

**REPORT ON THE
CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN
TEXTBOOK COUNT 3**



Prepared by the
Government Watch
Ateneo School of Government

Submitted to the
Partnership for Transparency Fund

Makati, Philippines
August 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

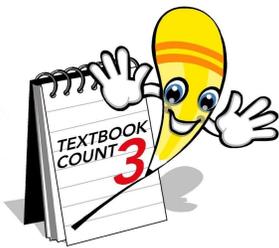
1. For the third time, G-Watch of the Ateneo School of Government served as the national coordinator for the civil society participation in the *Textbook Count: National Textbook Delivery Program*. With support from the Partnership for Transparency Fund, G-Watch implemented the *Textbook Count 3* activities from April 2005 to June 2006.
2. A Consortium of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) signed a Commitment of Support and Cooperation with the Department of Education to formalize the engagement. The consortium has 34 enlisted members. The Coca-Cola and KAAKBAY-CDI signed separate Memoranda of Agreement.
3. The civil society and private sector helped in monitoring the bidding, production, delivery, and onward distribution of from the districts to elementary schools.
4. The time spent for the bidding from the posting of advertisement (September 2004) to the release of the Notice to Proceed (July 2005) was nine months. The Notice of Award, however, had been available as of March 2005. One major cause of delay in the completion of the bidding phase was the determination of the amount of copyright fee that must be paid to the author of Math 3 textbook.
5. The average unit price of the textbooks for Math Grade 3 was P46.64 and for Math IV High School P46.00. These prices were at least 48% lower than the average unit price of textbooks prior to the use of international competitive bidding, which was P90.00. Such lower price saved the government from an opportunity cost of P68.5 million, which was theoretically the amount of corruption.
6. In the production stage, the CSOs joined 21 out of 25 inspections in the printing presses and warehouses. The Quality Inspection Team inspected 165,023 textbooks and lesson guides or 13% of total contracted quantity. There were 61,992 textbooks (5%) that were recommended for repair and replacement. Commonly found defects include uneven density, wrong registry, ink smudge and creases.

7. In the delivery stage, almost 6,000 volunteers from groups, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Namfrel, and Barug! Pilipino, were mobilized to help in the monitoring. On the average, the CSOs and community representatives signed 76% of delivery receipts, or 767,765 textbooks amounting to P47 million.
8. In the onward distribution from districts to elementary schools, Coca-Cola reported an accomplishment of 77% for textbooks and 81% for Lesson Guides, with an equivalent value of P11.4 million and P3 million, respectively. Using the G-Watch monitoring finding in 2004, the Coca-Cola assistance helped save P2.9 million from possible wastage.
9. The evaluation focused on various issues, such as the absence of accountability of forwarders, improving the physical quality of textbooks, finding better ways to facilitate the onward distribution from district to elementary schools, the need to promote more community-school-private sector partnership in the education sector, and ways to build on the gains of the *Textbook Count*.
10. The effect studies on the participation of the youth and the private sector in the *Textbook Count* affirmed the value of civic engagement in governance. Various insights were shared to optimize the benefits from these unique modes of participation.
11. The institutionalization of the *Textbook Count* would take place within the State and the society. A proposed Memorandum Order "Institutionalizing NGO and Private Sector Participation in the Department's Procurement Process" is expected to set the stage for such institutionalization.

REPORT ON THE CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN TEXTBOOK COUNT 3

Prepared by the Government Watch
Ateneo School of Government

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FOR THE THIRD TIME AROUND, G-Watch of the Ateneo School of Government has undertaken the national coordination for the civil society participation in the Department of Education's (DepED) *Textbook Count: National Textbook Delivery Program*. With support from the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF), G-Watch spearheaded the civil society sector in helping DepED ensure the delivery of the right quantity and quality of textbooks to the public schools. The activities were implemented from April 2005 to June 2006.

The civil society participation in *Textbook Count 3* was formalized with the signing of a Commitment of Support and Cooperation between the DepED and the Consortium of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Thirty-four CSOs were enlisted in the Consortium. These include anti-corruption and good governance advocacy groups, education-oriented alliances, faith-based (Christian and Muslim) organizations, and student and youth sector groups. The DepED signed separate Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) with the Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines, Inc. (CCBPI) and the Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan - Community Development Initiative (KAAKBAY-CDI) for the distribution of textbooks in hard-to-reach areas.

The CSOs and the private sector had been involved in four major activities. These were (1) bidding, (2) production, (3) delivery to high schools and districts, and (4) onward distribution from the districts to the elementary schools.

The activities started in the early stages of procurement. G-Watch tracked the progress of the procurement process from the pre-bid conference and opening of the bids to the post-qualification and awarding of contracts. After the contracts

had been awarded, the CSOs joined a series of visits to the printing presses and warehouses for the pre-delivery quality inspection of textbooks.

Massive information drive was also conducted to organize and mobilize volunteers, such as the Scouts and other well-meaning citizens, for the checking of the deliveries. Targeted were 4,844 school sites for the delivery of 1,269,617 textbooks, amounting to P63,069,903.77 (including transport and delivery costs). The deliveries were set from 15 August to 21 October 2005.

Finally, the Coca-Cola truck distributors' network and an education advocate group helped bring the textbooks to schools located in far-flung villages. Targeted were 8,401 elementary schools located in poor and hard-to-reach areas under the Social Reform Agenda (SRA) provinces. Distribution should ideally start two weeks after the last delivery to the districts.

Upon the completion of all these activities, post-delivery evaluations were conducted to look at the outcome of the program implementation. All stakeholders from the government, suppliers, civil society and community were gathered together to share their experiences and insights on the implementation of the activities.

Also, G-Watch studied the effect of the *Textbook Count* on the private sector, its effect on the young participants and beneficiaries, and ways to institutionalize the citizens' participation in the DepED procurement process.

The Challenge of *Textbook Count 3*

Two consecutive years of successful implementation of the *Textbook Count* created even higher expectations. Questions and apprehensions on how it could be sustained and institutionalized constantly surfaced in discussions. What will happen if there is a change in the DepED leadership? Can the program continue without the support of the top leadership? On the other hand, can the civil society continuously bear the cost of its participation? Up to what point can the citizens carry on with their volunteer service to help maintain transparency and accountability in the government?

Second-generation problems also started to gain prominence: Is it enough that we check the physical quality of the textbooks? Should we also look at the content? What happened to the books after the districts received them? Did they finally get to the hands of the students? Why can't the DepED deliver directly to the elementary schools, instead of the districts?

Thus, the value of *Textbook Count 3* was premised on its capability to address these concerns that accumulated from the last two rounds. At the outset, some salient actions could be considered as immediate responses to these challenges. The aggressive “marketing” resulted in the entry of many more participating CSOs, which signaled the sustained public interest in the project. The lingering worry over textbooks that remained in the districts’ storage brought to life another innovative idea, where a softdrink distributor’s vehicle, surprisingly a rather ordinary sight even in far-away villages, was given an extraordinary role.

It is worth noting that the DepED initiative to tap the assistance of a private company for the textbook distribution was sounded off as a concrete response to a finding from another PTF-supported G-Watch monitoring, which was conducted in 2004. The monitoring revealed that 21% of the textbooks delivered to the poor districts did not reach the elementary schools because of the difficulty and assumed lack of funds to transport the books.

