Philippines: Textbook Count

Overview
This program started in 2002 as a result of partnerships between the Department of Education (DepEd) and civil society organizations. In 2003, 37 million textbooks amounting to P1.5B ($30M) were tracked in 5,500 delivery points. In 2004, 13.6 million textbooks amounting to P660M ($13.2M) were tracked in 7,499 delivery points. The program supported by two World Bank assisted projects aims to:

- Prevent corruption in textbook procurement.
- Ensure that the right quantity and quality of textbooks are delivered to the right recipients at the right time.
- Make suppliers more responsive to clients’ needs.
- Mobilize Civil Society Organizations for monitoring and inspection at less or no cost to DepED.
- Establish benchmarks for DepEd performance.

Design
- Components are mapped.
- Goals are set.
- Stakeholders’ participation is ensured.
- Undertakings are defined.
- Mechanisms for coordination, reporting, and evaluation are put in place.

Components and Goals
- Bidding: Safeguard the integrity of the bidding process.
- Production: Ensure good textbook quality.
- Delivery: Help high schools and districts check the textbooks delivered to them.
- Distribution: Help districts distribute the textbooks to elementary schools.

Preparations
- Civil society partners were organized.
- Briefing-orientations were given to division supply officers, suppliers, and CSO provincial coordinators.
- Documents were sent to DepEd divisions, high schools, and district offices.
- Documents were sent to CSO provincial coordinators and volunteers.
- Print and radio advertisements came out.

CSO Mobilization Strategy
- Provinces were assigned to Boy Scouts of the Philippines (BSP) and Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP) Council Executives as Provincial Coordinator for mobilization of volunteers.

- Where BSP leads efforts, GSP and other NGOs report to BSP-based Provincial Coordinator.
- Where GSP takes the lead, BSP and other NGOs report to GSP-based Provincial Coordinator.
- If province is too large, Provincial Coordinators can assign municipal or city coordinator.
- Volunteers consist of BSP/GSP, PTCA, parishioners, individuals who responded to the newspaper ad.

Reporting
On-the-spot Reporting
- High School (HS) and district monitors report problems to Councils.
- Councils are empowered to make judgments.
- In case of disagreements between CSO volunteer and DepEd, DepEd prevails. But CSO volunteer indicates comments in Inspection and Acceptance Report (IAR) remarks section and reports to the Council, or to G-Watch.

Final Reporting
- Councils collect IARs and volunteers’ monitoring report forms.
- Councils complete Coordinating Council’s report form.
- Councils submit IARs and report forms to NHQ.
- NHQ forwards IARs and report forms to G-Watch.

Documentation & Evaluation
- CSO has parallel documentation of delivery reports.
- Program is evaluated yearly to discuss problems encountered and recognize accomplishments.

Accomplishments
- Prices of textbooks were reduced by 50% by using International Competitive Bidding procedure of the World Bank.
- Quality of materials significantly improved.
- DepEd completed procurement process from bidding to delivery in 12 months (previous performance was 24 months).
- Delivery errors were reduced to as low as 5% on average.

Lessons Learned
- Simple monitoring tools work effectively and can influence government’s policies and programs.
- Constructive engagement with agency facilitates positive actions on the findings and recommendations.
- Citizens’ involvement in public management prevents corruption and improves people’s access to basic services.