TEXTBOOK CHAIN
ISSUES IN LOWER INCOME COUNTRIES

Timor-Leste and Burundi – Case studies

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TIMOR-LESTE  Curriculum

• Timorese curricula have all been developed by Portuguese universities/specialists, outside of TL

• The Curriculum Directorate (*Direção nacional do Currículo e da Avaliação escolar* or DNCAE) has 7 persons, but no Subject Specialist: each member of the DNCAE is assigned a particular school level, but no particular subject, as would be the standard structure in most countries

• Repercussions - lack of control over:
  ✓ the content of the textbooks that are supposed to be produced under the DNCAE’s watch
  ✓ the pace and structure of curriculum revisions
TIMOR-LESTE

Textbook Planning Process

- It is weak and short term (one year of visibility, maximum, and most of the time not respected)
- Discrepancy (up to 20%) between EMIS enrolment figures and the ones used by DNCAE by order the number of books (on a 1:1 ratio)
- Textbook budgets prepared at the last minute and not very rigorously
**TIMOR-LESTE**

*Publishing Process*

- All textbooks have so far been produced by Portuguese publishers (private/public) with theoretical contribution from Timorese authors.
- On paper, Timor-Leste’s textbooks are published according to a classic PPP, where textbooks are published by an outside publisher, under supervision from the MoE.
- In reality, the PPP is quite unbalanced in favour of the publishing party, MoE exerting little of the control it could be entitled to.
TIMOR-LESTE

Sources of Publishing

TL is a unique country: it has three types of textbook publishing originations at the same time, all implemented through direct contracting:

1. Private Portuguese publishers for G1-G6 textbooks: books are produced and presented according to professional standards, even if sometimes too “European” in content.

2. Portuguese universities (Minho and Aveiro) for G8-G12 textbooks: badly produced, content heavy, with a clumsy layout, a bad use of iconography and an outdated educational approach.

3. Local contracted teams of authors will develop manuscripts for subjects deemed as « local » (PE, Religion, Arts, Indonesian, Tétum for secondary). No manuscript has been produced yet.

NB: Solutions 2. & 3. are only up to pre-press stage (excluded). Each solution consists of a mixed bag of various contracting channels.
Copyright and Language Policies

- Previous contracts with Portuguese publishers allowed them to keep the rights.
- But GRDTL wants to keep the rights for future contracts with private publishers.
- Universities relinquish their rights to GRDTL.
- Books are Portuguese only, even though a circular encourages teachers to orally teach in Tétum, the other official language.
- Recently the Minister has stopped all plans for G8 books with private publishers, demanding they be bilingual Tétum/Portuguese. Books won’t arrive on time for the next school year. The issue is not solved yet.
Textbook Evaluation Process

It is basically non-existent:

- No publishing bids
- No ToRs for publishers (technical specifications)
- No pre-submission evaluation
- Price is not a factor

To get the best value for money, a book should be evaluated, and this evaluation should be the object of three steps:

1. technical features, such as the paper grammage and opacity, binding, etc., on a pass or fail basis
2. content
3. price
TIMOR-LESTE

Textbook Procurement Flaws

- The current system does not exert any downward pressure on price. As a result, a Timorese *Ensino básico* student’s book costs between US$3.80 and $5 a unit, delivered in Díli
- Publishers only provide inspection copies to DNCAE for quality control purposes *after* the books have been produced
- There is little synergy between the DNCAE and the other textbook related Directorates (*Plano, Aprovisionamento, Logística, Finanças*)
- Contracting is not homogeneous and can sometimes be contradictory (eg the same titles being contracted out and officially “promised” to different operators)
KOICA donated GRDLT a US$4.5m printshop (inaugurated in August 2012)

It is however not technically fit to mass produce textbooks (the first title, a Civics books, was a terrible counter-example)

It has no budget for 2013, either on KOICA’s or on GRDTL’s side

It has no status either: part of MoE? A government agency? Semi-private status?

Rough budget estimates assess that the unit printing cost per book unit would be about $2.50, ie more than twice what it would be in Singapore or Indonesia, for lower quality and uncertain deadlines.
TIMOR-LESTE  *Distribution*

- Whatever the contract, the books are only to be delivered in Díli
- The distribution to schools throughout the country is carried out by the MoE Directorate for Logistics
- Feedback from the field shows that textbooks either don’t reach schools or do it late and unequally
- Beyond distribution flaws at central level, it seems that regional warehousing and the involvement of local Education Offices could be improved.
- Come what may, the « last mile » (between the regional warehouse and the school) is always up to the school to be covered, hence the difficulties in actually getting books to schools.
BURUNDI  Curricula

• Most of them date back from 1973, even if some patching up did take place in the 1980s and 1990s
• No total curriculum review has ever been carried out thoroughly
• Two issues are making the necessary curriculum review difficult:
  1. Political will
  2. Availability of trained researchers at the Curriculum Department (Bureaux pédagogiques)
BURUNDI Planning

- Two types of Planning are necessary for Textbooks:
  1. Projecting future enrollment for the upcoming years
  2. Projecting future textbook publishing for the upcoming years

- Enrollment: there is a reliable system in place
- Publishing: planning is more difficult
  - No mid-term publishing plan
  - No real publishing plan per subject
BURUNDI  Development Process within BEPEP/BEPES

- Educational publishing is deadline oriented; a notion not shared by both Bureau d’Etudes et des Programmes de l’Enseignement primaire (BEPEP) and secondaire (BEPES), neither of which is producing any publication plan.
- Unmotivated staff: lack of professional development and financial incentive, uneven staffing level according to subject cells.
- Many tasks supposed to be carried out by staff: manuscript development + educational field monitoring + internal curriculum evaluation → not enough time to focus on a textbook.
- Not enough authorship training.
- Not enough control of the Textbook Chain from A to Z by BEPEP/BEPES (issue of pre-press).
BURUNDI

Current textbook procurement

• In the absence of any updated curriculum, and in a post-conflict situation, Burundi relies on printing, or publishing/printing bids to provide textbooks to its students

• Bids are regularly advertised by either the MoE or the Projects

• Printing bid: only concerns already existing books that just have to be re-printed as they are (or were, some are dating from the 80s). Issues: lost original CRCs / rights disputes (Hachette)

• Publishing/printing: a publisher is given a manuscript developed by BEPEP/BEPES, with the task to edit and print it. Issues: text in a very raw form, sub-standard or non-existent iconography, no educational approach
BURUNDI  Printing

- Used to be reserved to the Government owned Régie des Productions pédagogiques (RPP)
- Since RPP changed status to become private, it has wanted to take part in donor funded bids but has not been able to because of the subsidies it receives
- RPP is now a private, albeit subsidised structure it wants to fight its way through various bids, even to become a reference in the Great Lakes areas
- RPP still is Burundi’s best equipped printer
BURUNDI  Distribution

- Under the responsibility of the *Direction générale des Bureaux pédagogiques*
- Does the DGBP have the means to carry it out effectively?
- Always the « last mile » issue
- Warehousing issues at Regional levels
BURUNDI

Situation in the field

• In April 2009: 18 primary schools and 4 secondary ones, in 6 provinces (Bujumbura, Bururi, Rutana, Ngozi, Kirundo, Gitega)
• Great differences in textbook/student ratios: from nearly 1/1 to 1/7
• «Average»: 1/4
• Highest availability in: French, Kirundi, Maths
• But almost no Maths textbooks from G4 to G6
• Secondary: general shortage
• Primary: many books in storage, not used, but «just in case»
• Annual attrition rate: 10 - 20% (worn out, stolen)