By and large, these challenges appeared to work well for the program and for all stakeholders, especially DepED. They allowed the *Textbook Count* to constantly reinvent itself and slowly find its way towards the goal of sustainability.

Organizing the Civil Society

Joining the *Textbook Count* on its third year had been significantly meaningful to the civil society. It proved the Department’s consistent commitment to the partnership and cooperation between the government and its citizens, which is what the *Textbook Count* is essentially all about. No wonder, such commitment eventually made the civil society participation its most distinctive component; and the *Textbook Count* program itself a model for public-private engagement for transparency, accountability, anti-corruption and good governance.

This opportunity, however, was at the same time a big responsibility considering the load and extent of work it required. It was a big task that could neither be accomplished by a few small civil society groups nor by haphazard preparations. It was necessary to get as many CSO forces as possible and to lay down simple but effective plans.

On 29 April 2005, the Consortium of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) participating in the *Textbook Count* met to regroup and reorganize. Previous member-organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Namfrel, together with newly invited groups from the student sector and Muslim

community, were in attendance. In the meeting, the opportunities and challenges of the third round of *Textbook Count* were presented. New commitments were then given as a response. See **Annex 1** for complete list of participating CSOs and their individual commitments.

The CSO regrouping reaffirmed the role of G-Watch as the overall coordinator for the CSO participation in the *Textbook Count*. As the overall coordinator, G-Watch served as the bridge between the CSOs and the DepED. It received all the necessary documents and information from DepED and transmitted them to member CSOs. It likewise received reports and comments from CSOs and sent them to DepED for action.

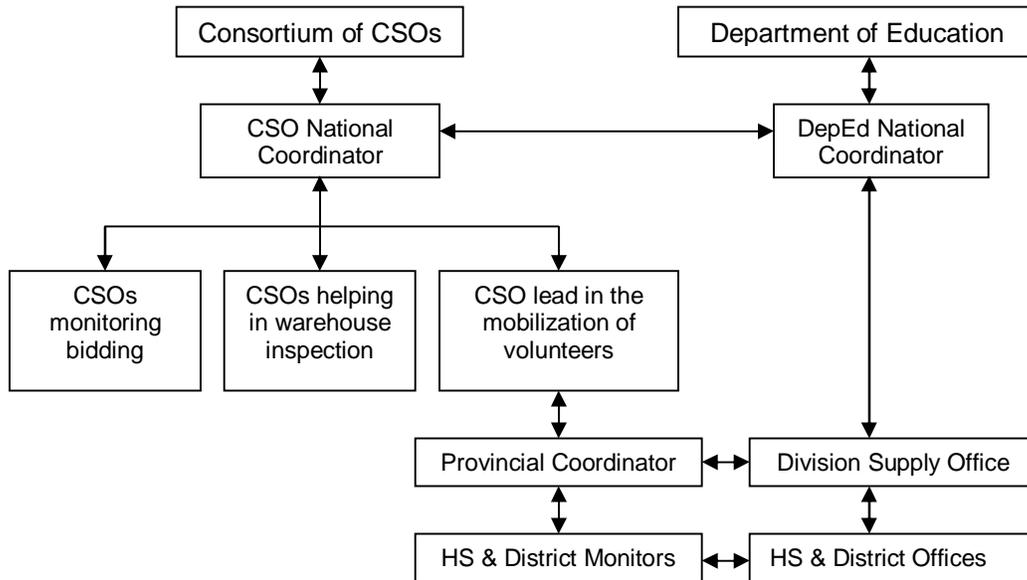
The Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts of the Philippines, on the other hand, accepted the responsibility of taking the lead in the mobilization of volunteers. They called up their Councils in concerned regions for the mobilization of Scouts in the schools that would receive the textbook deliveries. There were 49 Boy Scouts Councils and another 49 Girl Scouts Councils nationwide that served as local coordinators (see **Annex 2** for the Provincial Assignments). From the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, 4,974 adult volunteer monitors were enlisted.

The NAMFREL group also committed to help in all the *Textbook Count* activities, including the mobilization of more local volunteers. From its 52 chapters that participated in this year's *Textbook Count*, NAMFREL has mobilized 819 individual volunteer monitors. Barug! Pilipino, a church-based anti-corruption CSO in Cebu City, was also able to organize a group of 35 college students to do monitoring.

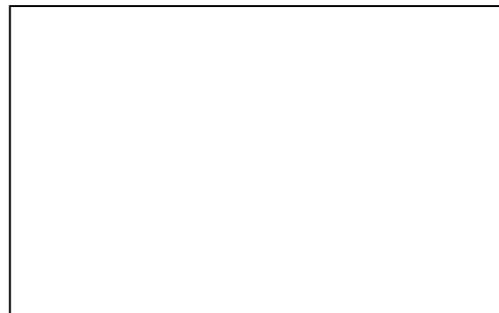
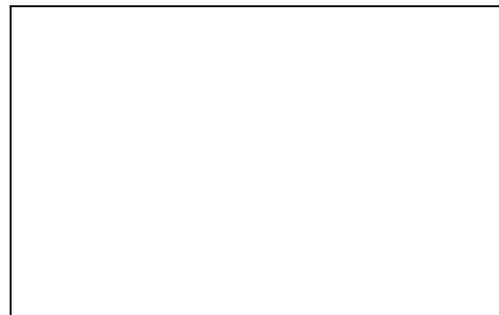
Various commitments also came from more CSO members, such as helping prepare the materials for the volunteers, sending representatives to the textbook inspections, and popularizing the project.

In the third run, the Consortium of CSO followed the same mode of working relationship with DepED. Horizontal or parallel coordination points were designated to avoid a centralized handling of issues and concerns. It likewise almost mirrored the DepED's bureaucratic hierarchy. Thus, G-Watch as the CSO's overall coordinator partnered with the Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS), which is the unit in DepED directly handling all matters concerning *Textbook Count* (except for the bidding, which is handled by the Procurement Service). At the middle level, the Councils dealt with the Division Offices. Finally, the community- or school-based volunteer monitors coordinated with the school authorities, particularly the Supply Officer or Property Custodian.

Coordination Scheme between DepED and the Consortium of CSOs

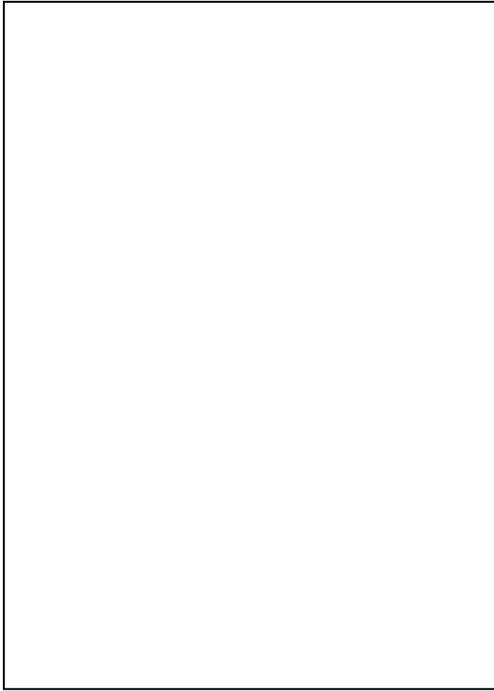


Topping these preparations and commitment-pledging, a launching ceremony was held on 4 August 2005 to seal the partnership between the Consortium of CSOs and the DepED. The event witnessed the signing of the *Commitment of Support and Cooperation* between the two sectors, and the signing of the Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) of DepED with the Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines, Inc. and the KAAKBAY CDI.

