions of text books for the end users

- The distribution plans at woreda and school levels
- Textbook orientation for teachers
- Teachers access to and utilization of textbooks and teacher guides
- Student attitudes towards and practices with text books

4. The utilization of textbooks in the schools

- The availability and quality of textbooks, teacher training materials and ratio of books per student
- The availability and quality of teachers' guides and the extent
- the availability policy for use text books at school level

5. Methodology

The following methodologies will be employed in the field visit

- Document review
- Interview
- FGD
- Checklist
- Observations

3. Time and scope of the field visits

The field visits will be held in two phases, the first being from March 15-16, 2013 and the first two regions to be visited include Dire Dawa and Harari. The second phase will take place the first week in April, 2013, and will include the regions of Amhara, Gambella, and Somalia. The visits will include Regional, Zonal (where relevant) woredas, kebele offices, primary and secondary schools (.including PTA's) and ABE Centers (one urban and one rural). Each team will begin its visit by briefing the mission the REB. At the end of each field visit, each team will have a debriefing session with relevant regional officials. ant to be visited? and the number of woreds and schools to be visited should be specified)

Woredas will be selected in consultation with REBs. Broad selection criteria, such as better performing and underperforming woredas will be used to understand challenges as well as program implementation.

4. Submission of field report

At the end of the field visits, a joint report will be prepared reflecting the observations, analyses and recommendations of ESDP. Each team is required to write and submit a brief field report which will be consolidated by a hired local consultant. The reports should be of two types: summarized key findings, major implementation challenges, other concerns, and recommendations from the team on PowerPoint for presentation on the JRM consultative meeting. The second version of the field report should be more detailed, with all the visit details and any attachments for future reference. The summarized PowerPoint version of the report should be submitted to the JRM co-chairs within three days of the end of the field trip. The detailed version of the report should be submitted to JRM co-chairs within a week of the end of the field mission by each team. The regional reports will be consolidated to one JRM report by a hired consultant.

5. Participants and vehicles required

The participants will be from MoE, MOFED, DPs, and NGOs. Each team will consist of approximately six participants. The following are indications of potential participants:

- Ministry of Education
- Development partners
- Regional Education Bureaus
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
- Regional Bureaus of Financial and Economic Development
- Local (if any) and International Non-government organizations

Each team will have a team leader assigned among the team members and development partners will provide vehicles for each team

6. Basic Documents and Studies to Refer to

Reference may be made to basic documents developed and studies undertaken in the last three years example:

- GEQIP documents (Including PAD, annual performance report, GEQIP I Aide Memoire February 2013, textbook procurement plans)
- ESDP IV
- Proceeding of Annual education conference of 2012
- Education Statistics Annual Abstracts at federal and regional levels
- Guidelines of textbook developments
- other relevant (if any) studies or assessments' reports

7. Annexes

Two annexes follow, including an itinerary for a generic field visit and guiding questions that should be used for discussions with regional, woreda and schools.

Annex I: Generic Itinerary

A specific itinerary will be developed for each region following notification and discussion with the regions to be visited. Three teams will be formed each will a group leader.

Day 1 – Travel to respective Regional capital each team is assigned for. (01/4/2013)

Day 2 – Discussion with Regional authorities (2/4/2013)

- A brief discussion with Education bureau heads
- visit at least one urban woreda and one urban school
- Discussions with woreda Education offices
- Visit to service delivery locations (schools) for discussions with frontline service providers and beneficiaries (e.g. PTAs)
- Discussion with community leaders on basic service provision (education)

Days 3 to 4 - Visit one rural woreda and three schools (3-4/4/2013)

- Discussions with woreda Education offices
- Visit to service delivery locations (schools) for discussions with frontline service providers and beneficiaries (e.g. PTAs)
- Discussion with community leaders on basic service provision (education)

Day 5 - Debriefing with regional officials

Day 6- Travel back to Addis Ababa

Annex II

Annex II is divided into three parts. Each part contains a list of guiding questions that should be used to guide discussions with the relevant stakeholders to be visited: Part A will be to regional and federal, Part B will be to woreda education offices, and Part C will be used for grass root stake holders (schools and community)

Annex II

Institutions Visited by the JRM of 2013

Region	REB	WEO	Town Admin. Education Office	Secondary Schools	Primary Schools	Teachers Education College	ABE	Remark
Amhara	1	3	-	2	3	1	-	
Gembela	1	2	1	2	3	-	-	- One of the Secondary School is 5-10 - One of the primary school has first cycle only
Somali	1	2	-	2	2	-	1	
Total	3	7	1	6	8	1	1	

N.B.

Schools in Dire Dawa and Harar were also visited during the first phase of the field visits.

Annex III

Guiding Questions for Field Visit

Annex 1: Guiding Questions used

Questions to guide discussions for regional education bureaus (REBs)

The development process of the textbooks

- Is there a regional textbooks management policy, plans, and implementation strategy?
- How do you perform it in the primary and secondary levels?
- How are textbooks developed, edited, printed, reprinted and distributed for primary and secondary levels?
- Who are involved in the development, edition and distribution of textbooks?
- What are the challenges you encounter?
- What are the basic criteria for the selection of writers, contents, illustration of the textbooks?
- How was the level of participation of teachers in the development process of textbooks for primary & secondary schools?

Printing of the textbooks

- What are the guidelines/standards/criteria you use to meet the required standards for all the printing/reprinting process?
- How do you manage to control /check the quality and size of paper, paper back of the textbook or teachers' guide?
- What types of challenges you encounter in the printing/reprinting processes?

Distributions of textbooks for the end users

- Is the distribution of textbooks done timely?
- What type of control mechanism do you use to check the fair distribution of textbooks & teachers' guide?
- How do you evaluate the status of the new textbooks –students' ratio?
- Are textbooks in the primary & secondary levels available enough to meet the demands of students in the grade and subject basis?
- How do you manage to let all subject teachers have their own personal copies of textbooks and teachers' guide?

The utilization of textbooks in the schools

- How did you cascade textbook orientations program (training on utilization of the textbook) at the regional level?
- How do you try to have access of the textbooks & training materials to teachers?
- What were the feedbacks you get from the training program?
- Comment on the availability, quality and the extent of teachers' guides in schools.
- What can you say about the quality of textbooks in relation to the needs and interest of students in particular and society in general?
- How often do teachers use teachers' guide?
- How are the textbooks and teachers' guide in line with each other?
- What can you say about required standards of teachers' guide for all subjects at each grade levels?
- How often do teachers' utilize textbooks?
- What is your opinion about the attractiveness and student-friendliness? organizational features (illustrations, gender sensitivity, portable size, etc.)?
- Have you ever received a feedback, comments, and errors/mistakes to be corrected?

Annex III

Questions to guide discussions for Woreda education Offices

Distributions of textbooks for the end users

- Is the distribution of textbooks done timely?
- What type of control mechanism do you use to check the fair distribution of textbooks & teachers' guide?
- How do you evaluate the status of the new textbooks –students' ratio?
- Are textbooks in the primary & secondary levels available enough to meet the demands of students in the grade and subject basis?
- How do you manage to let all subject teachers have their own personal copies of textbooks and teachers' guide?

