

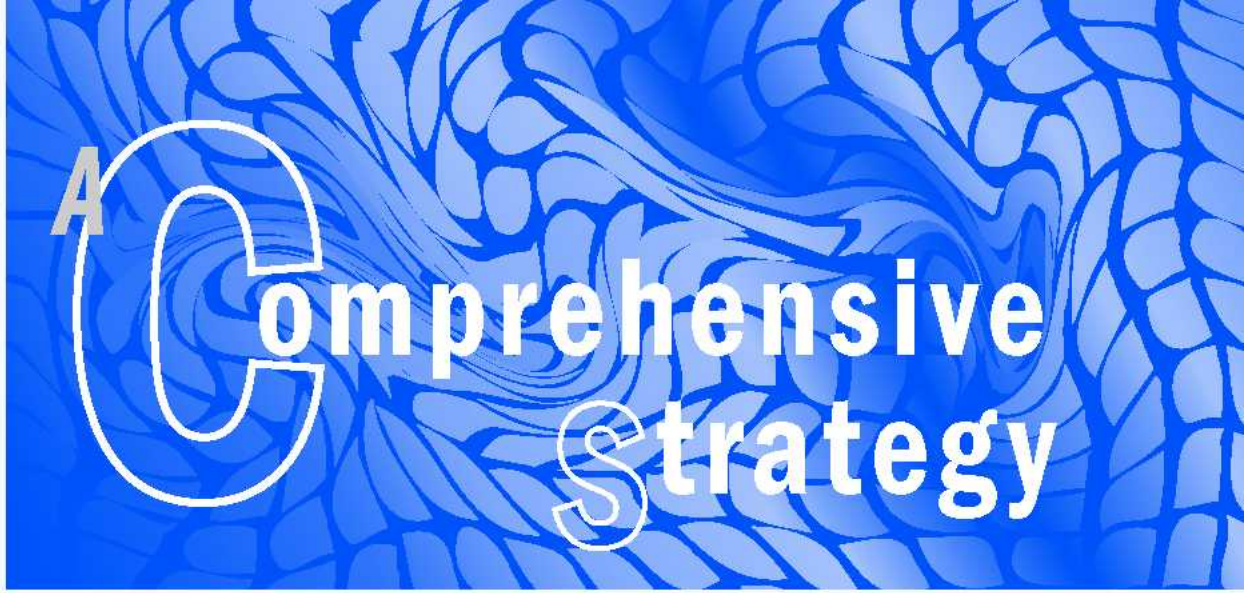
Education Sector
Division for the Promotion of Quality Education
Section of Education for Peace and Human Rights

A Comprehensive Strategy

for
Textbooks
and
Learning Materials



United Nations
Educational,
Scientific and
Cultural Organization



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Division for the Promotion of Quality Education*

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

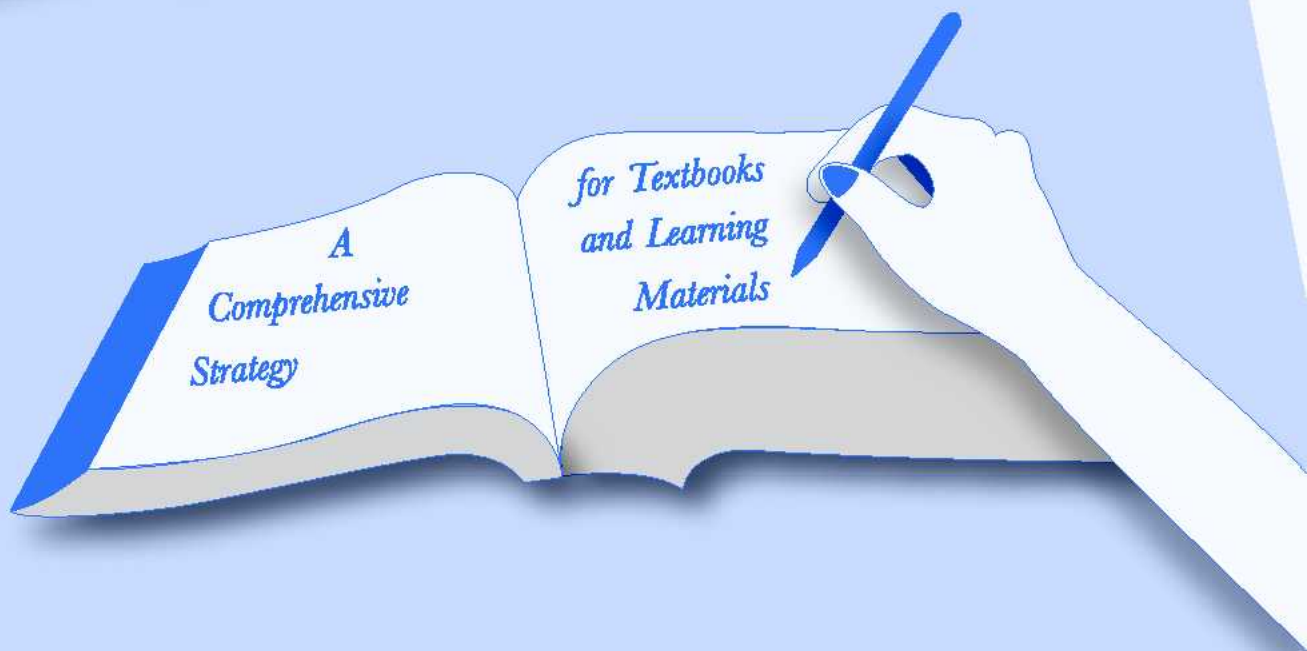
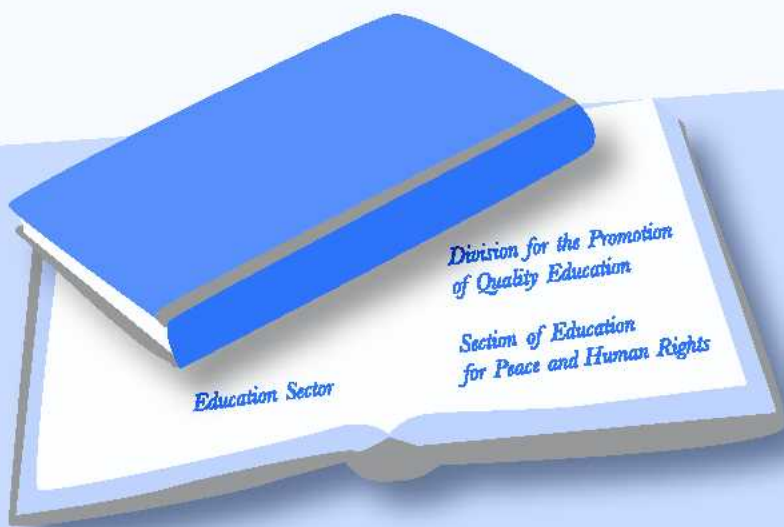
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
APCEIU	Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding
BLMI	Basic Learning Materials Initiative
CoE	Council of Europe
EFA	Education for All
EUROCLIO	European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations
GEI	Georg Eckert Institute
IBE	International Bureau of Education
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
INEE	Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WPHRE	World Programme for Human Rights Education

Definitions

Textbook – the core learning medium composed of text and/or images designed to bring about a specific set of educational outcomes; traditionally a printed and bound book including illustrations and instructions for facilitating sequences of learning activities.

Learning materials – any form of media used to support a program of learning, often as supplements to the core text. Examples include workbooks, charts, educational games, audio and video tapes, posters and supplementary readers.

Rights-based approach – for the UN system, a rights-based approach implies that all programmes of cooperation, policies and technical assistance should further the realization of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.



Foreword

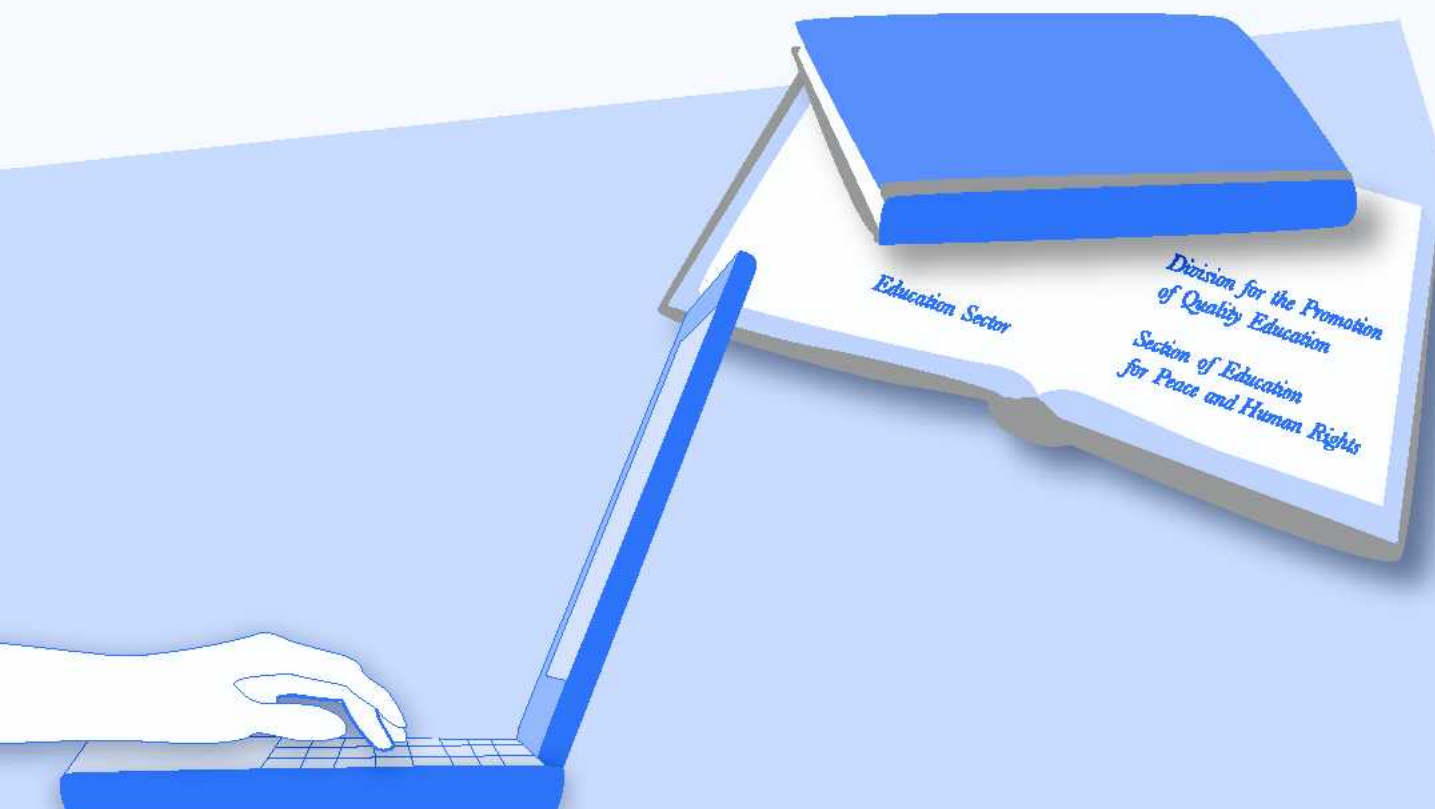
Textbooks and learning materials have the power to transmit knowledge, build skills, and shape the way learners interact with the world. From basic arithmetic to astrophysics, in classrooms, libraries and community learning centers around the world, textbooks and learning materials form an authoritative source of information, but also function as primary tools for shaping attitudes and behaviors. At every level and in every subject area, textbooks can be important vehicles for promoting human rights, including the principles and practices of non-violence, gender equity and nondiscrimination. They can also function as valuable resources in the process of education for sustainable development and for the prevention of HIV and AIDS. Textbooks and learning materials which effectively integrate these themes and teach relevant skills in culturally appropriate ways are a key component of quality education and essential to achieving the goals of Education for All.