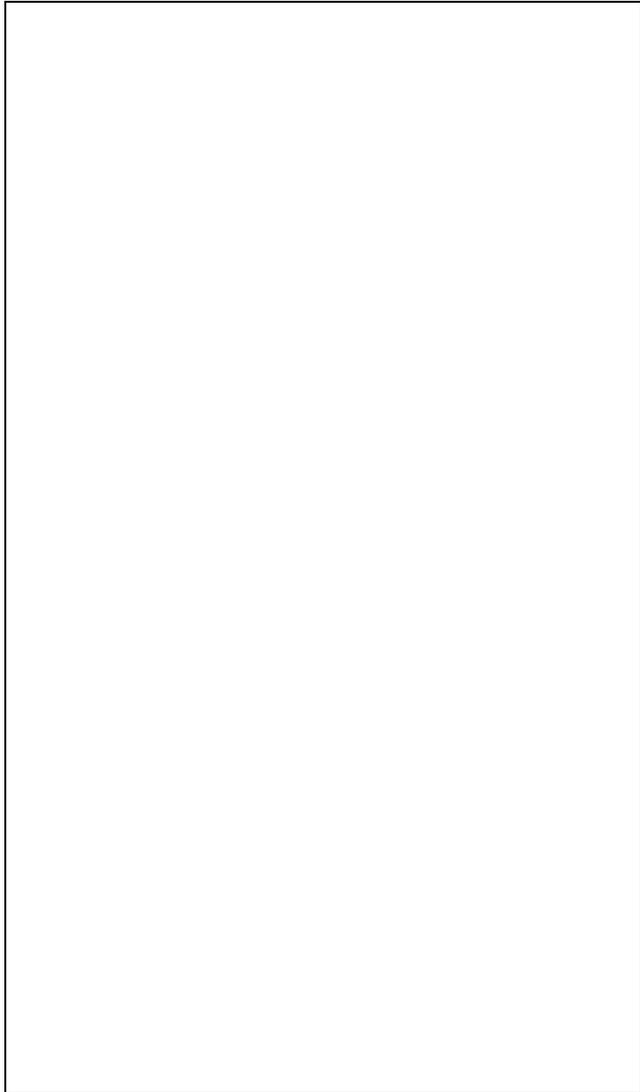


Left: Former Education Usec. Juan Miguel Luz with members of the Consortium of CSOs. Upper right: Ateneo VP Dr. Angeles, Usec .Luz and Coca-Cola President Mr. Huang. Lower right: Alternative music artist Noel Cabangon sings the theme song of Textbook Count.

Part of the launching event was the release of the *Textbook Count* print advertisements in three national newspapers, Philippine Daily Inquirer (3 August), Philippine Star (4 August) and the Business World (5 August).



*Left: Textbook Count 3 ad says, "No matter where, no matter how, textbook deliveries can go far."
Right: textbook allocation and schedule per division.*



Aside from popularizing the project, the advertisements also called on the citizens to become textbook volunteer monitors. The ads provided the contact numbers of G-Watch and IMCS. Volunteers who came forward in response to the ad were referred to the coordinating Councils or directly to the districts and high schools near the place of their residence. Among those who got involved through the ad were the Rotary Club of Parañaque and a group connected to the Representative of Camarines Sur.

Bidding: G-Watch as Third-Party Observer

With the passage of the new Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA) in 2003, G-Watch started receiving invitation from DepED Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat to observe the conduct of the bidding, including the pre-bid conference, post-qualification and awarding of contracts. This role became even more important with the introduction of the *Textbook Count*.

For *Textbook Count 3*, G-Watch again took on the task of observing the early stages of the procurement of textbooks, namely pre-bid conference, bid opening, post-qualification and content evaluation, pre-award deliberations, and awarding of contract. Originally, three sets of procurement were lined up for *Textbook Count 3*. These were (1) Textbooks on Math for Elementary Grade 3, Math for 4th Year High Schools and Lesson Guides for Elementary Grades 1-6, (2) Textbooks on Makabayan and Teacher's Manuals, and (3) Supplementary Reading Materials (lodged with an Inter-Agency BAC headed by the Department of Budget and Management).

The bidding for the Supplementary Reading Materials started late and was dropped from the list of target items for the *Textbook Count 3*. On the other hand, the bidding for the Makabayan Textbooks and Teacher's Manuals failed because none of the books passed the content evaluation.

Only the Math 3 and Math IV textbooks had successful bids. The contracts for the procurements covered under the *Textbook Count 3* were awarded to the following suppliers:

Supplier	Scope of Contract	Contract Amount
Grand C	Zone 1: Math 3, Math IV; Zone 3: Math 3	30,398,790.84
Book Media	Zones 2 & 4: Math 3 and Math IV	56,553,350.56
JTW	Zones 1-4: Lesson Guides 1-6; Zone 3: Math IV	21,499,271.91

The averaged unit prices of the textbooks were as follows:

Math Grade 3	Math IV HS	Lesson Guide					
		Gr. 1	Gr. 2	Gr. 3	Gr. 4	Gr. 5	Gr. 6
46.64	46.00	80.36	85.00	105.00	88.29	92.64	103.57

Compared to the P90.00 averaged unit price of textbooks prior to the use of international competitive bidding and the new GPRA, the current unit prices of the Math 3 and Math IV textbooks were around 48% lower. Such lower prices

saved the government from an opportunity cost of P68.5 million, the amount theoretically saved from corruption. (There was no comparison available for Lesson Guides because it was the first batch of procurement of its kind.)

Meanwhile, it took nine months to finish the procurement process from advertisement (September 2004) to the release of the Notice to Proceed (July 2005). The delay in the processing of the Notice to Proceed was due to

Printing and Delivery of Math 3 and Math IV Textbooks
and Lesson Guides Grade 1-6

Fund Source: Loan from the International Bank of
Reconstruction and Development

- 9 & 16 September 2004: *Advertisement*
- 20 September 2004: *Bid Bulletin 1*
- 15 October 2005: *Pre-Bid Conference*
- 22 October 2004: *Bid Bulletin 2*
- 12 November 2004: *Submission and Opening of Bids*
- 21 December 2004: *Resolution to Award*
- 28 January 2005: *BAC agreed in principle to 8% royalty fee*
- 2, 23 & 28 March 2005: *Release of Notices of Award*
- 5 May 2005: *BAC renegotiated royalty fee from 8% to 6.25%*
- 9 May 2005: *Publisher JTW stated offer of 8%; BAC members recommended to the Secretary not to award the contract*
- 4 July 2005: *Release of Notice to Proceed*

intervening issues, such as the recommended amendments of the World Bank and the disagreement among the BAC members on how much copyright fee would be paid to the author of Math 3 textbooks. If not for these issues, the DepED could have completed the process in six months as the Notices of Award had already been completed by March 2005.