The utilization of textbooks in the schools

- How did you cascade textbook orientations programme (training on utilization of the textbook) at the regional level?
- How do you try to have access of the textbooks & training materials to teachers?
- What were the feedbacks you get from the training program?
- What can you say about the quality of textbooks in relation to the needs and interest of students in particular and society in general?
- How often do teachers use teachers' guide?
- How are the textbooks and teachers' guide in line with each other?
- Comment on the availability, quality and the extent of teachers' guides in schools.
- What can you say about required standards of teachers' guide for all subjects at each grade levels?
- How often do teachers' utilize textbooks?
- What is your opinion about the attractiveness and student-friendliness, organizational features (illustrations, gender sensitivity, portable size, etc.)?
- Have you ever received a feedback, comments, and errors/mistakes to be corrected?

Questions to guide discussions for school personnel and PTAs

Distributions of textbooks for the end users

- Is the distribution of textbooks done timely?
- What type of control mechanism do you use to check the fair distribution of textbooks & teachers' guide?
- How do you evaluate the status of the new textbooks –students' ratio?
- Are textbooks in the primary & secondary levels available enough to meet the demands of students in the grade and subject basis?
- How do you manage to let all subject teachers have their own personal copies of textbooks and teachers' guide?

The utilization of textbooks in the schools

- How did you cascade textbook orientations programme (training on utilization of the textbook) at the regional level?
- How do you try to have access of the textbooks & training materials to teachers?
- What were the feedbacks you get from the training program?
- What can you say about the quality of textbooks in relation to the needs and interest of students in particular and society in general?
- How often do teachers use teachers' guide?
- How are the textbooks and teachers' guide in line with each other?
- Comment on the availability, quality and the extent of teachers' guides in schools.
- What can you say about required standards of teachers' guide for all subjects at each grade levels?
- How often do teachers' utilize textbooks?
- What is your opinion about the attractiveness and student - friendliness? Organizational features (illustrations, gender sensitivity, portable size, etc.)?
- Have you ever received a feedback, comments, and errors/mistakes to be corrected?

Annex IV

The JRM Team Reports

Education JRM Amhara Region Field Mission Report April 2013

1. Mission Members

The mission in Amhara Region was led by DFID and the Ministry of Education with the following members: Belay Addise and Moltotal Mekuria (DFID), Zelalem Alagaw (MoE), Mulugeta Mesfin, (AmharaREB), Shumye Mollaand Tefera Eshete (UNICEF), Befekadu Gebretsadik, (USAID), Girma Woldetsadik (World Bank), and Workaferahu Eshetu (Finland Embassy)

2. Objectives – as per JRM ToR

3. Methodology

The field mission from 02 – 04 April 2013 involved visits to Amhara REB, a zonal education office, three Woreda education offices, a college of teacher education, two high schools and three primary schools (see the full consultation list in Annex A below). The methodology included briefing meeting with REB officials followed by technical discussion with REB experts, meetings with relevant Zonal and Woreda officials and experts, focus group discussions with primary and secondary school teachers and students and classroom observations and interactions with PTA members in primary schools. A debriefing meeting was held at Amhara REB involving the heads of Educational Planning, EMIS and Resource Mobilization Management Support; and Curriculum Development and Implementation Core Process.

4. Findings

4.1 Best practices

- i. The region has a firm commitment to ensure the provision of text books at all levels. This is demonstrated by the huge financial resources allocated for the development, printing and distribution of text books. The cross-sectoral collaboration e.g. on transport and logistics for books distribution and assignment of command post for follow up was impressive.
- ii. Through the original color copy and reprints in black and white, the region has generally achieved a one to one ratio in most subjects that are developed and distributed so far. Access to teacher guides is also adequate.
- iii. Este Woreda informed the mission that it has introduced a 'one Birr for one Book' initiative to mobilize money for the purchase of supplementary materials.
- iv. The region has a comprehensive regional text book guideline in use since 2002EC. The mission has observed excellent utilization and handling of text books by students.
- v. The region has developed and distributed G1-4 environmental science and G5-6 integrated science textbooks and teacher guides, although the printing was done in black and white.
- vi. The implementation of the strategy on active learning practices within the framework of one-to-five students' networks has created a reasonably good culture of textbook utilization and learners' performance evaluation systems both inside and outside the school environment. At all levels of structures, this practice has generally been reported to have made significant contributions to the progressive improvement of learning and learning outcomes of students at the primary levels.
- vii. All the schools visited have started text book review process with teachers compiling editorial errors and content issues identified in their respective subject areas

- viii. The presence of curriculum experts in the three nationality zones of Awi, Wag Hemraand Oromia is facilitating the development of textbooks in the local languages of Awigna, Himtigna and Afaan Oromo.
- ix. There is a general upward trend in student achievement as observed from analysis of exam results at regional, woreda and school levels.
- x. There is an excellent and commendable community-school partnership where PTAs are actively engaged on the planning, management and monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning processes at the primary level as empirically verified in Este Woreda Education Offices and Mabi Abo Full Cycle Primary School.
- xi. School readiness programme in the form of “O” classes was observed to have been implemented in all the visited primary schools, and it was generally reported that the performance of Grade 1 students who pass through -“O” classes was better than those who did not come through the system in terms of literacy and numeracy skills.

4.2 Issues and challenges

- i. New primary text books in mother tongue i.e. Awigna (and most probably in Himtigna and Afar Oromo) have not yet reached the schools although at the time of the review some books were reported to have reached the Debre Markos warehouse. The mission noted the efforts made by the region, Enjibara CTE and Awi Zone education office to develop the textbooks through adaptive translation process.
- ii. The capacity of local publishers has proved to be a major challenge for the printing of text books in-country. Except few NGOs and adaptive technology centers with very limited capacity, developers of Braille materials with the required capacity are almost non-existent in-country.
- iii. Shortage of laboratory chemicals and equipment, and lack of ICT and connectivity impacting on practical learning
- iv. Class-size as one of the obstacles for student-centered learning and continuous assessment
- v. The delivery and content coverage of teacher orientation on the new curriculum and textbooks is inconsistent across woredas and schools.
- vi. The provision of reprinted text books is understood by all stakeholders as a pragmatic response to the shortage. However, the black and white copies compared to color books are distorting learning and raising quality and equity concerns with respect to equal access to better learning materials.
- vii. Text books review processes not systematic with no coordinated mechanism in place to collate feedback and act on them. However, the fact that teachers are undertaking the review is encouraging.
- viii. General comments related to the new textbooks include:
 - Portability seems an issue given that some of the secondary text books are large in size and students walking long distances are reluctant to carry them for fear of damages, wear and tear.
 - There are several specific editing errors
 - The qualities of black and white copies are poor and significantly distort content and learning. eg. Teachers /students cannot point out colors in a rainbow.
 - Some of the English text books particularly at secondary level are felt lacking cultural orientation. One officer in a woreda education office mentioned the feedback he received from some teachers that the contents of the new English textbooks for Grade 3&4 are heavy for their levels. However, this was not verified by teachers and students in the primary schools visited.
 - The content of some of the books is not compatible with the period allotment and teachers struggle to cover key topics and accompanying exercises.
 - Discrepancy between exercises on the text books and answers on teacher guides.
 - Some books contain content that teachers are not familiar with in their pre-service training.
 - Horizontal integration between subjects and vertical integration across grades need to be looked at. The latter may be a temporary problem since not all books (e.g. G7-8 biology and chemistry, G1-8 Amharic) are in place for all grades.