UNESCO has a long history of involvement in the revision of history and geography textbooks for the purpose of promoting peace and reconciliation through mutual understanding.

More recently, in response to the need for technical assistance in the provision of basic learning materials in less developed countries and in emergency situations, UNESCO has developed programmes and practical tools for building national capacities and policies for publishing, distribution and use. In both areas, programmes and activities have sought to integrate the core values of peace and human rights at all levels of intervention.

A Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Learning Materials establishes a single, coherent approach toward realizing this goal. It also calls for an expanded, more comprehensive role for textbooks and learning materials that encompasses both new and traditional forms of learning media as vital means of preserving local languages and cultural heritage. The resulting policies and practices are expected to open new pathways for inter-cultural dialogue, a key component of “Learning to Live Together.” We believe this strategy is a critical step toward strengthening UNESCO’s leadership in this area, and a significant contribution to constructing the defenses of peace for both present and future generations.

Peter Smith
Assistant Director-General for Education



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Executive Summary

As with all media, the issues surrounding the development and use of textbooks are complex and often controversial. However, the primary purpose of textbooks – to transmit knowledge, values, attitudes, skills and behaviors – is a constant. The question of *which* knowledge, *which* values, and *which* skills they teach is of concern to localities, nations, and indeed to the international community because textbooks and other learning materials can be powerful tools for sustaining languages and cultures, shaping thought processes and promoting tolerance. No less importantly, the question of *how well* they fulfill their primary purpose of educating learners involves issues of cultural and environmental relevance, social inclusion, gender equality and literacy. A third major question asks *who*, in the end, has the opportunity to use the materials and at what cost. In many areas of the world, the problems surrounding equitable and sustainable provision of quality learning materials for all learners have yet to be solved.

The need for a comprehensive strategy to address these central questions and, therefore, to guide UNESCO's work in textbook development and revision has become more pressing. The demands and challenges of life in the 21st century, together with the devastating consequences of war, terrorism and natural disasters require new, and often more integrative, approaches to all aspects of education, including textbooks and learning materials.

The UNESCO *Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Other Learning Materials* responds to this need first by defining the boundaries of its vision and clarifying its role. Three broad objectives are then put forward as the main cornerstones of the overall strategy:

Policy development

Assistance in the development of regional and national policies for textbooks and learning materials that will accelerate progress toward EFA and the Millennium Development Goals.

Improved quality

Promotion of approaches to textbook content and design take place within the framework of quality education.

Increased availability

Assistance to Member States in developing sustainable ways of increasing availability of textbooks and learning materials.

Specific strategies are then elaborated for each of the three broad objectives which explain how, within the framework of its vision, UNESCO intends to focus its activities in order to support Member States in achieving them.





Following the explanation of broad objectives and specific strategies, detailed descriptions are given of the modes of operation that will be used to carry them out, namely:

- **Training and Capacity Building**
- **Research**
- **Advocacy**

The Strategy then identifies a list of priorities for planning programmatic work focusing on textbooks at the international, regional, or national level, followed by a discussion of major issues that may potentially arise at the planning and/or implementation stage.

Finally, as UNESCO's work in textbooks and learning materials cannot flourish in isolation from the work of UN agencies, other international organizations, international networks, associations, institutes and the private sector, a list of potential partners is suggested with a view toward strengthening existing relationships and building new ones.



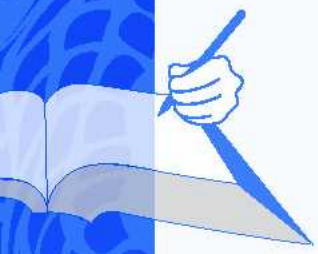
Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that textbooks and other learning materials play a key role in the learning process. While the design, content, and use of these materials may take many shapes and forms, the depth and quality of the interaction a learner has with them is recognized throughout the world as a significant factor in the achievement of successful learning outcomes. In accordance with UNESCO's primary mandate to promote world peace through education, the foundation of its strategy for textbooks is based on their potential as media for introducing new concepts, teaching skills and shaping attitudes.

The global commitment of Member States to a quality education for all underscores the necessity for teachers and learners, even in the poorest and most remote areas of the world, to have equitable access to materials which support quality learning experiences in culturally relevant and appropriate ways. A rights-based quality education necessarily entails values, knowledge and skills that revolve around the basic human rights principles of non-discrimination, participation, inclusion and equity.

To support such a vision, and building upon UNESCO's substantial experience in textbook research and development¹, the current strategy advocates an approach grounded in the core concepts of peace, human rights and sustainability. Its primary aim, in firm support of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals, is to help facilitate a process that enables learners to take charge of their lives, make substantial and meaningful contributions to their communities, participate in creating cultures of peace, and become knowledgeable citizens of the world.

¹ See Annex I: Historical Overview, p. 31



Why a Strategy for Textbooks and Learning Materials?

1


The motivation for formulating a global strategy for textbooks and learning materials arises from the need to respond in a responsible and comprehensive way to some of the most pressing challenges for education in the 21st century. Its purpose is to lay a solid foundation for launching new activities which, in turn, will accelerate progress in all parts of the world toward the goal of a quality education for all.

While UNESCO has a long history of accomplishments in the field of textbook revision, it is now necessary to act on the basis of a broader vision, which takes into consideration the changing role of textbooks and learning materials in the learning process and which encompasses the diverse needs of all learners in a wide range of cultural contexts, economic conditions and educational settings. This new vision must also anticipate the need to respond quickly and appropriately to the urgent needs of societies and communities in distress, either as the result of violent conflict or natural disaster or suffering from the longer term effects of economic instability, rapid urbanization, and environmental degradation.

1.1. Scope

This strategy incorporates broad principles that apply to all phases of textbook development and use, from the initial planning stages to production, review, revision, distribution and use. It seeks to set into motion a process which encourages local, national and regional systems to evolve in ways that are responsive to diverse cultures and traditions, yet compatible with the broader vision articulated above.

In practical terms, the strategy calls for a re-energizing of efforts to support sustainable systems for the development and delivery of textbooks and learning materials that are level-appropriate, inclu-



sive and engaging to learners of all ages, at every skill level, and in all types of environments. Recognizing that the needs of learners will continue to change and that new technologies are likely to become more widely available, the vision itself is flexible and open to adaptation in response to global, regional, national and local priorities.