For further details of the procurement proceedings, see **Annex 3.**

At any rate, the World Bank's own scrutiny of the bids and the deliberations that went on between and among the BAC members before awarding the contracts could not, in any way, be viewed as unnecessary. They were, in fact, indicative of a functional and healthy interaction among those concerned in the procurement. They were probably unavoidable circumstances, but from which the government must learn.

The usual controversies over irregularities and anomalies that hounded the textbook bidding were obviously not present in this procurement. The presence of the CSO observer in every step of the way showed clearly the complete transparency in the process. There was full disclosure of information, including those that involved disagreements and hard decisions that the public would likely criticize. Also, it had somehow influenced the behavior of both the agency authorities and the bidders to act accordingly.

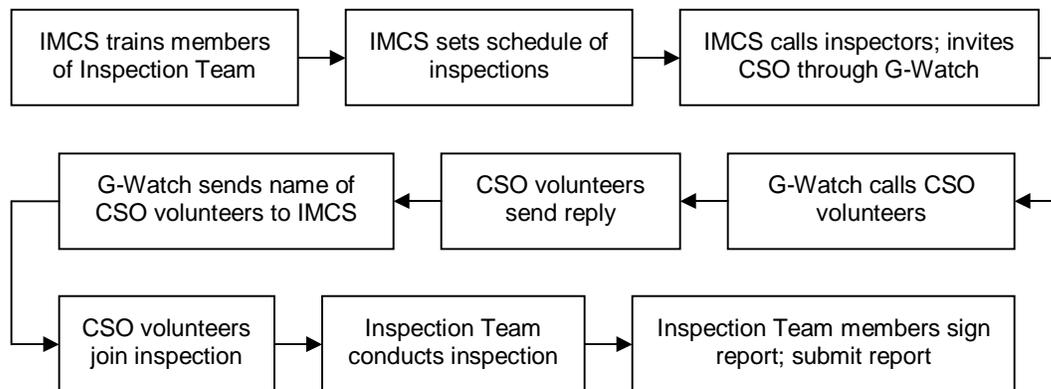
In gist, the CSO presence lent credibility to the bidding process. Both the government and the private sector found in the CSO a reliable witness who could provide objective testimony on the outcome of the process.

Inspection of Textbooks at the Printing Presses and Warehouses

After the contracts had been awarded to and finally accepted by the suppliers, the DepED's Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS) prepared immediately for the monitoring of the production stage. The most important part of the preparations was the formation of the Textbook Quality Inspection Team (QIT), which consisted of representatives from the IMCS, BAC, Procurement Service, Management Office of Social Expenditure Management Project (SEMP), Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP) and Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), and the CSOs.

The purpose of the inspections was for the early detection and rectification of defects in the textbooks. It was also aimed at guarding against the use of substandard materials and non-compliance to specifications set out in the contract. It is done in three stages of production, namely (1) printing and folding, (2) binding, trimming and checking of finished books, and (3) packing and packaging.

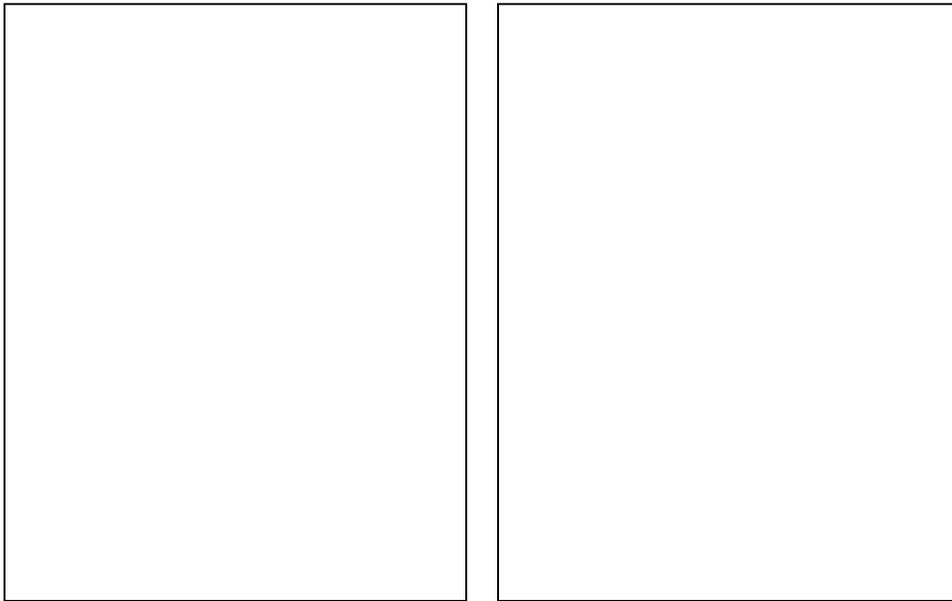
The coordination with the CSOs for the inspections followed the process below:



The inspections that were conducted were unannounced (except for follow-up inspections). Notification to the suppliers regarding the inspection was being sent on the day of the inspection itself. Using a customized yes-no template, the QIT was tasked to inspect 10% of available items in the printing press or warehouse. The findings of individual inspectors would be consolidated in one Inspection Report Form, which would contain the QIT's official findings and recommendations. The findings and recommendations would be discussed with the supplier's point-person, who would eventually be asked to sign the official QIT Inspection Report Form. In case of defective textbooks, another inspection would be scheduled to check compliance to the QIT's recommendation. All the

members of QIT would also sign the Inspection Report Form.

On 22 June 2006, the DepED-IMCS, in cooperation with G-Watch, held a training-seminar on Textbook Quality Inspection for all members of the Quality Inspection Team. From the CSO, 20 members received the training. The training consisted of (1) lecture on parts of books, types of textbook defects and ways to detect the defects, and the process of conducting the inspections; and (2) visit to a printing press for a test-run of the inspection. The Code of Conduct for CSO inspectors was also read and explained during the seminar. See **Annex 4** for copy of training materials and CSO Inspector's Code of Conduct.



Visit to SD Printing Plant during the Training for textbook inspectors.

The CSOs joined the DepED Quality Inspection Team in 21 out of 25 inspections conducted in the printing presses and warehouses of Grand C, JTW and Book Media. These inspections were conducted from 21 July to 20 September 2005.

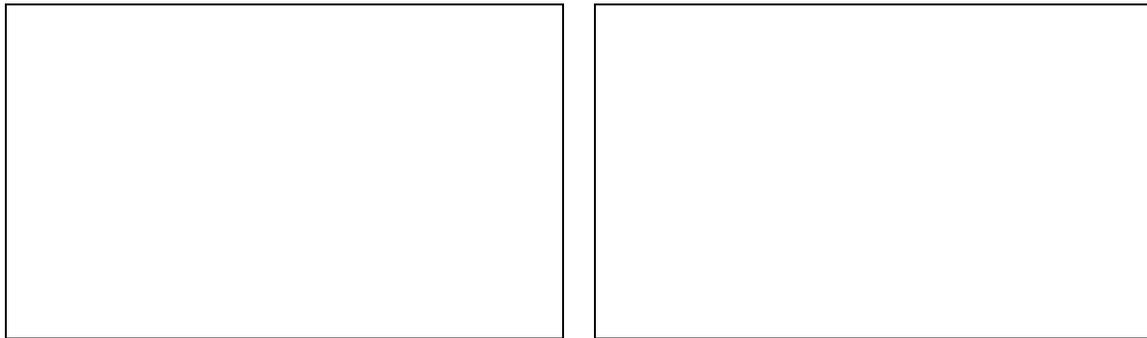
Date	Supplier	Title	Production Stage
21 July	Grand C	Math 3	Printing and Folding
22 July	Book Media	Math 3	Printing and Folding
26 July	Grand C	Math 3	Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book
27 July	Book Media	Math IV	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book
28 July	Grand C	Math IV	Printing and Folding
28 July	JTW	Math IV;	Printing and Folding

