Foundational Learning Knowledge Café

Books for All: How to Ensure Every Child Has the Texts They Need to Learn to Read

April 20, 2023
The Program provides **recognition and technical and financial assistance** to help countries improve foundational learning skills, particularly **early grade reading**.

It **complements the participating governments’ existing efforts** by providing support to key activities to maximize the engine’s impact.

Initially working with: State of Ceará, Brazil; Kenya*; Mozambique*; Niger*; Edo State, Nigeria*; Pakistan; Rwanda*; and Sierra Leone
Accelerator Hypothesis:

- Leverage strong political will to improve outcomes (*commitment*)
- Set explicit foundational learning targets (*focus*)
- Ensure evidence-based plan with financing (*plan*)
- Strengthen implementation capacity (*support*)
- Review progress regularly, adapt, and learn from each other (*accountability*)
- Maintain political commitment and enhance stakeholder engagement (*advocacy*)
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Getting the Right Books to All Children at the Right Time:
Strengthening Book Provision in World Bank Projects

Penelope Bender
Lead Reading Specialist
April 2023
Improving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and Reducing Learning Poverty Requires Three Kinds of Books:

• Reading and math textbooks: 1 per subject, per child

• Teacher’s guides: 1 per subject, per teacher

• Books for reading practice (fiction and non-fiction): At least 50 per class

These books must be in a language students understand, at their instructional level, designed based on evidence (the “science of reading”), and available at the beginning of every school year.
Books Reach Classrooms through the Book Supply Chain

- **Analysis**
- **Planning & Forecasting**
- **Budgeting & Procurement**
- **Publishing & Prepress**
- **Production: Printing**
- **Production: Binding and finishing**
- **Sorting & Packing**
- **Delivery and distribution**
- **Use**
Planning to Production

Project Management
- Ensure adequate financing
- Develop and maintain realistic timelines
- Coordinate between actors

Publishing
- Develop content
- Ensure files are ready to print on time, including resolution, margins, rights.

Printing
- Provide correct and reasonable specifications.
- Provide files on time.

Binding/Finishing
- Choose binding that fits the size and expected life of the books.
- Choose finishing that fits the life and use of the books.
Packing to Delivery

- Determine how books will be packed prior to printing to reduce costs and delays.
- Have books picked and packed at point of production to reduce loss during delivery.
- Books should be labelled, wrapped and strapped to reduce loss during delivery.

Pick and Pack

Delivery and Distribution
- Provide distribution plans when printing procurement begins.
- Contract professional logistics companies.
- Use tracking and tracing systems to monitor distribution.

Distribution Verification
- Verify distribution by auditing a sample of distribution locations immediately after distribution and at later intervals.
Use to Analysis

**Use**
- Ensure that schools and teachers receive an adequate number of books.
- Ensure teachers are trained to use books.
- Include use of books (not presence of books) in coaching, supervision, and inspection protocols.

**Stock Management and Replenishment**
- Develop and implement simple systems to manage books stocks in schools.
- Develop and implement replenishment programs.

**Analysis**
- Include government, development partners, and providers in after-action consultations.
- Document lessons learned, both good and bad.
- Share lessons learned, including challenges.

Photo courtesy Dana Schmidt
Key Areas of World Bank Support

Planning and Forecasting
- Coordinating book procurements in the country over the life of the project
- Ensuring planned project procurement fits this national plan
- Reviewing budgets to ensure sufficient financing
- Determining book quantities and delivery timelines

Title Selection
- Determining which titles are needed for textbooks, teacher guides, and reading practice
- Determining needed language(s) and levels
- Locating or developing those titles

Procurement
- Training procurement staff
- Developing procurement timelines and documents
- Ensuring competitive, transparent procurement
- Supporting procurement timelines

Distribution Monitoring
- Using a track and trace system for distribution monitoring
- Conducting a sample-based distribution audit
- Developing stock management protocols at school level

Use
- Ensuring book use is built into lesson plans and teacher guides
- Supporting teacher professional development on book use
- Building incentives based on book use at home and school
- Implementing a book replenishment plan
Using Best Practice for Accelerator Activities: Selecting, Procuring and Printing Titles

**Activities**
- Inventory of storybooks in Nigerien languages
- Selection of openly licensed, print-ready books
- Technical workshops to adapt
- Revision and design
- Re-printing and distribution of story books
- Guidance on procurement and printing
- Delivery and utilization in community soon