1.2 UNESCO's Role

As a major influence on the way children, young people, and adult learners view the world and their role in it, textbooks have enormous potential to advance the cause of world peace. Given its long experience in textbook research and its mandate for fostering peace through mutual understanding, UNESCO is in a particularly advantageous position to provide the intellectual leadership and technical assistance necessary to support Member States in their efforts to improve the quality and availability of textbooks in creative and innovative ways. The Declaration by the Ministers of Education at the 44th session of the International Conference on Education endorsed by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 28th session, clearly articulates the expanded goal:

(We shall strive resolutely) to pay special attention to improving curricula, the content of textbooks, and other educational materials including new technologies, with a view to educating caring and responsible citizens, open to other cultures, able to appreciate the value of freedom, respectful of human dignity and differences, and able to prevent conflicts or resolve them by non-violent means.²

In affirmation and support of this goal, **UNESCO's role is to assist member states in developing policies, norms, and standards for the provision of textbooks and other learning materials which facilitate quality education, and to encourage the development of sustainable ways of making these materials available to all teachers and learners.**

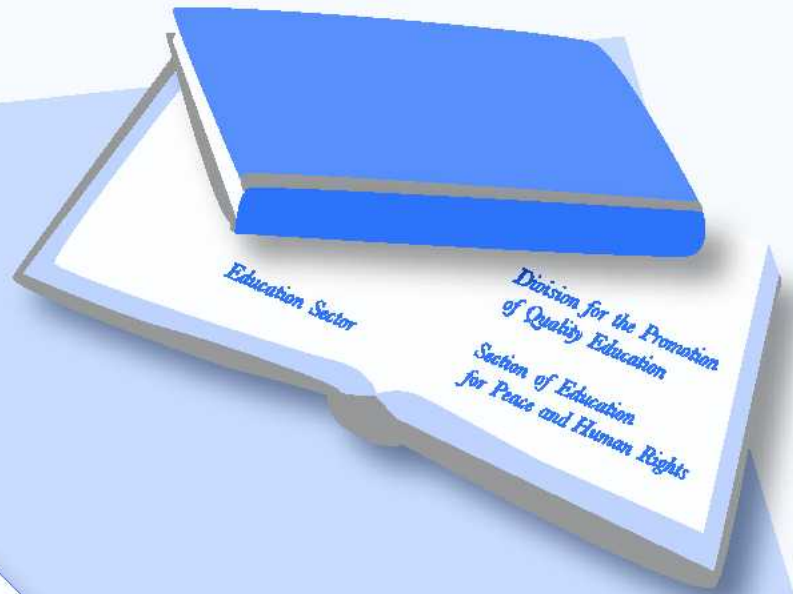
Each element of the textbook strategy is also closely tied to the overall UNESCO Strategic Objectives for Education (2002-2007), namely:

-  Promoting education as a fundamental right in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
-  Improving the quality of education through the diversification of contents and methods and the promotion of universally shared values

2 "Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Democracy," UNESCO: Paris, 1995.

- Promoting experimentation, innovation and sharing of information and best practices as well as policy dialogue in education

These links connect global priorities with practical points of reference for the development of regional and national policies in ways that accelerate progress toward achieving the ultimate goal of a rights-based, quality education for all.



Objectives

2

As a major means of achieving education for all, the long term goal in the area of textbook provision is for quality textbooks and other learning materials to be available to all learners. The three intermediary objectives of policy development, improved quality, and increased availability form the cornerstones of a viable strategy for achieving this goal.



Figure 1: Goal and Objectives of the UNESCO Strategy for Textbooks and Learning Materials



In its efforts to assist in the development of regional and national textbook policies that accelerate progress toward the achievement of EFA goals, UNESCO actions will be guided by the key concepts of quality and availability. At the practical level, these policies will, in turn, result in approaches to textbook development and revision that are based on the principles of a rights-based, quality education *and* incorporate sustainable ways of increasing availability.

For meaningful progress toward any one of these objectives to occur, both of the others must be taken into account: quality materials are of little use if they are not in the hands of learners and available materials are of questionable value (and may even be harmful) if they are not premised on the key concepts of rights-based, quality education.

Coordinated movement toward all three objectives can generate a process for the creation or expansion of national and regional textbook policies that lead directly toward the achievement of EFA goals, with UNESCO in a supportive role.



Strategies

3

Specific strategies leading toward achieving the three main objectives are summarized in Figure 2 (below). A more detailed description of their functions and interrelationship follows.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES
Policy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Seek consensus on international norms and standards■ Support a rights-based approach■ Assist in developing national and regional policies
Quality Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Help ensure that textbook development occurs within the framework of quality education■ Take advantage of opportunities for change■ Encourage participatory approaches to learning in materials design
Increased Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Assist with plans for sustainable textbook provision■ Support efforts to decentralize the book sector■ Promote alternative solutions and future perspectives

Figure 2: Toward Quality Textbooks and Materials for All
Objectives and Strategies



3.1 Policy Development

The provision of high quality textbooks and learning materials is essential to meeting all of the six EFA goals³, but is especially relevant to goals #2, #3, and #6, which stress quality, completion, and access.

- Goal 2:** Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- Goal 3:** Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- Goal 6:** Improving every aspect of the quality of education, and ensuring their excellence so that recognized and measurable outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The Dakar Framework for Action further elaborates, in support of goal #6, the specific correlation between an adequate supply of learning materials and successful learning outcomes. Even though this link has been clearly established, policies and practices for the development and effective use of textbooks and learning materials are still sadly lacking in many parts of the world.

As a first step toward remedying this situation, an international dialogue on general principles for the development of regional and national guidelines is urgently needed, together with focused interventions in the form of technical assistance to Member States in their efforts to enhance quality and access.

3.1.1 Seek consensus on international norms and standards

With the ultimate aim of establishing a set of internationally accepted standards for quality in the development of textbooks and learning materials, UNESCO will facilitate dialogue among Member States on the basic principles of materials development and revision in the context of rights-based, quality education. For purposes of initiating the dialogue, the following broad principles⁴ are proposed as a starting point⁵.

3 *Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments*, adopted by the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000). Paris: UNESCO 2000, para 7.

4 Based primarily on the *Dakar Framework for Action* goals and strategies and on the recommendations of the International Experts' Meeting: Paris, 2002.

5 Ideally, the debate will include governmental policy makers and curriculum specialists, representatives from NGOs and research institutes, representatives of teachers' unions and parents' groups as well as authors, editors, and publishers.

Quality textbooks and other learning materials:

- are essential to a quality, rights-based education for all.⁶
- are the products of the larger process of curriculum development, of which regular review, reform, and revision are seen as natural components.
- incorporate human rights principles in their content and integrate pedagogical processes that teach peaceful resolution to conflict,⁷ gender equity, non-discrimination and other practices and attitudes for “learning to live together”⁸ in their instructional design.
- facilitate learning toward specific measurable outcomes which take multiple perspectives, learning styles, and modalities (including knowledge, skills, and attitudes) into account.
- take into account the conceptual level, linguistic environment, background and needs of the learner as key factors in shaping the content and design.
- facilitate learning in ways that encourage active and equitable participation by all learners involved in the learning experience.⁹
- are affordable, durable and accessible to every learner.¹⁰

3.1.2 Support a rights-based approach

The UNESCO Strategy on Human Rights (2003) declared a renewed commitment to human rights education as an integral part of the right to education and specifically mandates that all educational efforts should be directed toward “integrating the learning and practice of human rights”¹¹ into its programmes in formal, non-formal and informal education. This directive clearly states that in its work involving development and/or revision of curricula and textbooks, UNESCO should work with planners and authors to put human rights education into practice.

Further to this, the Plan of Action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education affirms that a rights-based approach to education should be understood as a process that “ensures that all component processes of learning, including curricula, materials, methods and training are conducive to the learning of human rights.”¹² Inherent to a rights-based approach to textbook development, therefore, is a commitment to eliminating all forms of bias, intolerance, and stereotyping which threaten to undermine human rights and foster negative attitudes and violent behaviors. Textbooks and learning materials which incorporate rights-based values thus become a central vehicle for the delivery of quality education, which in turn seeks to fulfill the promise for all members of the human family to live in dignity and peace.

6 This principle is derived from Strategy #8 (para 5) of the *Dakar Framework for Action*, which states, “To offer education of good quality, educational institutions and programmes should be adequately and equitably resourced, with the core requirements... (including) books, other learning materials, and technologies that are context specific, cost effective, and available to all learners.” Paris: UNESCO, 2000, p. 20.

7 As recommended in Strategy #5 of the *Dakar Framework for Action*, specifically for educational systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instabilities, Paris: UNESCO, 2000, p. 19.

8 The third pillar of education, as set forth by Jacques Delors et al in *Learning: The Treasure Within: Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century*. Paris: UNESCO, 1996.

9 This principle addresses the need to promote nondiscriminatory practices and equally positive representation of girls and members of minority groups in textbook content and illustration.

10 A supply of one textbook per pupil per subject is the OECD standard for an adequate book supply. In most countries, an increase of only 1 or 2 percent of the primary education budget would ensure one-on-one provision. Askarud, Pernille. *A Guide to Sustainable Book Provision*. Paris: UNESCO, 1997, p. 18.

11 *UNESCO Strategy on Human Rights*, adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 32d Session (29 September-17 October 2003), p. 67.

12 *Plan of Action for the First Phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education*, adopted by the UN General Assembly at its 59th Session 14th July 2005 (res. 59/312).



In its focus on cultural diversity and language rights, a rights-based approach to textbook development and provision encourages policy-makers and planners, wherever possible, to make educational materials available to schools and community libraries in both mainstream and local languages and to actively seek ways of linking traditional learning media with broad-based curricular outcomes.

3.1.3 Assist in developing national and regional policies

In addition to initiating dialogue and seeking international consensus on the fundamental principles underlying textbook development and provision, UNESCO will provide assistance in the form of training, information sharing, and/or capacity building to governments and regional networks wishing to develop new or strengthen current policies for book provision in ways that accelerate progress toward EFA, as well as regional and national development goals.¹³

3.2 Quality Improvement

As described in Annex I (Historical Overview of UNESCO's Work in Textbook Revision), the orientation of most of its program work has been to review textbooks and other learning materials for the purpose of removing offensive or unacceptable content and, secondly to assist curriculum planners, authors, editors, and publishers in developing criteria for revising texts according to shared principles. While this approach may still be appropriate in some situations, it is one-dimensional and can be difficult to implement beyond the research phase.

A more current and comprehensive view identifies quality learning materials as those which actively engage the learner in the process of acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens of their communities and of the world. Textbooks have a legitimate role as media for authoritatively communicating and preserving local values, histories and perspectives as well as shared, international ones. However, in much the same way that folk tales use local characters and contexts to communicate universal themes, the language, symbolism and images of textbooks can be skillfully used to weave universally shared values into the messages they convey. This more holistic approach calls upon authors, editors and publishers to build in instruments for ensuring that learners develop the knowledge and skills they need to live in a rapidly changing world while preserving local values, traditions and modes of communication. To this end, UNESCO seeks to assist in the process of developing broader, more flexible paradigms that take all aspects of content and design into account

¹³ As an example, the Turkish "Project on Human Rights in Textbooks" identified three main assumptions based on a shared vision for a modern, democratic, and knowledge-based society, upon which the criteria for forthcoming curriculum reform and textbook development rest. For a discussion of these criteria, see Irzik, Gurol and Ceyhan, Deniz Tarba (eds.) *Human Rights in Textbooks*. Istanbul: Istanbul, 2004.



and measure their success within the framework of quality education for all.