		Lesson Guides	
1 August	Book Media	Math 3; Math IV	-Binding, Trimming, and Checking of Finished Book -Printing and Folding
2 August	Grand C	Math 3 Math IV	-Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book -Printing and Folding
5 August	JTW	Math 3 Math IV Lesson Guides	-Binding, Trimming, and Checking of Finished Book -Printing and Folding -Printing and Folding
9 August	Grand C	Math 3	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
11 August	JTW	Math IV Lesson Guides	Printing and Folding
17 August	Book Media	Math IV	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
19 August	Book Media	Math 3 Math IV	Packing and Packaging
23 August	JTW	Math IV, Lesson Guides	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
1 Sept	Grand C	Math IV	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
2 Sept	Grand C	Math IV	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
6 Sept	JTW Corp	Math IV	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
8 Sept	Book Media	Math 3 Math IV	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
13 Sept	JTW Corp	Lesson Guides	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
19 Sept	Book Media	Math IV	Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging
20 Sept	Grand C	Math 3	Printing, Folding, Binding, Trimming, Checking of Finished Book, Packing and Packaging

See **Annex 5** for copy of Inspection Reports.

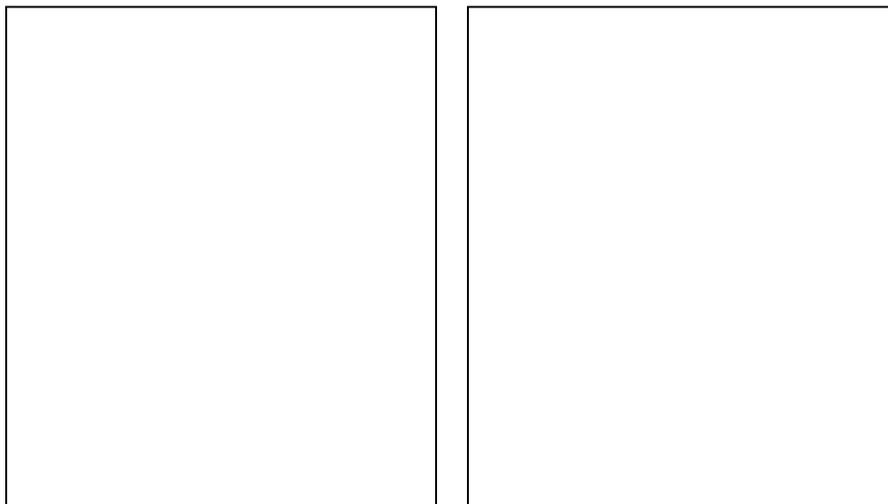
A total of 165,023 textbooks and lesson guides or 13% of total contracted quantity had been inspected during these inspections. Based on the reports, 61,992 or 5% had been recommended for repair and replacement. With this data alone, the inspection team's effort avoided wastes in government investment for education by around P3 million.

	Grand C	Book Media	JTW	Total
Contracted Quantity	392,298	667,012	207,120	1,266,430
Inspected	53,794	81,055	30,174	165,023
% Inspected	13.71%	12.15%	14.57%	13.03%
Defective	14,441	20,456	27,045	61,992
% Defective	26.85%	25.24%	29.79%	4.89%



Textbook Quality Inspection Team members at work.

Most of the defects found in the textbooks were uneven density, wrong registry, ink smudge and creases.



Left: Wrong registration; right: ink smudge. Source: IMCS Report

The inclusion of the CSO in the Textbook Quality Inspection Team did not only increase the number of DepED's inspectors, it also added a new and uniquely critical perspective to the conduct of inspection and the conduct of the inspectors. In a way, the effectiveness of the inspections could be attributed to the enhanced dynamism and higher expectations among the members of the inspection team, one main contributory factor of which is the presence of the CSO. With the introduction of volunteer service component in the task, the civil society has influenced in a subtle way the entire team's motivation for work.

In the end, the team's diligence paid off as it translated into better quality textbooks from the suppliers. According to DepED-IMCS, they received very few complaints from the field regarding the physical quality of the textbooks delivered to them.

Delivery and Distribution

The delivery, and now with the distribution, was a much anticipated part of the *Textbook Count*. It put to test the infrastructure set in place for coordination, communication and other forms of exchanges between and among the key players from the DepED (central office, division offices, high schools and districts), CSOs (central coordinator, local coordinators, local chapters, school- and community-based groups and stakeholders), and the suppliers and their forwarders.

Made precisely for the conduct of the *Textbook Count*, the synchronized delivery time, by zone and by division, provided the framework for the movements of the various players, most especially the suppliers' forwarders. Prior to *Textbook Count*, the timetable for deliveries was governed by a general provision in the Bidding Document, which required the suppliers to deliver within 150 days. It was left to the individual supplier's discretion to determine the sequence of their delivery destinations, which made the DepED a passive receiver rather than an assertive client who would thoroughly track the delivery of the textbooks. The situation was more chaotic when there were multiple suppliers since the delivery schedule of one supplier could differ radically from the schedule of another supplier, which made tracking practically impossible.

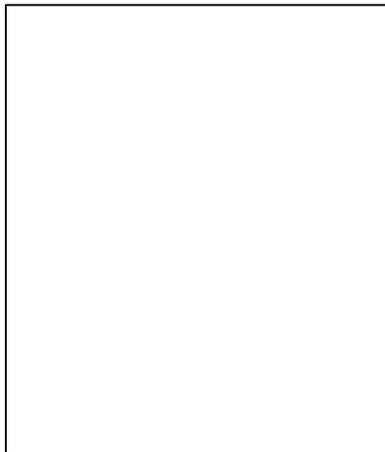
The synchronized delivery, therefore, imposed discipline on the working relationship between the DepED and the suppliers. The civil society came into the picture as another pressure point. When the civil society volunteers agreed to wait for the deliveries, it presupposed the predictability of the delivery

schedule and the suppliers' adherence to that schedule. Thus, DepED stressed to the suppliers that their deviation from it would cause great inconvenience to the volunteers who would wait for the deliveries at their own expense.

Now, the organizing of civil society monitors for *Textbook Count 3* stood basically on the same operational framework. It, moreover, capitalized on the relative familiarity with the framework, which the key players have already developed from their previous experience.

Before the start of actual delivery, G-Watch had undertaken preparatory coordination with the DepED-IMCS to map out the monitoring activities for the synchronized deliveries. By April 2005, the DepED-IMCS had already prepared the allocation list and tentative schedules of the delivery of Math 3 and Math IV textbooks and Lesson Guides. These were forwarded to G-Watch for the preparation of the materials for the CSO monitors. Necessary revisions in schedules were made later in view of the delays caused by the copyright issue.