- The assessment and examination system is not synchronized with the direction of the new curriculum and presentation of the new text books. There is perception among some teachers and students that the new textbooks do not provide sufficient content to prepare for exams.
- Supplementary and reference materials are not sufficiently available to complement text books. Although there are reading corners in all the primary schools visited, there were scarcity of user friendly supplementary reading materials, and the corners were observed to have been not functioning properly.

4.3 Recommendations

- i. Now that most text books are reaching schools, it is time for the MoE and REBs to commission a systematic text books review process so that future reprints (2nd editions) can correct errors and respond to comments.
- ii. Given the significant investment in text books, an independent external evaluation should be considered in the medium-term to assess utilization and impact of the new text books on learning outcomes.
- iii. There is an urgent need to synchronize the examination system with the direction of the new curriculum.
- iv. Strengthen the linkage between teacher development and curriculum to equip pre and in-service teachers with the required subject content and methodology to deliver the new curriculum as well as utilization of textbooks and teacher's guide.
- v. Special needs education should be given more attention in planning, developing and delivering teaching and learning materials.
- vi. The REB should assess the status of text books in all Woredas and schools so that shortages in some areas can be addressed using excess copies that may exist elsewhere.
- vii. Set up distribution centers at strategic locations in addition to the existing four centers in the region.
- viii. Strengthen text books management information system to help forward planning and accurate projection of demands.
- ix. Explore product market for light duty printing and assess the feasibility of REB/Zone/CT managed print shops for subjects with small print runs (eg Awi language) that would otherwise cost too much with private providers.
- x. Initiate development of supplementary learning materials at Zone, Woreda and school levels. CTEs can serve as Centre of Excellence for development of supplementary learning materials
- xi. In light of the existing practice of engagement of CTEs on adaptive translation of textbooks and other instructional materials in nationality languages, there is a need to create and/or strengthen local language development/enrichment centers/units within the institutions
- xii. For O-classes attached to primary schools to properly offer effective school readiness programme and to better prepare children for primary schooling, they need to be furnished and equipped with appropriate teaching and learning as well as play materials, and this can be done by forging strategic partnerships between and among the government, development partners, private organizations and teacher training colleges
- xiii. It was commented that REB's handling of the procurement process for textbooks for nationality zones added unnecessary bureaucratic chains. It is recommended that the procurement function be decentralized to the zonal level where the other the technical aspects are handled.
- xiv. For any full decentralization of text book development, printing, reprinting and distribution from federal to regional levels, there appears to be a careful consideration of capacities and the need to restructure and strengthen the organizational and institutional capacity of the REB particularly the Curriculum Development and Implementation Core Process

Annex A. Consultation List

No	Name	Position	Organization
1	Ato Habtamu Bizuneh	Head of Planning	
2	Ato Mazengia Alebachew	Curriculum Core Process Owner	Amhara REB
3	Ato Mulugeta Mesfin	Curriculum Expert	“
4	Ato Dagnaw Asmare,	Mathematics Curriculum Implementer	“
5	Ato Debasu Yayeh,	EMIS Implementer	“
6	Ato Muluaalem Abe	Curriculum Process Owner	Bahir Dar WEO
7	Ato Bililign Bekele	Director	Tana Secondary School, Bahir Dar
8	Focus Group Discussions with groups of teachers and students	Teachers and students	“
9	Netsanet Alemu	Vice Director	Donna Berber Primary School, Bahir Dar
10	Tenagne Wondimagegn	Grade 5 Science Teacher	”
11	Hulu Agerish Feleke	Grade 4 English Teacher	”
12	Enatnesh Zega	Grade 5 Civics Education Teacher, Grade 4 Maths Teacher	”
13	Hadisse Sinishaw	Grade 5 Maths Teacher	“
14	Mebrahtu	Grades 7 & 8 Biology Teacher	“
15	Tesfa Berhane Molla	PTA Chair PTA	“
16	Mekonnen	Member	“
17	Ato Desta Asratie	Head	Estie Woreda Education Office
18	Ato Abere Tesema	Vice Head	“
19	Ato Samuel Baissa	Curriculum Expert	“
20	Ato Eyebrue Aemiro	Statistician	“
21	Ato Moges Tesfaw	Director	Mekanyesus Secondary school, Estie
22	Focus Group Discussions with groups of teachers and students	Teachers and students	“
23	Eyayew Ashagre	Director	Mabi Abo Full Cycle Primary School, Estie
24	Bikis Birrara	Warehouse Officer	“
25	Abebe Tadesse	Grade 1 – 4 Language Teacher	“
26	Moges Berhane	Grade 5- 8 Social Studies Teacher	“
27	Setotaw Addisu	Grade1-4 Environmental Science Teacher	“
28	Ato Muluken Mekonnen	Curriculum Process Owner	Awi Zone Education Office
29	Yenew Genet	Natural Sciences Curriculum implementer	”
30	Ato Mekuriaw Anagaw	Dean	Enjibara CTE
31	Ato Alemu Seyoum	Curriculum Process Owner	Banja Woreda Education Office
32	Ato Dereje Getu	Director	Bahunk Primary School

Annex B: Overview of the Amhara Region Education Sector, (2011/12(2004 E.C)

Number of Students

- Primary Education (formal+ ABE) 4,002,168(female 49.8%)
- Pre-primary, 249,598 (female 48.9%)
- Secondary education 1st cycle (9-10), 339,691(female 50.7%)
- Secondary education 2nd cycle (11-12), 83,669 (female 43.2%)
- College of Teacher Education, 58,547 (female 44.4%)
- Functional Adult Literacy (FAL), 224,651 (female 25%)

Number of Teachers

- Primary Education (formal+ ABE) 92,465 (female 43.7%)
- Kindergarten 1,377(female 94.2%)
- Secondary education 1st cycle (9-10), 11,931 (female 18.4%)
- Secondary education 2nd cycle (11-12), 3,700 (female 9.5%)
- College of Teacher Education, 618 (female 9.5%)

Number of Schools

- Primary education + ABE, 9,328 (ABE is phased out in the Region)
- Secondary education 1st cycle (9-10), 287
- Secondary education 2nd cycle (11-12), 128
- College of Teacher Education, 10

Gross Enrollment rate (GER)

- Primary Education (formal+ ABE) 93.3% (female 94.6%)
- Pre-primary (kindergarten, “O” class, “Child to Child) 14.39 % (female 14.29%)
- Secondary education 1st cycle (9-10) 32.9% (female 34.5%)

Net Enrollment Rate (ENR)

- Primary Education (formal+ ABE) 84% (female 86.2%)
- Kindergarten 2 % (female 2%)
- Secondary education 1st cycle (9-10) 13.8% (female 15.8%)

Pupil Section Ratio

- Primary education (1-4) 46
- Primary education (5-8) 49
- Secondary education (9-10) 56
- Kindergarten 34

Pupil Teacher Ratio

- Primary education (1-4) 47
- Primary education (5-8) 38
- Secondary education (9-10) 32
- Kindergarten 28

Textbook-Pupil Ratio (TbPR)

According to ESDP IV, one of the factors determining quality of education is TbPR to be 1:1, i.e. every student at primary and secondary education level provided with standard complete set of textbooks for all subjects. For instance, a student in grade 1 or 2 shall have 4 textbooks as a set in subjects of Amharic, English, Mathematics and Environmental Science. The TbPR is quality indicator depicting availability of student textbooks and teacher’s guide in schools as well as to ensure that books are available in the hands of every student and teacher. The TbPR is calculated by taking number of books by type of subject by grade level (numerator), divided by number of students in the grade level (denominator). In this regard, the following Table shows TbSB for primary 1st cycle in Amhara Region in 2011/12 (2004 E.C).