3.2.1 Help ensure that textbook development occurs within the framework of quality education

Improving the quality of learning materials involves taking their role within the educational process into account. In whatever cultural context it occurs, this process incorporates a wide range of factors, including the skills, knowledge and values that learners bring with them. Even at a very early age (see Figure 3, next page), most children entering school have acquired a high level of oral competency in their native language, a considerable level of pre-literacy skills, and a sense of their individual and family identity. They have also acquired a set of attitudes and behaviors firmly grounded in family and community values.

As children begin to participate in a new learning community, the physical and social environment of the school or learning center provides the base for interactions with their peers, teachers, administrative structures, assessment instruments and (not least importantly) with a wide range of textbooks and learning materials. The criteria and methods for assessing these interactions often have both direct and indirect effects on the shaping of content and methodology to be included in the curriculum, and as such have a major impact on materials design.

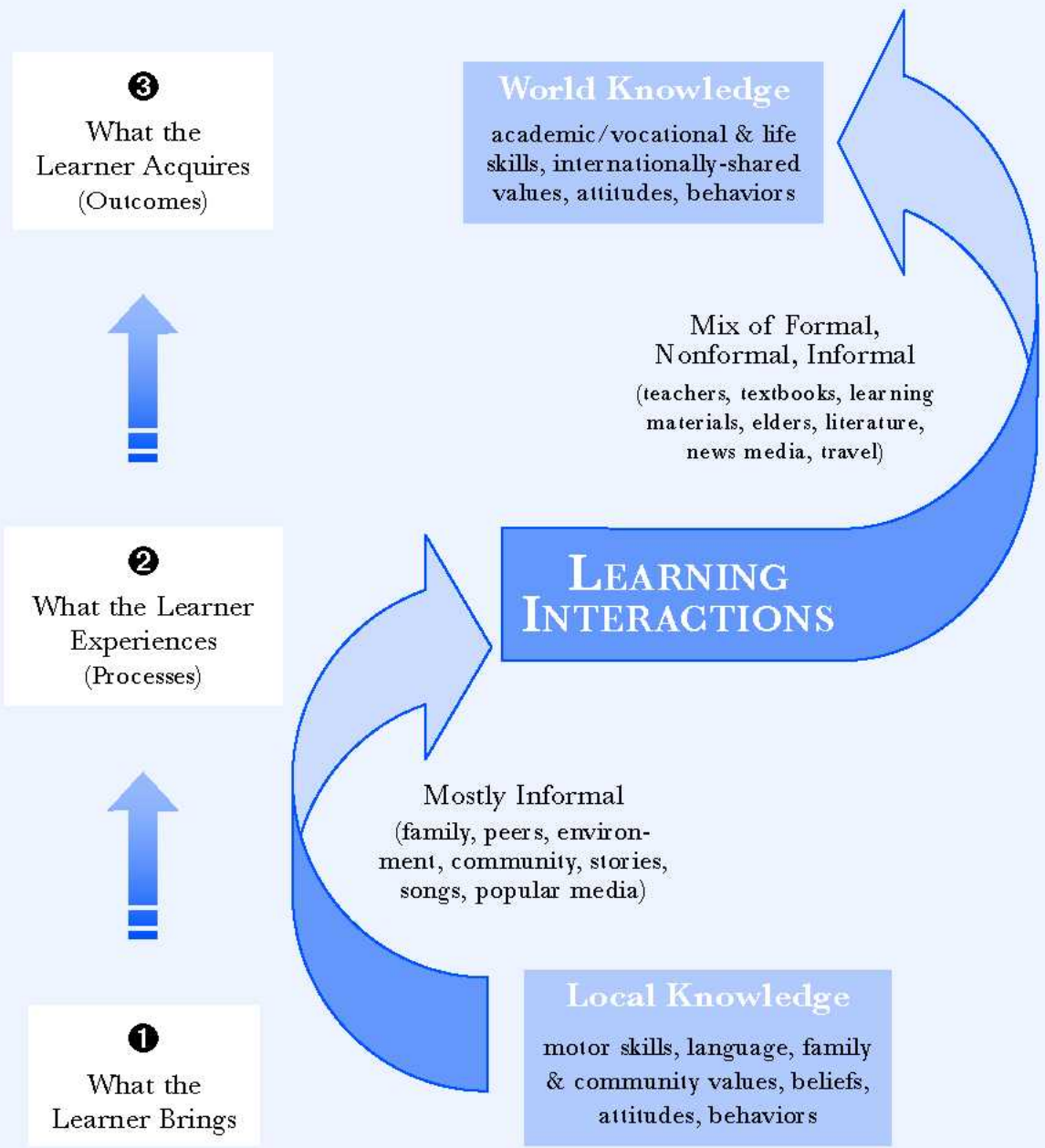


Figure 3: Factors Affecting the Design of Quality Learning Materials



In many education systems, textbook authors tend to focus on knowledge based outcomes, often resulting in an overly authoritative, top-down style of discourse representing a narrow point of view and failing to respond to the diverse learning styles, life experiences, and cultural values of all members of the communities they serve. The result is often content that is irrelevant to the learning context, thereby reinforcing patterns of exclusion. In its support of the right to quality education for all, textbooks for the 21st century must reflect more inclusive pedagogies and diversified content which not only impart academic knowledge, but also engage learners in interactions leading to the acquisition of life skills and universally-shared values. It is also important to recognize that in a rapidly changing world, the need for people of all ages to grasp new concepts, understand different perspectives and acquire more complex technical skills is more pressing than ever before. Hence it is increasingly important to respond to learners in ways that acknowledge their life experiences, abilities, and knowledge of the world and to equip them with the tools needed to become life-long learners.

3.2.2 Take advantage of opportunities for change

Whenever there is an opportunity for innovation and reform, whether through the complete overhaul of a country's educational system or the reconstruction of a new one, UNESCO will support the development of quality textbooks and learning materials to help implement the new curriculum in optimal ways. In countries emerging from conflict, there is a unique opportunity to encourage the integration of peace and human rights education as well as the concepts of sustainable development into both the design and content of the materials in virtually every subject area at every level. In some cases, it is especially important for governments to take advantage of this opportunity in order to avoid re-instating systems, pedagogies and materials which may have actually contributed to the causes of conflict. Where such opportunities exist, UNESCO will work closely with its partners to assist in the continued development and adaptation of curricula, textbooks and learning materials that are instrumental in the long-term effort to bring about peaceful, prosperous and equitable societies.

3.2.3 Encourage participatory approaches to learning in materials design

As classroom teachers and community education facilitators are well aware, the way textbooks, workbooks, and other materials are designed often forms a blueprint for the way learning is planned, managed and assessed. Formats consisting primarily of factual text followed by a battery of information questions, for example, do little to awaken curiosity or stimulate critical thinking.



Materials for science lacking visual representations of processes such as photographs, diagrams, models or flow charts may inadvertently exclude large numbers of users by failing to address their learning styles.

Textbook authors, designers and illustrators who strive toward inclusion of all members of society in the format and design of their work can also enable teachers to introduce participatory learning activities drawing upon learners' life experiences and hence resulting in more relevant and engaging ways of connecting with a wider range of conceptual abilities, individual personality traits and learning styles. In keeping with its overall effort to promote rights-based quality education, UNESCO will encourage new research in field of materials design aimed at the production of more culturally relevant, inclusive and teacher-friendly materials that provide multiple suggestions for active and meaningful learning events.

3.3 Increased Availability

The third main cornerstone of the strategy is to assist countries in building the capacities necessary to increase access to learning materials in ways that are cost effective and sustainable. In areas of the world where there are few libraries or bookstores, textbooks are often the major, if not the only, reading materials available. In many cases, textbooks are considered the voice of authority as well as the medium of instruction and the main resource for teachers.¹⁴

Even though governments may well be aware of the close link between textbook provision and educational achievement, plans for assessing, developing, publishing, printing, and distributing textbooks are often hampered by limited resources and/or in some cases the lack of political will. In order to bring about positive change, training programs for educational planners and administrators at the national level using materials such as the twelve modules on planning the development of school textbooks,¹⁵ produced by the UNESCO Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) must become more widely implemented.

At the regional level, the Basic Learning Materials Initiative (BLMI) provides an excellent model for identifying problems and addressing challenges of textbook provision, including quality control in developing countries with limited capacities and resources.¹⁶ This seven-year initiative, in which nine countries participated, stressed the need for policy-makers to focus on establishing enabling environments for the development of national publishing capacities.

In countries emerging from crisis, there are much greater obstacles to overcome. Even if books have been published in sufficient quantities, the infrastructure for distributing and transporting them

14 Askerud, Pernille. *A Guide to Sustainable Book Provision*. Paris: 1997, p. 16.

15 *Planning the Development of School Textbooks*. Paris: UNESCO (IIEP), 1995

16 *Basic Learning Materials Initiative: Final Report*. Paris: UNESCO, 2004.



to schools may be weak or nonexistent, as in the case of Iraq.¹⁷ It is therefore important to provide the necessary technical assistance at every stage of the process, from planning to provision, beginning with rapid response to immediate needs. Ultimately, the aim is for every teacher and learner to have easy access to a plentiful and sustainable supply of books and materials.

3.3.1 Assist with plans for sustainable book provision

Since policies and procedures for sustainable book production are country-specific, UNESCO will provide technical assistance, as requested, in building national publishing, printing and distribution capacities to reach the objective of increased availability. Part of UNESCO's role in assisting governments in meeting these demands is to intensify capacity building efforts in countries where needs are most urgent so that quality textbooks and supplementary materials are in sufficient supply in every school and learning center. In public school systems, the goal is for quality textbooks and learning materials be individually accessible, either on loan or distributed free of charge to each and every learner.