**Data**
- 700,000 books in Hausa, Zarma and French
- Low prices made it possible to double number of books
- 5 regions out of 8
- 500 schools
- 130,000 students / 70,000 in Grade 1&2
- 3 NGOs for implementation
Mozambique: 10 Success Factors in Reducing Printing Costs and Key Lessons

Lúcia Nhampossa

April 20, 2023
Good Procurement → Good Prices and Quality

1. Make procurement predictable
2. Consider separating printing and publishing
3. Use correct, complete, and standard technical specifications
4. Require Polyolefin binding in most cases
5. Select the correct Incoterms to better manage delivery risks
6. Advertise WIDELY and provide adequate time for bid submission
7. Make it easy to obtain the bidding documents
8. Answer questions from suppliers promptly
9. Set reasonable timelines
10. Build procurement capacity in the government and in the Bank team
But...there could be some challenges and here are some lessons

• Keeping/Improving procurement capacity of MoE is probably the most important out of the 10 factors: a change on technical assistance policy resulted in reduced capacity to manage procurement in the MoE, leading to systematic delays and increased prices.

• In capacity constrained settings, adopting multi-year framework agreements can help reducing the burden over stretched procurement departments, while keeping good prices and quality.

• Printing quality books efficiently is great, but not enough to have them in the hands of the children and teachers: book’s distribution to schools can be a huge challenge, especially in low infrastructure context and limited accountability structures. Track and Trace Systems and incentives to key stakeholders for timely delivery can help.
Key lessons to date from Read@Home procurement support

• Thousands of open licensed titles in hundreds of languages have been developed over the last decade—but they’re not always perfect. Build in time to review.

• Prices drop when procurement is conducted correctly, allowing teams to buy thousands of additional books.

• Distribution monitoring remains an issue; R@H is developing a low cost, simple, open source, QR-code based tracking system that will be ready this summer.

• Book use must be built into lessons, teacher professional development, and supervisor’s expectations.

• Strengthening book supply chains is iterative. Remember Mozambique and persist!
We’re Here to Help: Resources from Read@Home, REACH, and the Global Book Alliance

Your sources for guidance and tools to:
• Analyze the existing book supply chain and develop a prioritized strategy
• Select and/or develop high quality books in the languages children need
• Figure out how many books you need and how much they should cost
• Survive procurement from beginning to end
• Ensure your books get where they’re supposed to go
• Help parents and caregivers engage children in reading
• Support teachers in the use of textbooks, teacher’s guides and reading books
• Improve book chains with every cycle of book provision
Go to the ELRN website to find:

- Openly licensed, **print-ready** books (textbooks, teacher’s guides, and books for reading practice) in multiple languages to download, translate, adapt, and print at scale.
- Guidance and tools for book procurement, book design, open licensing, and other aspects of large-scale publishing and printing programs.
- Materials for programs to engage parents and caregivers.
- The ELRN houses more than 2,000 books and resources with new content being added every day.
- New course for book designers coming in May.

https://www.earlylearningnetwork.org/
Selecting and Developing Quality Books
Support for Book Procurement

PROCUREMENT SUPPORT

Read@Home supports countries and teams with just-in-time technical assistance to complement country efforts to: (i) source, select, and procure quality reading and learning materials for children in appropriate languages and accompanying materials for parents and caregivers; and (ii) improve efficiency and reduce costs in book procurement and distribution.

The team has produced a range of global public goods, including:

**Read@Home: Using the World Bank Bidding Document for Books**
This Guidance Note is designed to support government and World Bank teams in preparing accurate and complete bidding documents for books, evaluating proposals, and awarding contracts.

*Author:* Jung Hee Chei  
*Publisher:* World Bank Group

**Incorporating and Insurance: Guidance for World Bank Procurement of Textbooks and Reading Books**
The Incorporating and Insurance rules have become an essential part of the daily language of trade.

*Author:* World Bank  
*Publisher:* World Bank Group

**Read@Home Guide for Writers, Illustrators, and Designers of Books for Young Readers**
This Guidance Note was created for the Read@Home project to help writers, illustrators, and designers create books for young children to share with their families at home. Of course, such books may be used in schools as well. In either case, these will be enjoyable books that children will want to read, so they will learn to love reading and develop the lifelong habit of reading.

*Author:* World Bank  
*Publisher:* World Bank Group
Resources and support:
Read@Home team
pbender@worldbank.org

https://www.earlylearningnetwork.org/
https://www.globalbookalliance.org/

THANK YOU