Subject	Grade 1			Grade 2			Grade 3			Grade 4		
	No. students	No. of textbooks	Tb PR	No. of students	No. of textbooks	Tb PR	No. students	No. of textbooks	Tb PR	No. of students	No. of textbooks	Tb PR
Amharic	910811	912744	1.0	681153	728316	1.1	488575	508297	1.0	448954	386786	0.9
English	910811	1073036	1.2	681153	493111	0.7	488575	603631	1.2	448954	323644	0.7
Env. Science	910811	880121	1.0	681153	702749	1.0	488575	484156	1.0	448954	50348	0.1
Mathematics	910811	918962	1.0	681153	743982	1.1	488575	527204	1.1	448954	377147	0.8

*Source: Amhara Regional Education Bureau

Education Sector

Joint Review Mission

Textbook Development, Printing, Distribution and Utilization

Report by Gambella Monitoring Team

April 2013

JOINT REVIEW MISSION - GEMBELLA

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	33
Overview of Gambella	34
Purpose of JRM 2013.....	35
Team Composition	35
Methodology	36
Development and Printing of Textbooks and Teachers Guides	37
Distribution of Textbooks and Teachers Guides	39
Management and Utilization of Textbooks	40
Recommendations	42
Annex 1: Guiding Questions used	24

Executive Summary

Purpose of the JRM - To assess the performance of the implementation of ESDP IV by the Ministry of Education in providing textbooks to students, a joint review mission (JRM) took place in three regions (Amhara, Somali, Gambella) in April 2013 to examine the effectiveness of federal and regional textbook production, printing, distribution and utilization. This report focuses on the findings from Gambella.

Development and Printing of Textbooks and Teacher guides – It is generally agreed amongst students and teachers that the federally produced textbooks and teacher guides are of a high physical quality. The books produced regionally however are reported to be of a lower quality. Textbooks produced in local languages generally had poorer vertical and horizontal integration of content and also had physical repetition of pages or repetition of content. The whole process of development and production is slow. This is in large part due to the lack of qualified script writers and editors to produce books in local languages. There is also an additional financial burden on multi-lingual regions like Gambella, because producing so many textbooks in different languages increases the per-unit costs of printing substantially.

Distribution of textbooks and teacher guides – Despite recent improvements there is still an acute transport problem in Gambella at the regional and Woreda levels. Although this year saw a quicker distribution of textbooks than the previous year, many books still did not arrive by the beginning of the academic year. The most worrying issue observed by the Gambella JRM team however was the hugely inequitable current distribution of textbooks and teacher guides across schools in the region. The current situation, whereby some schools have a severe shortage of textbooks and other schools have a surplus is due to the current flawed textbook allocation conditions. Distribution was based on the previous year's EMIS enrolment data report and does not take into account the existing surpluses and shortages of books that schools have. A more equitable distribution system is urgently needed for example: better communication between schools and the Woreda about the specifics of existing textbooks; and improved record keeping at the Woreda education office and regional level about which schools have which textbooks for which grades.

Management and Utilization of textbooks and teacher guides in the classroom – Students and teachers agreed that the higher quality federally produced textbooks and teacher guides were more useful and easier to use in the classroom. Even when pupils have textbooks for their subjects, it was observed that few textbooks were being brought to class. Reasons offered for this included: their physical weight given the number of subjects studied and the unfavorable hot climate in which students had to carry the books and lack of school bags amongst the students. Although these reasons should be considered seriously, there was concern amongst the team that the real reason for students not bringing textbooks to class was the teaching methodology teachers follow. If teachers don't employ a student-centered teaching method (engaging the students with the material in the books, requiring the students to complete exercises from the books etc.) then the students may not have much reason to bring the books to class. On the positive side, schools are employing effective methods to ensure the safety of books distributed to students. These included securing signatures from the guardians of students or withholding their education certificate until they return the books. However some schools did not give textbooks to students especially grade one because families were not willing to give a guarantee.

Recommendations for improvement include: improving the capacity of textbook and teacher guide script writers and editors, and improving the record keeping and reporting at Woreda and regional level for evidence based textbook distribution.

Overview of Gambella

Based on the 2007 Census conducted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia (CSA), Gambella Region has a total population of 307,096, consisting of 159,787 men and 147,309 women; urban inhabitants take 25.37 percent of the population. With an estimated area of 29,782.82 square kilometers, the region has roughly a density of 10 people per square kilometer and a fast population growth rate (4.1%). The indigenous ethnicities of the region are the Nuer (46.66%), the Anuak (21.16%), Mejen (4%), Opo (0.32%) and Komo (0.07%).

The region is prone to recurring multiples of hazards including flooding, cross border and communal conflict, drought and wild fire hazards. Flooding is the most common challenge to the smooth functioning of schooling. It affects timely distribution of educational materials including textbooks and sensible execution of the education calendar.

With a total number of 91,149 children enrolled in 234 primary schools and 10,590 students in 73 alternative basic education (ABE) modality, the general education enrolment (GER) at primary was reported to be 126.2 % (120.4 percent for girls and 126.2 percent for boys).

Total number of children enrolled in the first cycle primary (1 to 4) by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Girls	Boys	Total
Agnuak	6,176	6,176	12,898
Nuer	15,006	11,555	26,561
Komo	42	21	63
Majen	1,177	1,167	2,344
Opo	159	150	309
Others	6,097	5,702	11,799
Total	29,203	24,771	53,974

At general secondary (grades 9 and 10) 13,404 students (5,332 girls and 8,072 boys) were enrolled in 31 schools in the current academic year. The enrollment at preparatory was 2,470 (24 percent of them girls) in the same year.

The total number of teaching staff at primary level in the current academic year was 2,606 (22.9 per cent female). Regarding ethnicity there was only one diploma graduate for Komo while teachers from Opo background were all at certificate level or below. The number of teachers at secondary education (grades 9 to 12) was 569 (11 percent of them female).

Purpose of JRM 2013

One of the critical inputs to improve the quality of education in the teaching and learning process at school level and to enhance students' learning performance, is through the provision of quality textbooks in adequate quantity and ensuring that these textbooks get used in the classroom.

To assess the performance of the implementation of ESDP IV with regard to textbooks, the Ministry of Education conducted a joint field visit (Joint Review Mission – JRM) in April 2013 in partnership with Education Development Partners and other interested Education stakeholders supporting the program.

The theme of this year's JRM is textbook effectiveness across all levels of educational institutions from the Ministry of Education (MoE) to classroom level. The theme focuses on the availability and use of textbook policies, strategies and guidelines, student textbook and teachers' guide development, printing and re-printing, distribution, teacher training and utilization.