It is equally important to convince governments, especially those in the process of reforming or reconstructing their educational systems, to place a larger portion of their human and financial resources into the book sector, as this will not only fill a vital role in education but also benefit the economy. Dependence on external financing and technical assistance would thus be transformed into autonomous, sustainable systems for the supply of textbooks and other learning materials for both formal schooling and for lifelong learning.

3.3.2 Support efforts to decentralize the book sector

During the last decade, the trend has been away from centrally controlled, government-owned systems for book provision to more decentralized systems allowing for competition and local choice, a trend which thus far has produced more pedagogically innovative and level-appropriate materials.¹⁸ However, there remains much work to be done. Accessibility of the materials and their effective use in the learning environment requires the cooperation and active participation of all actors. "When the political will is present, the shortage of learning materials will disappear,"¹⁹ so the question becomes how best to mobilize political will and raise funding in ways that will encourage decentralized systems to flourish.

Decentralized systems also allow more space for the production of learning materials in local and minority languages. In the

17 The UNESCO Textbook Quality Improvement Programme (2004-2005) assisted not only in the revision and printing of some 8.75 million textbooks following the fall of the Ba'athist government, but also in building the Ministry of Education's capacity for adapting and using a computerized distribution system despite persisting violence. For a complete description of the project, see *Textbook Quality Improvement Programme: Final Report*. Paris: UNESCO, 2005.

18 Montagnes, Ian. *Thematic Studies: Textbooks and Learning Materials 1990-1999*, World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal. Paper presented at the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal. Paris: UNESCO, 2001.

19 Ibid.



context of the threat of globalization to traditional societies, Amartya Sen has pointed out that “the appropriate response has to include concerted efforts to make the form of globalization less destructive of employment and traditional livelihood, and to achieve gradual transition. For smoothing the process of transition, there also have to be opportunities for retraining and acquiring of new skills...”²⁰ Building local capacities to plan, develop, produce and distribute quality teaching and learning materials can serve both of these purposes.

As stated in the UNESCO position paper on multilingual education, shortages of materials in minority languages can be a serious obstacle to mother tongue instruction²¹, which in turn can exacerbate the difficulty of learning in a second language. This, in turn, can lead to social exclusion and stratification in multilingual learning contexts as well as loss of cultural and linguistic identity within minority communities. To counter these hegemonic trends, UNESCO will support countries in encouraging multilingual, multicultural textbook and learning materials development. Indeed, one of the natural outcomes of decentralization is an increase in the diversity of textbook contributors, resulting in a broader range of choices for schools and communities .

3.3.3 Promote alternative solutions and future perspectives

Over the next decade, developments in communication technology are likely to continue to bring about a worldwide shift in the way learning materials are defined, developed and used. While traditional, printed and bound textbooks produced by centralized government facilities or private publishing houses are not likely to disappear, there are now a variety of alternatives available. Desktop publishing capacities facilitate local publication of manuals, guides, and even textbooks. Internet access makes it possible to download and print entire volumes, while the distribution of CD-ROMs with print functions may well become a better option than the warehousing and transport of learning materials in parts of the world lacking transportation systems. It is conceivable that in societies emerging from prolonged conflict, Internet access may precede lower tech printing capacities in much the same way mobile phones have “leapfrogged” the development of landline infrastructures, creating opportunities to introduce higher-tech, lower cost systems.

While computer-based technology has made the production of textbooks and learning materials less expensive and more locally driven, access to the necessary infrastructures and hardware is still a distant dream in many parts of the world. To work toward closing this aspect of the “digital divide,” UNESCO will collaborate

20 Sen, Amartya. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Random House, 1999, p. 240.

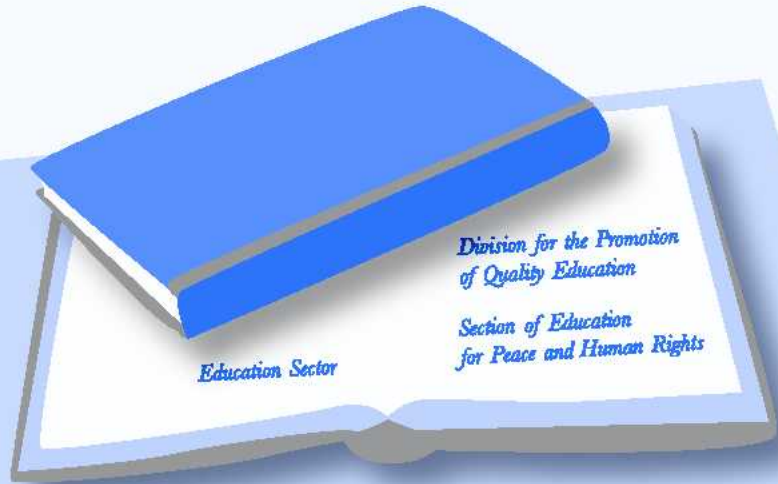
21 King, Linda (ed.) *Education in a Multilingual World*, UNESCO Position Paper. Paris: UNESCO, 2003.



with Member States in planning, and, where appropriate, enlisting the assistance of the private sector in building capacities for planning, producing and distributing high quality materials using locally available or easily acquired technologies.²²

22 Such as desk-top book design and low cost, high volume duplicating technology with computer interface.





Modes of Operation

4


Within the framework of quality education for all, UNESCO will seek to integrate and expand its modalities for training and capacity building for the production and revision of quality materials. In the area of research, the promotion of innovative research methodologies, advocacy and the diffusion and sharing of information and best practices are essential modes of operation.

4.1 Training and Capacity Building

The correlation between quality learning materials and attaining educational goals is undeniably high everywhere, but there is an especially strong connection in environments where access to information and other resources is limited. The need for governments to build the capacity to develop curricula, provide quality learning materials in a range of formats and to continuously revise them to keep pace with new ideas, new technologies, and new priorities for educational systems is greater than ever. Such activities as training of textbook evaluators and managers, creation of review boards, building of quality assurance systems, and development of higher technology, lower cost publishing capacities and distribution systems are vital to the effective operation and sustainability of the book chain.

4.1.1 Establishing measures of quality

Taking into account the evolving definition of textbooks and recognizing that textbook revision is an ongoing process, many of UNESCO's forthcoming activities will focus on assisting governments in building the capacity to define and implement standards



for quality in both content and design based on projected learning outcomes that are responsive to local needs.

Additionally, UNESCO will assist regional networks and other international research and professional organizations in reaching consensus on fundamental principles and establishing processes for monitoring textbook quality from a broader perspective. Such assistance may, for example take the form of supporting international consultations organized to identify, define and ensure that measures are put into practice as an integral part of a reciprocal textbook revision or collaborative development process.

4.1.2 Support international consultations on textbook review and revision

As outlined in the *UNESCO Guidebook for International Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*²³, international textbook consultations are multi-stage processes in which two or more countries, most often with regional ties, convene for the purpose of reviewing each others' textbooks in a certain area for the purpose of developing a common set of analytical tools, recommendations for revision and, ultimately, cooperation in the development of new materials. The first step in initiating such a process is for the countries involved to engage in preliminary meetings with researchers, authors, editors, curriculum specialists and policy makers to define the aims, methods, and duration of the project. Textbooks are exchanged, and, after a period of time for review, the second stage is set into motion. During this stage, participants may participate in a general workshop on textbook revision and compare models used in various regions of the world in similar content areas. The third step is for participants to present their own analyses and, if applicable, to come to terms with each other on problematic issues and agree on a set of recommendations in accordance with the original aims. Finally, in a follow up meeting, participants focus on specific ways of revising or producing new classroom materials that reflect their common recommendations. These consultations have the added benefit of bringing together academics, educators and publishers from countries which may have histories of long-standing or periodic conflict with one another, and as such may in themselves become a for dialogues for reconciliation and intercultural understanding. Alternatively, participating countries may share common languages and cultural values, yet have different approaches to problematic issues on a broader scale, in which case the consultations become an opportunity for learning through the exchanging experiences and perspectives on reaching solutions.

²³ Pingel, Falk. *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*. Paris: UNESCO, 1999, p. 25.

4.2 Research

UNESCO will continue to support research in international textbook analysis and revision to inform its support and establish areas of priority for its programmatic activities. The established model for reciprocal analysis and collaborative revision at the regional and subregional levels continues to be used, where appropriate, as a platform for raising awareness and producing practical, mutually agreed-upon guidelines for planners, authors, and editors.

For research activities leading toward a more participatory approach to reform within a national or local system, the action research model is suggested, in which users of the materials including learners, parents, and other community members are invited and encouraged to identify problems, discuss options, and make constructive recommendations to authors, editors, and publishers. UNESCO will also support ethnographic studies on the use of traditional learning materials among indigenous peoples of the world, including maps, games, charts, and other visual aids used to transfer and maintain local knowledge, values, and skills.

To bridge the gap between theory and practice, UNESCO will use a variety of formats to disseminate research results, including a website and expanded electronic newsletter for researchers, teachers, textbook writers, and curriculum planners to exchange experiences, plans and best practices.

4.3 Advocacy

In response to the critical shortage of textbooks and other learning materials of good quality in many parts of the world, UNESCO will advocate vigorously for the development of textbook policies which focus on issues of quality with the end goal of 100 % distribution of one book per learner for the duration of a learning cycle, course, or school year. At the same time, UNESCO will advocate for the establishment and maintenance of school and community libraries stocked with reading materials that are relevant to the school curriculum and responsive to the needs of the community.

In nonformal and distance education, UNESCO will support a rights-based approach to the design, production and delivery of learning materials within the framework of quality education. At the same time, UNESCO will advocate for the continued production, preservation and use of traditional learning materials and methods in both formal and nonformal settings.²⁴ In situations of crisis and in societies emerging from conflict, UNESCO will continue to advocate for emergency provision of revised (if necessary) textbooks and other learning materials in coordination with UNICEF, INEE, USAID and other agencies to meet immediate needs.