After receiving the materials from IMCS, G-Watch, with the help of Boy Scouts from the Don Bosco Technical Institute Makati, the Ten Outstanding Boy Scouts of the Philippines Association and NAMFREL, sorted and prepared them for the use of volunteer monitor in each district or school. Approximately 10,000 sets of materials had been prepared and sent out to the respective addresses of the Boy Scout and Girl Scout Councils and NAMFREL Chapters. These materials include:



- Duties and Responsibilities of BSP/GSP Coordinating Councils
- Report Form of the BSP/GSP Coordinating Council
- Simplified Guidelines on Textbook Delivery and Inspection
- Duties and Responsibilities of Textbook Monitor
- Monitor's Report Form
- Sample Inspection and Acceptance Report
- Inspection Guide
- Identification Card

See **Annex 6** for copy of materials distributed to volunteers.

Also part of the preparations was the conduct of the *Briefing-Orientation on Civil Society Undertakings in the Textbook Count 3* (see **Annex 7** for materials used in the Briefing-Orientation). The activity gathered local groups that would provide

link with volunteer monitors at the district and school level. The groups in the SRA provinces, which received Math 3 textbooks procured through the Third Elementary Education Project, were prioritized for the activity because they would be the pilot areas for the monitoring of the onward distribution from districts to elementary schools.

The Briefing-Orientation for volunteers of Luzon was conducted in 11 July 2005 at the Rockwell Center, Makati City. The activity was attended by the BSP and GSP National and Regional Offices and Coordinating Councils, NAMFREL, Alliance of Volunteer Educators, Rahma Foundation, Naga City People's Council, Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government, and the Fellowship of Christians in Government.

Then Education Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz addressed the participants. The first part of the program consisted of a review of the implementation of the *Textbook 2* and an introduction on the coverage and features of *Textbook Count 3*. The second part of the program focused on specific undertakings of the CSOs. A workshop was also conducted for a preliminary planning on the strategies to be employed in the monitoring.



See **Annex 8** for the Transcript of the Proceedings.

The Briefing-Orientation for the volunteers of Visayas and Mindanao was conducted in 15 August 2005 at the Ecotech Training Center, Lahug, Cebu City.



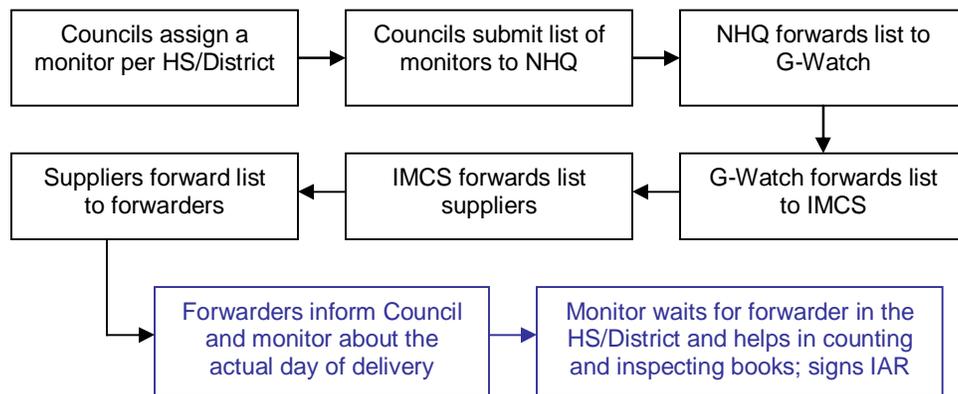
The activity was attended by the BSP and GSP Regional Office and Coordinating Councils and Barug! Pilipino, a Cebu-based anti-corruption group.

DepED Region VII Director, Dr. Carolino Mordeño, and Barug! Pilipino Coordinating Steward, Fr. Carmelo Diola, addressed the participants. IMCS Director Socorro Pilor

also was also present to give the overall background on the *Textbook Count 3*. The program used in the Luzon briefing was likewise used in the Visayas and Mindanao briefing.

See **Annex 9** for the Transcript of the Proceedings.

In those Briefing-Orientations, it was reiterated that the mobilization strategy to be used would be the same strategy employed in the previous year, as shown in the flowchart below:



Based on record, the mobilization for *Textbook Count 3* marked a total of 5,828 volunteer monitors from the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, NAMFREL and Barug! Pilipino. The Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts used the same list of adult Scout volunteers as last year. They were basically the Scoutmasters and Troop Leaders assigned in the recipient schools. The NAMFREL volunteers, on the other hand, consisted of church workers, parishioners and some professionals and students. From Barug! Pilipino, student and youth groups were tapped. There was also significant participation from the Parent-Teacher-Community Associations, but this had not been fully documented.

In the course of the actual delivery monitoring, the expectation that the forwarders would notify the concerned Council and the CSO monitor regarding the exact day of its arrival in the school was deemed most important. This would allow the monitors to maximize the use of their time and do necessary arrangements, such as taking leave from work or studies during the time of the monitoring.

The synchronized delivery by zone was scheduled as follows:

	# of Delivery Points	Schedule
Zone 1	1,180	15 Aug – 9 Sep
Zone 4	1,039	29 Aug – 7 Oct
Zone 3	1,210	12 Sep – 7 Oct
Zone 2	1,415	26 Sep – 21 Oct

See **Annex 10** for detailed allocation and schedule per delivery site.

On the other hand, the onward distribution from districts to elementary schools was expected to commence two weeks after all the suppliers had completed their delivery to the districts. The IMCS prepared a Distribution List per Elementary School under the Districts (**see Annex 11**), but this was subject to the revision of the District Property Custodian based on the most current inventory available.

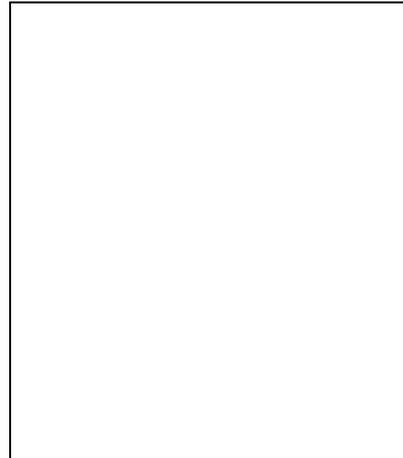
At the outset, it must be stated as a general remark that the suppliers were not able to follow strictly the prescribed schedule of deliveries. One forwarding company, which happened to be providing forwarding service to two of the suppliers, cited financial limitations as the reason for the delays in their delivery operations. Naturally, such delays had considerable implications on the participation of the civil society. These caused confusion as well as frustration among the field volunteer monitors. The delivery was extended until January 2006, or a delay of four months, while the distribution to elementary schools lasted until March 2006.

The official documentation of the IMCS regarding compliance to the delivery schedules reported these deviations. In SRA provinces, there were early deliveries in 8 out of 446 delivery sites (2%) and late deliveries in 220 out of 446 (49%). In non-SRA provinces, 485 out of 4,394 (11%) received early deliveries while 1,385 out of 4,394 (32%) received late deliveries. According to IMCS, the late deliveries had been imposed with the corresponding liquidated damages.