The JRM assessed the efficiency and effectiveness of student textbooks and teacher guides through observations and made recommendations to the Ministry regarding the development, printing, distribution, use and effectiveness of the textbooks available in Ethiopian classrooms. Through document reviews and field visits the JRM came up with key-recommendations that can contribute towards continued qualitative and quantitative improvement of the implementation of the textbooks program at school level. These recommendations will also feed into the annual conference for education.

Three JRM teams visited different areas of the country to assess the textbook situation in different contexts. These areas were Amhara, Somali, and Gambella with the lessons and recommendations of this report being from Gambella.

Team Composition

The team that went to Gambella consisted of the following mix of Ministry of Education, Development Partner and Education Stakeholder staff.

Name	Organization	Position
Tiye Feyisa	UNICEF	Education Project Officer
Yukiko Okugawa	JICA	Education Specialist
Dessalagn Mulaw	JICA	Education Specialist
Adenew Mesfin	British Council	Contract Manager
Yosef Mihret	MoE	Curriculum Expert
Joe St Clair	MoE	Economic Advisor

Without the generous support of JICA, DFID, The British Council and UNICEF in providing flights, per diems, vehicles and accommodation, the mission could not have taken place.

Methodology

The methodology used to collect information on textbook development, printing, distribution and utilization in Gambella, was a combination of interviews, group discussions, observations, and a desk review of the relevant documents.

Gambella is not a uniform region and Woredas can vary in numerous ways: the level of infrastructure available; the distance from the regional center (Gambella town); socio-economic factors that can affect the distribution, management and utilization of textbooks and teacher guides. Also the various ethnic groups in the region can differ by Woreda, which may have effects on textbook development, printing, distribution and usage. Given this diversity the Regional Education Bureau (REB) management was consulted to ensure the sample of Woredas visited by the team took into account the factors listed above.

Sampled schools were purposefully selected based on the local languages they use as a medium of instruction. Two languages that are widely spoken and used as the language of instruction (namely Anguak and Nuer) were considered in Woreda and school sampling preferences. The list of offices and schools visited during the mission are listed in the table below.

Sample Woredas, schools and key Informants

#	Name of the Office	Distance from the regional center(K M)	Name of the school	Grade level of the school	Local language spoken and taught	Medium of instruction	Key informants
1	Regional Education Bureau	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-Curriculum head -Education material distribution head -Expert of Opo Language -Expert of Komo -Educational material distribution expert
2	Gambella town administration	0	Dalkoch	5 to 10	Nuer	English	-WEO -School principal -Supervisor -Teachers -Students -PTA
			Jajjabe	1 to 4	Anguak	Anguak	
3	Makoy Woreda	125	Gninignang	9 to 12	Nuer	English	-WEO -School principal -Teachers -Students
			Batigdol	1 to 8	Nuer	Nuer and English	
4	Gog Woreda	110	Dippa	1 to 8	Anguak	Anguak and English	-WEO -Supervisor -School principal -Teachers -Students

When visiting schools the team observed: classroom teaching methodologies; how students handled and utilized textbooks; the textbook storage facilities of the school; and the libraries available for students to use. Five classroom lessons, one library, and four storerooms were visited at school level. Interviews and group discussions were conducted with intentionally selected personnel from: the REB, the Woreda Education and Capacity Building Offices (WEO), and school management. Supervisors, a representative of a parent teacher association (PTA), randomly picked teachers, and students were also interviewed.

Wherever possible, sampling considered gender. A total of 29 education personnel including students (five of them female) were involved in interviews and group discussions. In three of the sample schools, conversations took place with three groups of students in their classroom setting. Guiding questions (listed in Annex 1) were used to gather information from the respondents. Documents were also reviewed to trace tender processes, the profiles of scriptwriters, editors and proofreaders, and the arrival and distribution dates of textbooks and teacher guides.

Limitations of the methodology and sample interviewed

The team is very grateful to all the personnel who assisted them in their work in Gambella. The regional, Woreda and school staff and other school community members interviewed were fully committed to helping the team and providing useful and reliable information.

The information collected is believed to have given a reasonably broad and representative picture of textbook development, distribution and management in Gambella. However given the time constraints and the nature of the mission, the team could not manage to visit schools that provide education in the less common Opo and Komo languages. The regional education bureau is therefore advised to conduct similar monitoring visits to these Woredas to acquire a fuller picture that can then inform national education policy architects and regional decision makers.

Development and Printing of Textbooks and Teachers Guides

MoE Secondary textbooks – Centrally produced books are of high quality

The team learnt that the revised curriculum for secondary school textbooks and teacher guides was developed, printed and distributed by the Ministry of Education (MoE). Core primary education second cycle (grades 5 to 8) textbooks such as Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Social Science and Basic Science, were also part of the package that was centrally developed, printed and distributed to the regions. In addition to this, the development and printing of Civics and Ethical education, and English textbooks and teachers guide for all grades were reported to be under the Ministry's jurisdiction. There was general agreement amongst respondents (teachers, students, principals and supervisors) that the new edition textbooks and teachers guides produced were of a high standard. However there was repeated criticism from teachers of the quality (consistency and integration) of the grade 9 biology textbook produced.

Regionally Developed Textbooks are delayed

At regional level, the REB is responsible for the development, printing and distribution of textbooks and teachers' guides for subjects (courses) that are provided in regional indigenous languages. To maintain national concord, the syllabi were prepared by MoE and rolled out to the region. The REB recently submitted 112 kinds of revised textbooks and teachers guides that were camera-ready to the Printing Presses, and have already received a few printed copies. However, 78 more books were still pending submission to the printing organizations. At this point in time, the regional government seemed to have failed in their intention to deliver all revised editions to schools before the beginning of the current academic calendar.

According to the REB curriculum experts, the substantial delays in the production of textbooks in local languages are largely the result of the weak capacity of scriptwriters, editors and proofreaders at the regional level. They emphasized that the serious shortage of qualified manpower was a major setback to the timely development, printing and distribution of the textbooks and teachers guide in local languages. The previous editions produced at the regional level had pedagogical and consistency errors, widespread wording errors, and were generally poorly edited.

According to Mrs. Tiruwork Alemework, principal of Jajabe Primary first cycle school, all the textbooks prepared in Anguak language had some kind of content, integration, consistency and/or relevance defect. “No wonder, the new editions could also have similar glitches,” says Ato Mulugeta Gezahegn, officer in charge of REB educational material provision and distribution. His concern was attributed to the lack of competent textbook writers involved in the revision of the new textbooks. Many of them have a low level of education, especially about local languages.

A large proportion of scriptwriters and editors also have other duties and responsibilities in their own offices, and this compounds the problem. For instance, all individuals involved in the development of textbooks for Opo and Komo were certificate graduates (10+1) and also had little experience. “Mejen” script writers (the language of Mejenger people) were also cited to be officials in the regional parliament, and although once in the teaching profession, these days were too busy with their other commitments to dedicate much time to script writing and editing. It should be noted that there is no doubt over the legality of the tender or the bidding process for the selection of textbook writers. The monitoring team observed a good record of tender floating and selection process. The underlying problem is a lack of competent professionals in the market place.

