Solving the Global Learning Crisis: A Global Book Fund

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@USAIDEducation  #LetGirlsLearn  #endpoverty
There is a Global Learning Crisis

In many countries, more than 50% of students can’t read a single word after several years of school.

This hidden epidemic costs governments and economies

US $129 BILLION
Books are essential for learning to read

‘Studies using a variety of research methodologies find that textbooks and learning materials show the highest incidence of impact for improving primary school outcomes in many developing countries.’
And books are not available

There are not enough books in languages children know.

Books are not available across borders and languages.

Book costs are too high.

Distribution systems are inefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage of Children Tested with 1:1 Textbook Access</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</tbody>
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A Global Book Fund would address each link in the book chain:

1. Content Development
2. Content Access
3. Procurement
4. Licensing
5. Distribution
6. Use
Book Chain Challenges

1. Content Development
   - Lack of high quality books in many countries
   - Lack of books in languages students speak and understand
   - Content production traditionally complex
   - Copyright and licensing barriers

2. Content Access
   - Books are unavailable cross-project, cross-country, and cross-language
   - Existing titles cannot be “re-versioned” for different languages/cultures
   - Books disappear post-project
Book Chain Challenges

3. Procurement

- Demand and funding are erratic
- Purchases are uncoordinated
- Costs vary hugely cross-country
- Technical specifications do not optimize cost-effectiveness

4. Licensing

- Open licensing not widely used
- “Automatic” copyright restricts reuse
- NGOs and donors have often restricted reuse, revision, adaptation
Book Chain Challenges

5. Distribution
- Textbooks and materials go astray at all levels of the system
- Lack of transparency and accountability leads to rent-seeking, which in turn is a disincentive to create more efficient, less corrupt distribution systems
- No globally accepted “home” for early grade reading material
- Print copies stored wherever/however and eventually ruined
- Digital copies not systematically assembled and often cease to exist

6. Use
- Even when books get to a school, they don’t always get into classrooms
- The recurrent costs and actions associated with replenishing the supply are rarely taken into account
Solutions: Developing a Global Book Fund

- Partnership
- Title Development: Enabling Writers
- Title Access: Materials Inventories and Licensing
- Title Access: Global Reading Repository
- Supply Chain Management Development/"Track and Trace"
- Country proof of concept activities
- Procurement and Finance
- Improving Use: Core programming
The Solution: A Global Book Fund

Access to quality reading materials:

- improves literacy rates
- reduces income and gender inequality
- supports the development of stable and more prosperous societies
How Can YOU Get Involved?

Join the Steering Committee or Advisory Group

Participate in global and regional concept development meetings

Contribute to the Enabling Writers rollout, use CC licensing, contribute to the Global Reading Repository

Contact Penelope Bender (pbender@usaid.gov) for more information

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