24 For example, oral poetry, drama, and story telling, inscribed texts and visual aids (maps, charts, diagrams) made out of locally available materials.



4.3.1 Communication and information sharing

There is no better way to develop, refine, and promote project models than to share them as widely and through as many channels as possible. The primary means for information sharing will be the website of the International Textbook Research Network with attached electronic newsletter,²⁵ which will provide news and technical information, showcase ongoing projects, provide links to resources, and invite dialogue on issues related to textbook research and development.

In addition to the, channels for information sharing include *Education Today*, the Newsletter of UNESCO's Education Sector, conference presentations, participation in regional networks and associations as well as the popular media.

²⁵ Created and managed by the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Braunschweig, Germany in cooperation with UNESCO.



Priorities

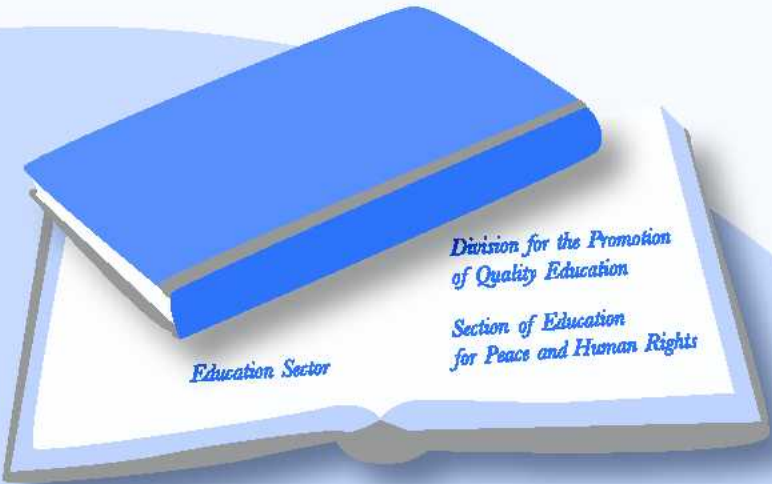
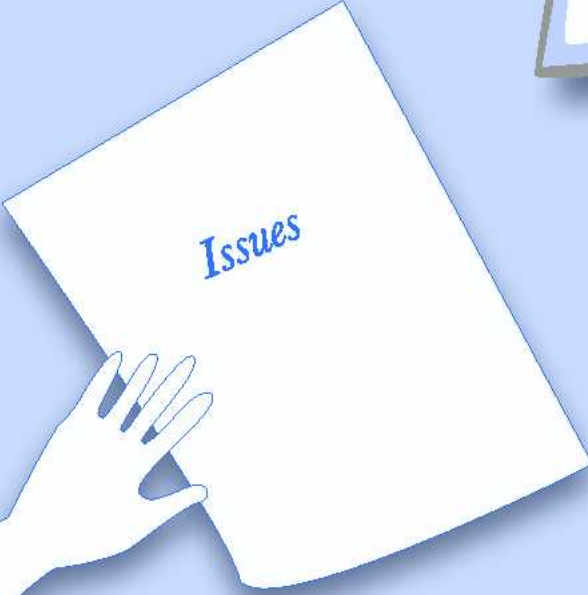
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While all activities in textbook development and revision are important to undertake without delay in order to accelerate progress toward EFA and Millennium Development goals, following priorities take precedence:

1. **provide assistance in areas of greatest need**
2. **initiate dialogue on fundamental principles**
3. **facilitate policy development**
4. **assist in the development of national publishing industries**
5. **promote good reading habits**
6. **support textbook research**
7. **disseminate and exchange information**

Since many of the world's children, youth, and adults have very limited or no access to textbooks and learning materials of any kind, UNESCO's first priority is to assist in capacity building for sustainable textbook provision in countries and regions of greatest need. The issue of quality is critical to building cultures of peace everywhere; therefore, the second priority must be to initiate dialogue on fundamental principles is the second priority. The international norms and standards emerging from this dialogue will, in turn, lay the foundation for national, subregional, and regional policy development, which is the third priority. The fourth and fifth priorities are directly related to the capacity building activities of the third.

The sixth priority focuses on research aimed at exploring issues of quality in textbook development and revision. The insights and knowledge gained from these activities will be fed back into the development of programmatic work in the first three priorities, and will culminate in the dissemination and sharing of information based on both experience and research.



Issues

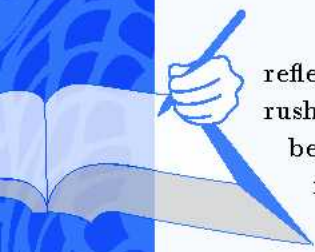
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Issues that can arise during the course of the development of textbooks and learning materials fall under the major categories of (1) resistance to change, (2) lack of time and (3) lack of resources. When even one of these conditions is present, it is likely that obstacles will occur that cause the entire process to grind to a halt.

National governments' agreement to strengthen and expand their efforts to provide quality education in all of its dimensions is the springboard, without which there is little hope of achieving EFA or MDGs. As an example, a system may develop the capacity to produce textbooks with high surface qualities such as four-color printing, appealing illustrations, high grade durable paper and hard covers, yet the same books may not match the level or cultural environment of the students, may easily be gender biased or may exclude activities designed to engage learners in interactions that lead to an awareness of their human rights or to universally shared values.

Another source of resistance may be the unwillingness to decentralize control of curricula and standards for publication from national to local control, potentially resulting in a stagnation of initiatives to produce materials in local languages that incorporate traditional knowledge and reflect the cultural values of local communities.

With the exception of emergency textbook provision projects, the development and production of quality materials is by its very nature a long-term process which cannot be successfully completed without sufficient time and resources, both material and human. While resources such as desk-top publishing software, hi-tech printing presses and computerized distribution systems are undeniably important, they are primarily tools in service to the human capacity to create pedagogically effective and culturally appropriate materials



reflecting a rights-based approach to quality education. In the rush to meet pressing needs, it is important to strike a balance between time constraints and the need to meet the quality imperative, ensuring that adequate time is allowed to complete the process of field-testing, feedback and revision for each new module, chapter, visual aid or activity plan that is introduced. In the longer term it can be anticipated that textbook revision cycles will increase in frequency, but also that the tools for producing materials of all kinds and in all languages will become more accessible to a broader spectrum of prospective authors, thus placing the critical selection of quality materials to match intended outcomes in a more central role for policy makers, teachers and communities.



Partnerships

7

7.1 Other UN Agencies

Other UN agencies, notably UNICEF, UNHCR, and UNRWA have been active in aiding governments in the provision of textbooks and other learning materials, especially in emergency relief efforts. UNICEF has also been particularly concerned with curriculum and textbook reform with regard to issues of gender bias, and violence prevention over the longer term. UNESCO will continue to strengthen these partnerships with these agencies, as well as by identifying areas of continued collaboration and cooperation in the planning, funding, and implementation of its programs.

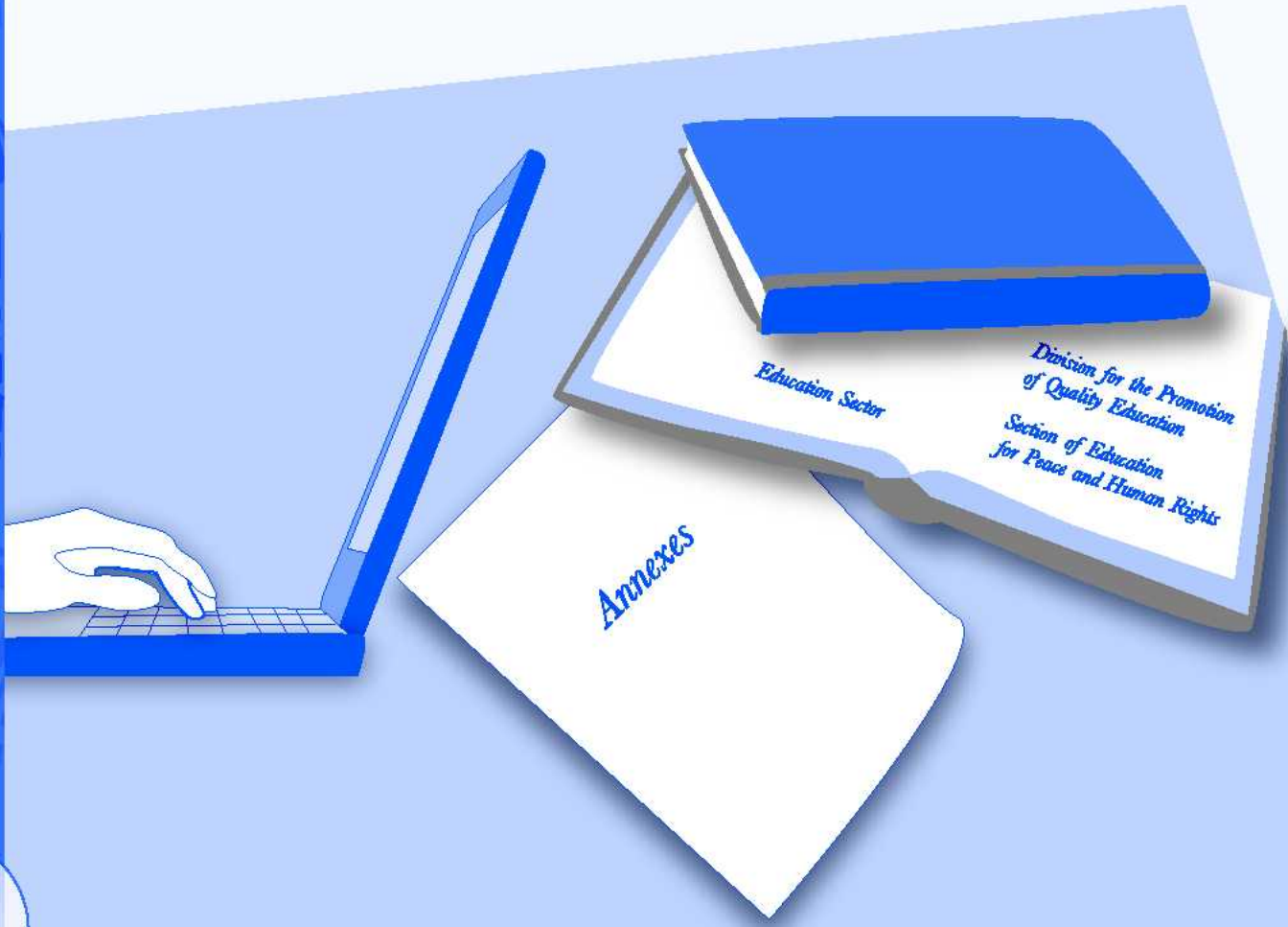
7.2 International Organizations, Networks, Professional Associations, and the Private Sector

UNESCO will strengthen existing ties with international organizations and networks which promote and implement innovative approaches to research and design of quality learning materials, notably with the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) for International Textbook Research. Cooperative links with relevant professional organizations, such as the European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations (EUROCLIO), the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU), the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), and the International Publishers' Association will also be strengthened.