Teachers evaluate locally produced books but no feedback to the region exists

If the regional textbook development process is to improve then feedback to the region from the teachers and students using the textbooks is important. Although 75 percent of schools visited reported that they had conducted evaluations on the content, consistency, coherence and relevance of the textbooks at their respective department levels, there was no system in place for their feedback to inform the ongoing development of textbooks at the regional and national levels.

The high cost implications of multiple language production and printing

The region should be commended for its achievements in ensuring the right of children to learn in their local language. The initiative to provide education in languages of Opo and Komo minorities, and the endeavor to develop textbooks in these languages, is commendable. However, this commitment to producing in so many languages puts a strain on the capacity and resources of the regional education bureau.

Across the region five local languages are used as the medium of instruction in primary first cycle, and English is used in primary second cycle. This diversity of the instructional languages and the number of textbooks that need to be produced, although embracing the rights of the child, has high cost implications. Large print runs, for widely used textbooks, can take advantage of economies of scale and thus the unit cost of textbooks is lower. Small print runs however, for local languages, can have very high per-unit costs and add significant additional costs to the regional education bureau’s textbook development budget.

In 2012/13 the number of students in attendance of primary education using local languages as a medium was 53 974 in total with students attending education in Opo language only numbering 309 in the current academic year. As a result, the unit cost of printing textbooks in the region was three fold higher than those in regions that develop in a single language for a large number of students. This implies that the cost of printing textbooks is high for regions like Gambella that have multi-lingual medium of education. Furthermore, the long distance from the region to Addis Ababa (where the printing agencies are located) increases the cost at which textbooks are delivered to the students. For every additional kilometer from Addis Ababa to the region the marginal cost of reaching printed books to the regional center and beyond increases. The lack of transport options at the region further complicates the safe delivery of textbooks to students outside of Gambella town.

Distribution of Textbooks and Teachers Guides

Transport

The transport of textbooks and teacher guides to remote rural Woredas has previously been a major challenge to regional education bureau that continue to face tight budget constraints and acute transport limitations. Recently however the delivery of textbooks and teacher guides developed and printed at the central level directly to the Woredas has helped to ease the burden for the regional education bureau.

Timing

Generally in 2005 E.C, there was an improvement since last year in the timing of distribution of textbooks to Woredas and then to schools. However, the earlier delivery still did not arrive before schools opened in September. The centrally (MoE) distributed textbooks reached schools about three months after the commencement of the current academic year.

Despite the relative timeliness of the centrally distributed textbooks, there were serious delays by the REB in the distribution of the revised editions of primary school second cycle textbooks and teachers guides. Unfortunately, these books all remained in the regional warehouse for four months after their delivery to the REB. Even schools in the capital have not received them yet.

Inequitable distribution

The regional textbook ratio was reported to be 1:3 at primary and 1:2 at secondary education levels. However, the ratio seems to be a rough estimate at regional level with the exact numbers of textbooks throughout the region, not known by the REB. This rough estimate is deficient in two ways:

- 1) The ratios of books available are not divided by subject or grade.
- 2) The ratios of books are not broken down by school or Woreda.

This second problem is particularly worrying given the hugely inequitable distribution of textbooks observed by the team. The discrepancies in ratios can vary from, for example, 1:1 in schools in Gambella town, to almost no textbooks at all available in Makoy Woreda. Batgdol primary school in Makoy Woreda (which is five kilometers away from the Woreda town) reported that the school had only 17 old version Chemistry textbooks for grade seven. Teachers had to travel to schools in other Woredas (Lare and Jikawo) to get one textbook for each subject. Similar problems, but less acute, also exist in Gambella town where a school had to borrow grade nine Geography textbooks from another school in the neighboring Woreda. All the schools visited reported that they had a severe shortage of textbooks in at least one subject.

Allocation strategy

Clearly, there still exists a shortage in the total number of textbooks available in Gambella region. Yet it is the vastly different ratios across Woredas and schools that are of most concern, where some schools have a surplus of textbooks and others have none at all. The allocation procedure for textbooks at the regional and Woreda level therefore requires close attention. At both regional and Woreda levels, allocations were based on the previous year's EMIS enrollment report, and did not take repeaters and dropouts into consideration. In other words, the precise number of students at a school was not taken into account during the allocation decision. Despite the fact that most schools provided textbook inventory reports to Woredas at the end of the academic year (that is June), new allocations were based on the proportion of delivered textbooks against the number of registered students. Consequently, schools that might already have a sufficient quantity could still get additional textbooks. For example, the monitoring team confirmed a sizable surplus in Dalkoch School while other schools had a severe shortage.

Communication and monitoring

In addition to the ineffective allocation system in place, a lack of communication and record keeping between schools and Woredas and Woredas and the regional education bureau, exacerbates the problem of inequitable distribution of existing books and means that the exact numbers of books and the exact pupil-textbook ratios are not known. Schools do seem to be expressing their concerns to the Woreda level, but the Woredas fail to keep track of exact numbers of books at schools. Although some of the region's textbook problems are due to a lack of textbooks and resources, other problems are due to a lack of record keeping and the result of poor planning (not evidence-based planning/distribution).

An unfortunate incident, that was the result of poor communication and feedback, was the displacement of textbook allocations due to confusion in the names of the Woredas. This happened when a shipment of books was destined for Gambella town but transported to Gambella Zuria Woreda. In another case, a Woreda that used to be named Jikawo was split into two Woredas in 2010 (as Makoy and Jikaow). Makoy Woreda was not in the list of Woredas to receive books and therefore did not benefit from the federally managed distribution.

There is no system in place at either the regional or Woreda levels to keep track of exactly which schools have which textbooks and in what quantities, or of exactly how many students are actually studying at the school. If there, was a monitoring system covering all schools that was keeping track of pupil textbook ratios by subject and by grade then the distribution of textbooks would likely be far more equitable?

Good practices of sharing textbooks amongst schools exist

There is no formal system in place for the redistribution of textbooks between schools. Despite an inventory system at the Woreda at the end of the academic year, extra books in one school are not being transferred to where there are shortages. However, resourceful teachers, faced with shortages of textbooks in their own class or school, borrow and lend books from neighboring schools where they can. For example, this was observed in Dalkoch secondary school in Gambella town (a handful of geography textbooks) and Batigdol primary in Makoy (a single textbook for each teacher in their subject). Although these teachers can usually only borrow a handful of books (and nowhere near the numbers they require) their resourcefulness is very useful to their school and its students.

Storage Facilities

It is important to note that most Woredas and schools did not have storage facilities. All Woreda Education Offices and two-third of schools visited indicated lack of storerooms for any kind of educational supplies including textbooks.

Management and Utilization of Textbooks

If textbooks arrive in schools, how are they then used by teachers and students? Are the limited number of textbooks in the system being used by pupils in the most effective way? The situation in the schools visited in Gambella is discussed below.

Orientation on textbooks

Only one school was reported to have the practice of orienting students on textbook handling and utilization. The recently produced USAID English textbooks were pointed out to be particularly helpful because they have a 'How to use' guide at the front of the textbook. The region had not yet provided orientation training on textbook distribution and management but was planning to do so in the following two weeks.