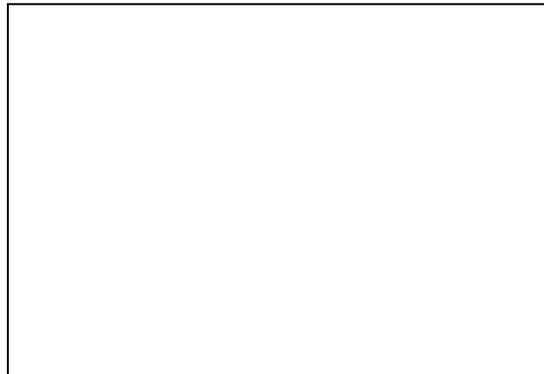
In response to several queries and complaints from the volunteers on the suppliers' non-compliance to schedules, G-Watch sent an advisory, which recommended alternative actions. These were to "(1) continue monitoring beyond the scheduled date if the forwarder will still coordinate with them, (2) conduct post-delivery monitoring, i.e. check the textbooks with the schools after they had been delivered, or (3) quit the monitoring of late deliveries altogether."

Other major problems that were encountered in the course of the monitoring include the failure of the forwarders to notify the monitors regarding the exact date of delivery, problematic coordination with some of the BSP/GSP Council offices—NAMFREL reported four cases, lack of information among the districts and high school officials regarding the delivery, and inadequate resources for the volunteers. The issues and concerns regarding the implementation were further discussed during the evaluation.

One major issue that put the *Textbook Count 3* on spotlight was the “delay” in the deliveries. The matter landed on the headline of a Cebu City major daily when Barug! Pilipino pointed out that the textbooks arrived late or were not in time for the opening of classes. It spurred controversy when a DepED official argued against the claim saying that the delivery was not late, but was in fact early for the next school year. The situation prompted G-Watch to issue a clarification. The delivery in Cebu City was not late since it complied with the prescribed delivery schedule, but it was late in terms of usage since textbooks are supposed to be used immediately after the schools have received them.



Despite the difficulties, the collective efforts of the civil society resulted in an average of 76% coverage, based on the number of delivery receipts with CSO and community representative signatures. This was equivalent to 767,765 textbooks amounting to P47 million.



Left: Ifugao; upper right: Zamboanga del Sur; lower

The accomplishments of the civil society monitoring of deliveries are detailed in the table below (See **Annex 12** for details):

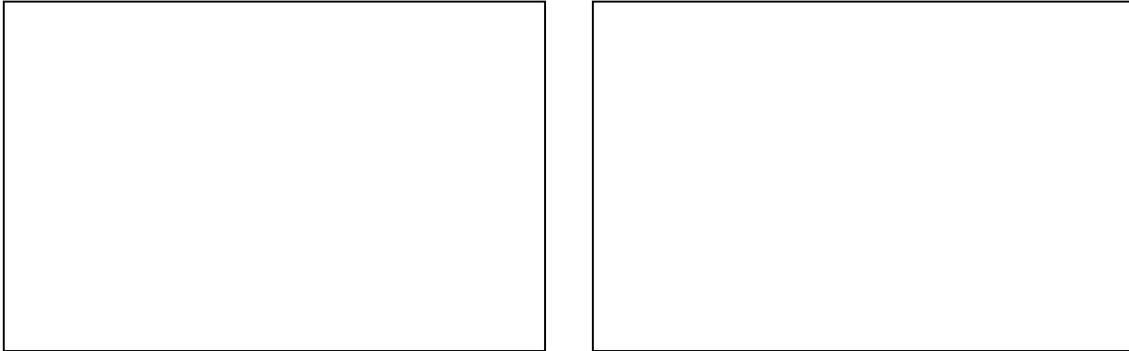
	<i>Math IV</i>	<i>Math 3</i>	<i>LG</i>	
<i>Luzon</i>	24%	64%	100%	63%
<i>Visayas</i>	100%	61%	100%	87%
<i>Mindanao</i>	39%	98%	100%	79%
<i>Average</i>	54%	74%	100%	76%
<i>Tracked Quantity</i>	487,408	237,555	42,802	767,765
<i>Equivalent Estimated Cost</i>	24,506,015.32	10,183,353.58	12,713,188.45	47,402,557.35

In view of the many instances of late deliveries, the timing of the onward distribution from the districts to the elementary schools was also negatively affected, particularly in terms of time-schedule. At any rate, Coca-Cola reported the following accomplishments:

Area	MATH 3 TEXTBOOKS			LESSON GUIDES		
	For Delivery	Delivered	Accomplishment	For Delivery	Delivered	Accomplishment
CAR (Benguet, Mt. Province, Apayao, Abra)	20,482	20,482	100%	3,945	3,945	100%
CAR (Ifugao, Kalinga)	17,165	17,165	100%	2,879	2,879	100%
Batanes Island	490	490	100%	109	109	100%
Romblon	8,855	8,190	92%	1,171	1,008	86%
Tacloban, Ormoc, Masbate	92,367	89,380	97%	12,890	12,644	98%
REGION VII	69,020	58,882	85%	8,443	7,220	86%
REGION 12/13	60,134	17,465	29%	6,705	2,032	30%
REGION IX	47,390	32,644	69%	6,226	4,369	70%
Total	315,903	244,698	77%	42,368	34,206	81%
Equivalent Value	11,412,714.70			3,163,370.48		

Using the 21% failure rate from the 2004 G-Watch monitoring finding, the Coca-Cola's assistance saved around P2.9 million from possible wastage (P2,225,200.37 for Math 3 and P668,000.00 for Lesson Guides).

The Coca-Cola's involvement in *Textbook Count 3*, however, also received criticism from left-leaning youth groups. It was captured in a newspaper (and later in a magazine) article entitled, "*Textbooks + Coke = Mass Mediocrization? Youth group decry DepEd-Coke tie-up.*" The criticism essentially raised the concern that involving a softdrink company was tantamount to the endorsement of its unhealthy product to the students.



Coca-Cola distributors delivering textbooks to Ifugao, Mountain Province.

Nevertheless, G-Watch viewed all the complaints, controversies and criticisms that came out in the course of implementing the *Textbook Count 3* as part of the process of dialogue with the general public. It is perhaps part of the program's growth that its concepts and mechanisms generate more varied comments. After all, any program that aims to be truly participatory cannot expect only good reviews; negative opinions and standpoints are a natural part of the public sphere.

By and large, the third year of *Textbook Count* illustrated the soundness of the concept and mechanisms employed for it, which provided good indications for its continuity and sustainability. The civil society and private sector's interest and willingness to be involved in it remained despite the recurring problems and difficulties encountered in the course of their involvement.

Evaluation

To appreciate the gains and face the challenges ahead, the DepEd and G-Watch conducted two evaluation workshops last May 2006, one in La Union for DepEd officials and participating CSOs in Luzon and another in Cebu City for the Visayas and Mindanao participants.

For this round of *Textbook Count*, several major concerns emerged or re-surfaced, requiring attention:

Absence of accountability of forwarders led to delay in deliveries. As in previous *Textbook Counts*, suppliers were given the discretion to hire their forwarders. These forwarders did not pass through the pre-qualification process unlike the printers/suppliers. Hence, DepEd had no idea on the capabilities and track record of these forwarders. A suggestion to separately bid the forwarding service had been deemed impractical as it would prolong, even compromise, the procurement of textbooks. Forwarders were directly accountable to the winning suppliers. On the suppliers/printers rested the responsibility of orienting the forwarders on the mechanics of *Textbook Count*, including informing the district property custodians and the civil society representatives on the exact dates of delivery.