In the private sector, UNESCO will explore the possibilities of establishing mutually beneficial partnerships with publishers, software developers, and printing houses who are interested in contributing toward its capacity building and information sharing initiatives. International norms and standards for quality textbooks



and other learning materials will also be made available to publishers and developers in the private sector as guides for project development.



Annexes

ANNEX 1: Historical Overview

In the period of reconstruction in Europe following World War II, the founding members of UNESCO sought to build upon the earlier work of the League of Nations by creating a set of criteria for developing and revising textbooks with a view toward enhancing international understanding.²⁶ Also, in the post-war period, UNESCO organized a number of seminars aimed toward developing an awareness of the multiplicity of regions and cultures in the world as presented in the textbooks of the industrialized nations.²⁷ With the onset of the Cold War and the growing division between the industrialized and the developing world, UNESCO and its partners focused more on developing strategies resulting in awareness of multiperspectivity, especially in the teaching of history.²⁸ In other words, the learner is presented with events or topics as seen from several different perspectives, requiring her to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to formulate her own interpretation.

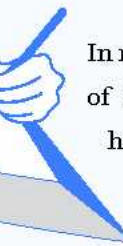
Since 1974, UNESCO has strongly encouraged activities involving the reciprocal study and revision of textbooks and other learning materials. This general approach evolved primarily from a recommendation made at the 18th General Conference for incorporating universally shared values in the development and revision of all educational materials “in order to ensure that they are accurate, balanced, up-to-date, unprejudiced, and will enhance mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.”²⁹ These activities led to awareness of the need for a more global approach to the way problems are presented in textbooks while, at the same time, respecting local interpretations and views. By the late nineteen eighties, the approach had broadened to acknowledge the necessity of a more participatory paradigm for textbook research involving not only the creators but also the users of the materials. Significantly, these methods tend to give equal weight to the transmission of knowledge, attitudes and skills.

26 Pingel, Falk. *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision*, Paris: UNESCO, n.d., p. 8-9.

27 Ibid.

28 For a full definition of this term see Stradling, Robert, *Multiperspectivity in History Teaching: A Guide for Teachers*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2003.

29 Ibid, p. 12.



In response to the proliferation of increasingly devastating acts of international terrorism within the last decade, UNESCO has placed a high priority on developing educational and cultural programmes aimed at promoting mutual understanding and respect for cultural diversity. A resolution adopted at the 31st session of the General Conference in 2001 called for the promotion of dialogue predicated upon “the unity of humankind and commonly shared values, the recognition of its cultural diversity and the equal dignity of each civilization and each culture.”³⁰ Indeed, textbooks and other learning materials are now considered a major player in both the prevention of violence and in aiding societies emerging from conflict.

ANNEX II: Recommendations of the International Experts Meeting of 2002

The main purpose of the International Experts’ Meeting on Textbooks and Learning Materials held in Paris in December, 2002, was to assist UNESCO in this area with a view toward becoming more effective in enhancing quality education based on universally shared values. Within this framework, participants were invited to formulate recommendations for UNESCO and its partners. The meeting proposed two main recommendations for the Organization’s future work:

- (i) To strengthen UNESCO’s capacity to handle the issue of textbook and learning material revision and improvement efficiently, and
- (ii) To stress the importance of research and conceptual policy shaping.

In addition, the participants recommended the following:

- Textbook revision should be analyzed in the context of the improvement of quality education.
- Multiculturalism and language of instruction should be taken into account in the development of textbooks and other learning materials.
- The concept of media competence should be developed further as a key element of education for democracy.
- UNESCO should continue to work with its partners to explore the possibility of establishing international agreements on normative standards for textbook development and revision.

30 31 C/ res. 39 adopted at the 11th plenary meeting on 20 October 2001.

- UNESCO should capitalize on existing regional and sub-regional curriculum and textbook networks to gain cooperation among them.
- UNESCO should gain commitment from Member States to fight representations of violence in textbooks and other learning materials.

List of References

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- Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments, adopted by the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal 26-28 April 2000)*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Delors, Jacques et. al. (1996). *Learning: The Treasure Within: Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Gurol, Irzik and Denize Ceyhaln (eds.). (2004). *Human Rights in Textbooks*. Istanbul: Tarhik Vakfi Publications.
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— UNESCO *Strategy on Human Rights*. (2003). Adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 32d Session (29 September-17 October, 2003).

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List of Activities and Publications on Text-books and Learning Materials³¹

Normative Background

- **1 C/res. 6: Improvement of textbooks and teaching materials, 1946**
 For the purpose of fostering international understanding and removing certain sources of misunderstanding and improving other teaching materials, the following activities will be undertaken during 1947:

 - (i) draft a model method of text-book analysis, including the development of principles by which Member States might analyze their own text-books and teaching materials.
 - (ii) Compile an annotated list of existing bilateral or regional agreements on text-book revision.
 - (iii) Collect at Unesco House samples of textbooks commonly used in various countries for the teaching of history, geography, civics and other subjects related to international understanding.
 - (iv) Organize and initiate a study of the treatment of international co-operation in these textbooks.
- **3 C/2.3: Improvement of text-books and teaching materials, 1948**
 The Director-General is instructed, in co-operation with Member States, National Commissions, and other national and international bodies, to further the improvement of text-books and teaching materials, in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the First Session of the General Conference.
- **6 C/1.311/1.316: Education for international understanding/curricula and methods, 1951**
 The Director-General is authorized to stimulate Member States, in the light of the seminars previously held on this subject, to proceed with the revision of their history and geography textbooks, particularly through either bilateral or multilateral arrangements.
- **22 C/13.1.2 § (c) ii: Peace, international understanding, human rights and the rights of peoples, 1983**
 The General Conference invites the Director-General, in particular:

 - (ii) to promote the strengthening of action in school education, including technical and vocational education, through, more especially, the revision and improvement of curricula, textbooks, teaching materials, and teacher training, and to encourage the extension of such action to higher education, eliciting inter alia a greater contribution from educational institutions at various levels to the World Disarmament Campaign and to the implementation of the Plan for Development of Human Rights Teaching;
- **24 C/res. 13.1.2. (c): Peace, international understanding, human rights and rights of peoples, 1987**
 The General Conference invites the Director-General, in particular:

 - (vii) to foster the development of bilateral and multilateral agreements

31 Published by or with the support of UNESCO.

between Member States for the reciprocal study and revision of textbooks and other educational materials in order to ensure that they are accurate, balanced, up-to-date and unprejudiced and will enhance mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples, as stipulated in the 1974 Recommendation, and to provide technical support to Member States for this purpose;

■ **25 C/res. 7.5: Unesco's contribution to peace, human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination, 1989**

The General Conference invites Member States:

(d) to give full support to international co-operation in the field of school textbook evaluation, research and revision, as a follow-up to the International Consultation held at Braunschweig (1988), as well as to the realisation of the plans for improved international co-operation and broader impact of the Associated Schools as established by the International Consultation at Bangkok, and, in particular, to the implementation of the interregional pilot projects;

■ **28 C/res. 5: Declaration and integrated framework of action on education for peace, human rights and democracy, 1995**

Teaching materials and resources:

18. All people engaged in educational action must have adequate teaching materials and resources at their disposal. In this connection, it is necessary to make the necessary revision of textbooks to remove negative stereotypes and distorted views of <<the other>>. International co-operation in producing textbooks could be encouraged. Whenever new teaching materials, textbooks and the like are to be produced, they should be designed with due consideration of new situations. The textbook should offer different perspectives on a given subject and make transparent the national or cultural background against which they are written. Their content should be based on scientific findings. It would be desirable for the documents of UNESCO and other United Nations institutions to be widely distributed and used in educational establishments, especially in countries where the production teaching materials is proving slow owing to economic difficulties. Distance education technologies and all modern communication tools must be placed at the service of education for peace, human rights and democracy.

■ **29 C/res. 38: Toward a culture of peace, 1997**

(c) to give a fresh impulse to developing innovations in school curricula and educational contents and methods; to encourage the conclusion of agreements between neighbouring countries, or countries in conflict, for the revision of school textbooks on history and geography; and to continue to support the development of the network of UNESCO Chairs for peace, human rights and democracy and of the UNESCO International Network of Textbook Research Institutes;

■ **31 C/res. 3.B.I.2.1: Toward a new approach to quality education, 2001**

Authorises the Director-General:

(a) to implement the corresponding plan of action in order to:

(i) promote a new approach to quality education as outlined in the Delors report by emphasizing the acquisition of values, attitudes and skills needed to face the challenges of contemporary society, sustainable development and globalization, with a clear focus on human rights education, the reform of curricula and textbook revision, and the Associated Schools Project (ASP).