Quality of textbooks and teacher guides

Generally the attitude towards federally produced textbooks and teacher guides was very positive. The books were of a high physical quality (paper and ink quality, colour of illustrations, binding etc.) and also well designed in terms of their educational content. There was generally good vertical integration (logical progression through the grades in a single subject) and appropriate horizontal integration (similar degree of difficulty of concepts across subjects in the same grade).

However, textbooks and teacher guides produced at the regional level, in the local languages, were of a much poorer quality. The books are of lower physical quality and also with poorer educational content. Repetition of concepts (or actual pages) within the textbooks is one problem. Anuak language textbooks are an example of textbooks with quality problems. This, as mentioned earlier, is in part due to the lack of skills and the inexperience of textbook scriptwriters and proofreaders in the local languages at the regional level.

Some schools are adapting to the challenges they face

When textbooks arrive and there are clearly issues of quality, primary and secondary teachers may come together and discuss how to teach the material despite the deficiencies in the textbooks. Also schools in Gambella town repeatedly report shortcomings of the textbooks to the Gambella town administration, education and capacity building office.

Proper utilization of textbooks in the classroom

It was noted during the visits to the schools that there is a problem of utilizing the textbooks even though the students are in possession of them. Often students with textbooks in different subjects did not bring them to school and thus could only work and think based on what the teacher said or wrote on the blackboard. There are different reasons for why the students may not be bringing their textbooks to school with them. One reason is that it is inconvenient to do so. Some pupils mentioned that in the hot weather with many subjects and many books, and without bags for carrying them, it is a lot of effort to bring their textbooks to school. These reasons are worth seriously considering but the reason may also lie with the teacher's performance and methodology.

If the method of teaching is not student-centered and instead 'Teacher-centered and blackboard orientated' then pupils may feel there is no reason to bring their textbooks to class. If teachers don't engage the students and use the textbooks and their exercises in their teaching, then students may never have reason to open their books, and therefore no reason to bring their books to school. This method of teaching was observed in some of the schools and may need to be addressed if textbooks are to be fully utilized when they reach schools. It may help to explain why even when textbooks exist, few are actually brought to (and used in) class. In all schools visited the number of textbooks brought and used in the classroom was low. As mentioned above, the failure to produce good quality primary textbooks in local languages may also result in low motivation of students and teachers to use textbooks in the learning and teaching process.

Keeping books safe

In order for students to take textbooks home, and also to ensure that they get returned to the school at the end of the year, often a system of guarantees and guarantors is in place. Most schools (Jejebe) lend books to students with a parent or guardian acting as a signatory in case the book goes missing or gets damaged. However in some areas (e.g. Jejebe primary school in Gambella town) parents would not sign the guarantee for fear that the textbooks would be mismanaged by the students. This unwillingness to sign for textbooks is also indicative of a wider lack of awareness by parents on the importance of textbooks in the learning process.

Monitoring utilization

Schools sometimes give orientation on how to handle textbooks at home and in the classrooms but no monitoring mechanism is in place at Woreda level for checking whether textbooks are being utilized effectively.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this report, and bearing in mind the immediate budget constraints faced, the 2013 JRM Gambella team makes the following recommendations to the REB, the Woredas and the Schools. These recommendations were communicated to the Gambella REB on April 4th 2013, and this report will be forwarded to them on publication.

For the REB

Development and Preparation of textbooks

- Provide capacity building for scriptwriters, editors, and proofreaders to come up with quality textbooks and teacher guides. Capacity building on pedagogic principles, horizontal and vertical integration, appropriate kinds of illustrations, minimum learning competencies, gender sensitivity etc. A skill gap survey identifying skill gaps should be carried out as a first step.
- The region should find a way to incorporate the feedback of textbook evaluations from teachers. Also this feedback on textbook deficiencies should be communicated to the federal Ministry of Education.
- It is advised to adapt the Government's 'Textbook development, printing, distribution and utilization guideline' for the Gambellan context.

Printing

- Maintain the national high quality standard for textbooks prepared and printed at the regional level.
- Look for multiple options of financing textbook and teacher guide development and distribution (e.g. Development partner community, private investors etc.)

Distribution

- Distribution should be based on actual number of students and actual number of existing textbooks (not EMIS report alone). Inventories that are taken at the school level and fed to the Woreda, should further inform REB and MoE allocations.
- If the REB uses inventory data from the Woredas, then the allocation of the limited number of textbooks in circulation can have a more equitable distribution.
- Enhance the communication with Woredas and federal level. E.g. when textbooks arrive in the store, the Woredas should be contacted as soon as possible.

Woreda Level

- The Woreda should compile the comments made by schools and share them with the regional education bureau for possible consideration of textbook revision in the future. This would be in the form of a textbook and teacher guide evaluation report.
- Distribution should be based on actual number of students and actual number of textbooks (not EMIS report alone). Inventories that are taken at the school level and fed to the Woreda, should further inform REB and MoE allocations.
- Ad hoc and periodic reports should include textbook and teacher guide availability, distribution, and utilization situation. These reports should be shared to the regional education bureau and should be used as an input for further actions at regional and Woreda levels.
- The Woreda education office should prepare a temporary store to keep textbooks and teacher guides until they are distributed to the schools.
- The Woreda education office should collect data on each subject and grade on student textbook ratios, to make sound decisions at Woreda and regional education levels.

School Level

- Schools should develop textbook and teacher guide utilization guidelines based on the guidelines prepared at regional level.
- The school in collaboration with the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) and (Kebele Education and Training Board (KETB) should create the necessary awareness amongst parents on the importance of textbook utilization for the knowledge, skill and attitude development of children.
- Schools should create a system on the parental follow up of textbook management and utilization by their children.
- The schools should provide orientation to students on the management and utilization of textbooks, at home and in the classroom.
- Textbook utilization should be an integral part of a child-centered learning methodology.
- Borrowing of textbooks should be flexible and should consider the context of the local community without compromising the safe handling and returning of textbooks.
- Given the flooding that commonly happens in the region, schools should make available a storage facility that is conducive and protective for textbooks (rain, dust, termites, sun, and damp) to increase the lifespan of textbooks.

JRM REPORT SOMALI TEAM

Introduction

The JRM team of Somali region is composed of MoE, UNICEF and Kelem (local NGO). A national consultant also joined the team. Two woredas i.e. Awbare and Jijiga, were visited based on the Somali Regional Education Bureau selection who also actively participated in the mission. After conducting the mission, focusing on textbooks development and utilization-debriefing session was conducted with all the stakeholders in the education system.

Summarized key findings,

Somali Regional Education Bureau Head, Regional Education Bureau Process Owners (Supervision, TDP, Curriculum), Experts, Dr. Abdimajid TTC Dean , Awabare WEO and Jijiga Council Education Office – Heads, School Directors (Main and Vices – both Primary and Secondary), Teachers, Students, PTAs, Cluster Level Supervisors and Store Keepers attended the discussions and meetings conducted with the JRM team in the region. The JRM team visited Awabare Woreda Education Office, Awabare Secondary and Preparatory school and Lafaisa Primary School (1-8) in Awabare woreda while Jijiga Council Education Office, Jijiga Secondary and Preparatory School and Willwal Primary School were visited from Jijiga Council Office. Additionally the team visited Lo’maqaris ABEC located in Jijiga woreda.