Conferences, Seminars and Consultations

- **International educational seminar on the teaching of history as a means of developing international understanding**, Sèvres, France, 18 July-21 August 1951.
- **Better history textbooks: international seminar on textbook improvement**, Brussels 1950. Report, UNESCO, 1951.
- **Bilateral consultations for the improvement of history textbooks**, Paris, UNESCO, 1953. Bilateral consultations and mutual textbook revision after the second world war originated in a new and stronger awareness of the need for closer international relations. This document describes the work carried out since the end of World War II by bilateral committees or bodies whose task has been to frame recommendations after a critical study of textbooks, for improving them with a view to the better mutual understanding of the countries concerned.
- **Sub-regional workshop to establish a framework for evaluation of textbooks in social sciences, history and geography**, final report, UNESCO, 1987.
- **International consultation with a view to recommending criteria for improving the study of major problems of humanity and their presentation in school curricula and textbooks**, Finnish National Commission for UNESCO, 1988.
- **International conference on history teaching and peace in Latin America, 1996: La Enseñanza del Historia para la Integreación y La Cultura de la paz, Conferencia Internacional**, Cartagena de Indias, Organizacion de Integracion Educativa, Ciencia, Tecnologia y Cultura, 1997.
- **Disarming history: international conference on combating stereotypes and prejudice in history textbooks of South-East Europe**, Visby, Gotland (Sweden), 23-25 September 1999.
- **Report on the training seminar for textbook analysis within the framework of the project on intercultural education and human rights education in Albania**, Tirana / Albania, 28th January -1st February, 2002.
- **Interagency meeting on book sector development for EFA**, Paris, 21-22 May 2002.
- **International experts' meeting on textbooks and learning materials: components of quality education that can foster peace, human rights, mutual understanding and dialogue**, Paris, 12-13th December 2002.
- **Euro-Arab dialogue: the image of Arabo-Islamic culture in European history textbooks**, Cairo, 12-14th December 2004.

Handbooks and Guidelines

- **L'enseignement de la geographie: quelques conseils et suggestions**. Paris: UNESCO, 1949.
- **Handbook for the improvement of textbooks and teaching materials as aids to international understanding**. Paris: UNESCO, 1949.

- **La révision des manuels d'histoire dans les pays nordiques sur la base de consultations réciproques.** Paris: UNESCO, 1950.
- **A handbook of suggestions on the teaching of geography, towards world understanding.** Paris: UNESCO, 1951.
- **African geography for schools, a handbook for teachers.** Paris: UNESCO, 1974. This book was intended to meet the long-felt need for better teaching material on the geography of Africa. It is designed primarily for use in African schools, but it also should serve as teaching aid in other regions.
- **Guidelines for textbook writing, prepared by participants in the UNESCO textbook writing workshop for national liberation movements.** Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 1978.
- **Educational development, a practical issue: guidelines for the preparation, production and distribution of textbooks.** Paris: UNESCO, 1980.
- **UNESCO handbook for the teaching of social studies.** Paris: UNESCO, 1981. This Handbook was conceived at the "International Meeting of Experts on the Role of Social Studies in Education for Peace and Respect for Human Rights". Fourteen social studies experts met for one week to consider ways that UNESCO Member States might better utilise social studies courses in order to implement the suggestions made at the meeting.
- **New UNESCO source book for geography teaching.** Paris: UNESCO, 1982. A large part of the book is devoted to practical suggestions on ways and means improving teaching methods and to the whole range of materials necessary for the effective teaching of geography at both the primary and secondary levels. It was intended to raise the standard of geography teaching and at the same time enlarge the contribution of this important school subject to better international understanding.
- **Guidelines for curriculum and textbook development in international education.** Paris: UNESCO, n.d. Elaborated on the basis of two International Expert Meetings organized by UNESCO in Braunschweig, Germany (1988) and Brisbane, Australia (1991), this manual presents guidelines and criteria for the development, evaluation and revision of curricula, textbooks and other educational materials in order to promote an international dimension in education.
- **Down with stereotypes: eliminating sexism from children's literature and school textbooks.** Paris: UNESCO, 1986.
- **The elaboration of school textbooks: a methodological guide.** Paris: UNESCO, 1989.
- **Planning the development of school textbooks: a series of twelve training modules for educational planners and administrators.** Paris, UNESCO (IIEP): 1995.
- **La conception et la réalisation des manuels scolaires, Initiation aux techniques d'auteurs.** Paris: Centre Internationale de Phonetique Appliquee-Mons, 1997.
- **From plan to print: a guide to sustainable book provision.** Paris: UNESCO, 1997. Designed for use by policy makers and educational planners, this handbook encourages innovative approaches to the development of systems for book production and distribution in developing countries.

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 ■ **UNESCO guidebook on textbook research and textbook revision.** Paris: UNESCO, 1999. The guidebook was designed to serve as one of the tools to encourage and support the efforts of Member States with regard to textbook and curriculum development and bilateral and multilateral textbook review based on UNESCO criteria and approaches.

- **Source documents for textbook evaluation and approval.** Paris: UNESCO, 2001. A set of guidelines developed as part of the Basic Learning Materials initiative in nine African countries, in partnership with DANIDA.

Reports, Articles and Information Sources

- **Seminar on the improvement of textbooks, particularly history books.** UNESCO Courier III, 9, 1950.
- **History, geography and social studies, A summary of school programmes in fifty-three countries.** Paris: UNESCO, 1953. The survey was prepared by UNESCO as a practical contribution towards a long-term programme for encouraging the development of international understanding among children through the teaching of regular school subjects. Summaries of school programmes in history, geography and social studies presented here are listed in the alphabetical order of the fifty-three countries concerned.
- **History textbooks and international understanding: towards world understanding.** Paris: UNESCO, 1953.
- **Women in US history high school textbooks.** Hamburg, Germany: UNESCO Institute for Education 1973.
- **History in black and white: an analysis of South African school history textbooks.** Paris: UNESCO, 1983. The study re-examined and took further the analysis of South African Textbooks and the way in which they reflected the preoccupations of a political system based on racial segregation.
- **Study on the portrayal of men and women in school textbooks and children's literature in Norway.** Paris: UNESCO, 1983.
- **Multilateral evaluation of history and social studies teaching materials.** Helsinki, Finland: Finnish National Commission for UNESCO, 1983. The multilateral evaluation of secondary school history and social studies teaching material was carried out between 1978 and 1982. The evaluation was made primarily of textbooks dealing with the last two centuries, with references to earlier periods whenever necessary.
- **Textbook provision and feasibility of co-operation among SADC Countries (Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe).** Paris: UNESCO, 1996.
- **Learning to live together through the teaching of history and geography,** in *Prospects*, (UNESCO) XXVIII, 2, 1998.
- **UNESCO international textbook research network, participants.** Braunschweig, Germany: Georg-Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (with financial support of UNESCO), 1999.
- **Teaching history differently: a lesson from the Balkans.** Paris: UNESCO, 2000.

- **Improvement of Balkan history textbooks, project reports.** Istanbul, Turkey: Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey (with financial support of UNESCO), 2003.
- **The basic learning materials initiative, final report.** Paris, UNESCO, 2004. This report documents the work of the Basic Learning Materials Initiative (BLMI) supported by DANIDA in nine participating countries from 1996-2002 and summarizes the outcomes. Recommendations for textbook provision in developing countries facing particularly difficult challenges in this area are included.
- **Textbook quality improvement programme, final report.** Paris: UNESCO, 2005. Under this emergency programme, 8.75 million mathematics and science school textbooks were revised and made available to primary and secondary school children in Iraq during 2003/2004 in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The programme then embarked on capacity building activities with a view to improving the printing and distribution structures within the country.
- **UNESCO/ International textbook research network newsletter, Numbers 1 – 10.** Braunschweig, Germany: Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (with financial support of UNESCO), different years of publication.

Selected List of Networks and Organizations Concerned with Textbook Research

The American Textbook Council

<http://www.historytextbooks.org/about.htm>

Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA):
Working Group on Books and Learning Materials

http://adeanet.org/workgroups/en_wgblm.html

The Centre for Pedagogical Texts and Learning Processes

<http://www-lu.hive.no/tekstar/engversion.htm>

EUROCLIO (European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations)

<http://www.eurocliohistory.org/>

Georg-Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research

www.gei.de

Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI)

<http://www.kedi.re.kr/>

International Association for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media (IARTEM)


<http://www.iartem.no/index.htm>

South-East Europe Textbook Network

www.ffzg.hr/seetn/

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A Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Learning Materials

As with all media, the issues surrounding the development and use of textbooks are complex and often controversial. However, the primary purpose of textbooks – to transmit knowledge, values, attitudes, skills and behaviors – is a constant. The question of *which* knowledge, *which* values, and *which* skills they teach is of concern to localities, nations, and indeed to the international community because textbooks and other learning materials can be powerful tools for sustaining languages and cultures, shaping thought processes and promoting tolerance. No less importantly, the question of *how well* they fulfill their primary purpose of educating learners involves issues of cultural and environmental relevance, social inclusion, gender equality and literacy. A third major question asks *who*, in the end, has the opportunity to use the materials and at what cost. In many areas of the world, the problems surrounding equitable and sustainable provision of quality learning materials for all learners have yet to be solved.

The need for a comprehensive strategy to address these central questions and, therefore, to guide UNESCO's work in textbook development and revision has become more pressing. The demands and challenges of life in the 21st century, together with the devastating consequences of war, terrorism and natural disasters require new, and often more integrative, approaches to all aspects of education, including textbooks and learning materials. *A Comprehensive Strategy for Textbooks and Other Learning Materials* responds to this need by setting out a single, coherent approach encompassing both traditional and new forms of learning media as key components of a quality education for all.