The team conducted the review mission focusing on the development, printing, distribution and utilization of textbooks. The following are key findings:

a. Text Book Development

Somali region has regional implementation strategy, policy and plan for the development of textbooks that are adapted from the federal government. At regional level, it was mentioned that there is high level of participation by curriculum experts, TTC teachers and private experts to develop content and graphics/illustrations. Secondary school textbooks, with the exception of Somali Language textbook, are prepared at federal level with the involvement of the region while primary school textbooks are developed at regional level that includes the subjects Integrated Science, Environmental Science and Somali Language. Somali Language textbooks for grade 9 and 10 are printed at regional level while no textbook are available for grades 11 and 12 at all.

b. Printing

Printing and transportation budget is allocated and covered by the Woredas. As a result, some woredas allocate adequate budget for printing of textbooks while others do not. Therefore, the types and quantity of textbooks a woreda receives each year from federal or region depends on the amount of the allocated budget by the woreda itself. The printing quality of the textbooks printed by federal is by far eminent compared to the textbooks printed by the region as the textbooks. This was easily observed by the team that textbooks printed by federal are up to quality printing standard when it comes to color, paper and binding quality while the other one is just a photocopy with poor binding.

c. Distribution

The textbook distribution channel is two ways: one from federal direct to zones/woredas, and the second one are from federal to REB and then to zones/woredas where there is security problem. The controlling mechanism for the proper distribution of textbooks to the zones/woredas is through supervision. The supervision is done by asking school principals when they come to the REB or when experts travel to woredas or by making phone calls to the woredas to crosscheck what has been actually distributed with the distribution list REB received.

Serious shortages of Integrated Science, Environmental Science, Somali Language, Additionally, there is no Somali Language text books for grade 11-12 including absence of teachers' guide at all grades (1-12) and also art (1-4 grades), music (5-6 grades), Amharic (3-8 grades), Social Studies (5-8 grades) and sport (5-12 grades). For the rest of the subjects average textbook student ratio for secondary school level is 1:2, primary school level is 1:4 and in ABE 1:4.

d. Utilization

Once the textbooks reach schools, the controlling mechanism for proper distribution, utilization and returning to the school is done by the homeroom teacher and subject teachers. Students are expected to bring all the textbooks to the classroom, however, during the visit it was observed that as it is not easy to bring all the textbooks to the school (as the volume of textbooks are big i.e. not portable) students either bring textbooks in turns (within each group of 5 students) or for only selected subjects.

Physics and English textbook ratio is 1:5 and old textbooks are used in Lefisa Primary School for the subjects the school did not receive the new textbooks for instance Biology. Only some teachers were involved in the textbook development process additionally, very few teachers get training of trainees on the utilization of the newly developed textbooks and teachers' guide from the visited 5 schools. Even those teachers who took ToT did not cascade the training.

Some teachers explained that there is miss match between teachers' guide and textbooks, for example for biology since teachers' guideline was borrowed from the other region teachers find it a bit difficult to go with the textbook. In both types of text books editing errors are there for example geography and reprinted books are mostly invisible. Additionally, textbooks and plasma do not go together and there is no laboratory manual for teachers. For the Lo'maqaris ABEC there is no mathematics textbook (neither the old nor the new ones as the old one is in English and students at ABEC are expected to learn with mother tong).

Major implementation challenges,

The following are observed to be major implementation challenges:

- low budget allocation for textbook printing by most of the woredas
- Budget constraints at regional level to publish quality textbooks
- Most of the time students get textbook very late that resulted from the lengthy printing process and distribution challenges
- Based on the quality of printing, textbooks are of two types with in a school i.e. one students can get colorful and nicely bind textbook while the other one gets a photocopy with poor binding. This creates tension and dissatisfaction among students in a class.
- There is no communication and coordination between MoE and REB to fill gaps and avoid overlaps in textbooks printing and reprinting.
- There is no system to document comments properly that come from the school level on the content of textbooks for future correction or addition.
- As a result, of poor infrastructure in the region distribution of printed textbooks is not easy.
- Inadequate teachers guide is observed for almost all the subjects that put the teacher in a difficult situation to cop up easily with the new textbooks.
- Some difficult terminologies are not explained in some of the textbooks, example Biology.

Recommendations from the team

- Regional Education Bureau (REB) need to work closely with woredas and take the initiation to explain and convince woredas on the importance of allocating enough budgets for textbooks.
- REB needs to work very closely with the Ministry of education (MoE) to better utilize limited resources on the production of textbooks.
- The REB should design a stronger controlling mechanism at to the distributed of textbook to woreda /school level.
- REB needs to have a knowledge management system to document any comments or questions about textbooks content for future correction, addition or elaboration.
- REB needs to Cascade, and organize trainings on the utilization of new textbooks for *Woreda* Education Office, School Principals and teachers.
- REB needs to engage teachers not only on the utilization trainings but also during the development process of textbooks.

JRM Report - Dire Dawa and Harar

Discussion on availability, Use and effectiveness of textbooks

- Textbooks are available in the sample schools visited.
- Textbooks arrived on time this year. In some schools e.g. Hidassie Chemistry textbook didn't arrive.
- There are challenges in textbook distribution.
- 1:1 ratio is achieved for most of the primary school subjects. But Afan Oromo is in 1:2 ratio in Sabian and Kezira School.
- In some schools textbooks are kept in store. Parents couldn't sign for the books as they thought they cannot pay the book back once they are lost or damaged.
- REBs reviewed textbooks and attempting to give feedback (e.g. Dire Dawa).
- Students liked colored English textbooks provided by USAID.
- Unlike the past trend, students bring textbooks to schools.
- Some textbooks are photocopied and are only in black and white color only.
- Teacher guides not arrived on time (e.g. Kezira).
- Rural urban disparity in textbook distribution. It is good to look experiences in other schools as town schools do not represent rural schools.

Issues:

- Did textbook availability improved students achievement?
- Providing textbooks without training teachers.
- Teachers chalk and talk method of teaching and students achievement.
- Scarcity of textbooks in some schools.
- Distribution issues.
- Life span of textbooks (3 years?)
- Data problems on number of textbooks needed by WEOs and schools.

What shall be done? Some solutions:

- Exempting poor families from paying back for damaged or lost books (???)
- Constant printing to provide textbooks one-to-one.
- Textbooks are kept in classrooms, not to be taken home with children (???)
- IT support
- Train teachers on use, delivery and distribution of textbooks.
- Strengthen REB supervision systems.
- MOE distributes TBs to WEO level and the latter will distribute the books to schools.
- Dire Dawa and Harar to discuss with Oromia on delivery of textbooks developed with Afan Oromo. Oromia has sufficient textbooks.

Textbooks on development by MoE

- Chemistry for grade 7&8 are on development and will be delivered to schools by next academic year.
- Amharic language is also on development
- Mother Tongue is also on development
- Integrated science for grade 5&6 will be developed by Regions
- Environmental science for grade 1-4 is the responsibility of Regions.
- A new system of training teachers for secondary schools through Post Graduate Diploma program for one year training period will be introduced. This training system will prepare teachers adequately in use of textbooks.