Textbook Count 3 showed that forwarding remained the weakest link in the delivery process from warehouses to high schools and districts. On many occasions, forwarders failed to show up on the appointed date and failed to inform the district and CSO monitors of the changes in schedule. They turned up at the district unannounced, at times at odd hours of the day when the district offices were closed and the recipients were nowhere to be found. Reports persisted of boxes of textbooks being left at variety stores adjacent to public schools. In the absence of CSO representatives, district supervisors and property custodians had to cajole barangay captains or other village officials to witness and sign the Inspection and Acceptance Reports (IAR).

In the next *Textbook Count*, G-Watch proposed that DepEd require suppliers to include in their technical proposals the names of their forwarders and their capacity to undertake the forwarding tasks.

A culture of quality and accountability has yet to permeate the Department of Education. *Textbook Count* sought not only to ensure that the right quantity of textbooks is delivered and received but also that the textbooks are of good quality, free from physical defects. For this reason, the DepEd with CSO representatives armed with a detailed checklist inspected textbooks during the production stage to catch physical defects before delivery. The sheer number of textbooks made it well nigh impossible to inspect more than a sample. Further inspection was expected to be done when the books were received by the districts and at the school level when they are used by the teachers and students. However, despite repeated exhortations to end-users to return defective textbooks for replacement, formal reports of defects and returns (called Notice of Rejection) have lagged behind anecdotal evidence. Accustomed to years of shortages and uncertainty over the arrival of replacements, many

principals and teachers choose to make do with defective textbooks rather than reject and return them. It did not help the cause of quality and accountability any that many of those who filed Notices of Rejection failed to receive any acknowledgment and feedback from the IMCS.

Physical quality problems, e.g. loose binding, were partially a problem of specifications. The workshop brought forth proposals to re-examine specifications and their cost implications, e.g. the kind of glue used and the use of staples for thick books to address these problems.

Onward distribution from district to the schools remains a challenge. Onward distribution from district to elementary school remained an evergreen challenge for the Department. (This is not a problem at the secondary level as books are directly delivered to the schools.) The causes were manifold.

One was the absence of funding at the district office to do book deliveries to the schools. The Department of Education allocates funds for delivery equivalent to one peso per textbook but these monies are lodged at the division level. There had been proposals to match function with funding. However, problems of accountability, e.g. bonding the district officials who shall be responsible for the funds, auditing by COA, have dogged the proposal. Furthermore, school principals, some district supervisors do not know that such funds exist. In the absence of information, school principals and teachers shell out their own money to transport the books from the district office to the schools and eventually to the classrooms. For lack of information about the textbook distribution fund, these expenses never get reimbursed. In some cases, principals and teachers borrow vehicles from the Local Government Units (LGU) and tap into their city or municipality's Special Education Fund (SEF) to finance the transport of textbooks.

Textbook Count 3 sought to minimize the problems by mobilizing civic groups like KAAKBAY and businesses like Coca Cola Bottlers' Philippines, Inc. (CCBPI) to fetch the books from the district office and deliver these to the school. The pilot met with mixed reviews. The problems were mainly in communication and coordination. District offices failed to inform the local Coca Cola dealer that the books have arrived and are ready to be transported to the various schools. Concerns were raised on the propriety of using Coca-Cola trucks given that the Department of Education has discouraged the sale of all kinds of soda beverages/soft drinks in school cafeteria because of their dubious nutritional value.

For the next round of textbook procurement, the Department of Education is considering tapping Local Government Units to assist in the delivery of textbooks from district to schools. Local Government Units have a ready source of funds. The Local Government Code (LGC) mandates that one percent (1%) of the all Real Property Tax Collection of LGUs goes to a Special Education Fund (SEF) whose use is to be determined by Local School Boards chaired by local chief executives and whose membership includes DepEd officials at the district and division levels. A major concern is how to prevent textbook deliveries from becoming a venue for politicking and electioneering.

During the evaluation workshops, both the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts of the Philippines have committed to mobilize their Councils and troops at the local level to participate in transporting textbooks from the district to the school levels, such as the holding of "Textbook Delivery Days," "Walk for a Cause," and "Fun Runs." The workshops brought out the need to provide "psychic incentives" in the form of merits and certificates to the participating Scouts. Similar incentives were proposed for property custodians and teachers, such as additional points in their evaluation or in-service credits that can help in their promotion.

The need for Community-School-Private Sector Partnership is sinking in—albeit slowly—in the Department's culture. Among all government line agencies, the Department of Education has the most number of employees in government. With over half a million in personnel, the problem is communication and coordination. Through three rounds of the *Textbook Count*, awareness and appreciation of the project have grown. There remains a minority of education officials who are uncomfortable with civil society participation in government procurement because of the misconception that their actions are being monitored and inspected. It was reiterated in the workshop that it was the performance of suppliers and the forwarders that was being monitored, not that of DepEd officials.

As the crisis in Philippine education deepened, the past years have seen a similar harvest of programs tapping in the innate desire of many people, both young and old, to contribute and make a difference. Projects, such as *Brigada Eskwela* and *Adopt a School* have harnessed considerable goodwill and so-called social capital to achieve their objectives. At no time in history has the environment for public-private-community partnerships in education been more conducive. Unlike other government agencies which serve contending constituencies, e.g. Department of Labor and Employment or whose work is by nature divisive and acrimonious, e.g. agrarian reform, there is broad social consensus on what needs

to be done to stop the spiralling decline of education and enthusiasm to participate.

The efforts of the Department of Education are only scratching the surface. For all their success, *Brigada Eskwela*, *Adopt a School*, and *Textbook Count* remain centrally initiated. For these to be sustained, the energies of DepEd units from the regional office to the school have to be gathered and streamed. Years of centralized command and control have left many middle level field officials and school-based officers of the DepEd passive and bereft of initiative. Yet there is immense goodwill and trust to be tapped at the local level. Culture change in the Department in the direction of greater initiative and entrepreneurship remains a continuing challenge.

Looking Ahead: Building on the Gains of Textbook Count. The three *Textbook Counts* have generated immense goodwill for the DepEd enabling it to substantially improve its tarnished image as among the most corrupt government agencies. It has revived the spirit of volunteerism and provided models for partnership with civil society and private sector. Lastly but not the least important, it has generated savings for the DepEd.

It remains to be seen if the savings generated as a result of *Textbook Count* have been ploughed back into the sector to finance other worthy projects.

There remains the unsettled question what contribution the *Textbook Counts* have had in improving educational outcomes. Admittedly, such judgments do not come easy because textbooks are just one input in the pedagogical process. The challenge is twofold: first, how to institutionalize the spirit and mechanisms of *Textbook Count* and make it a standard operating procedure in the Department; and second, how to harness this same spirit of volunteerism and channel it to other equally important and pressing concerns of the public education sector.

(See **Annex 13** Evaluation Report; **Annex 14** Materials used in the Evaluation; **Annex 15** Transcript of La Union Evaluation; **Annex 16** Transcript of Cebu Evaluation; and **Annex 17** TC Video)

Effect Studies on Innovations in Civic Engagement

Aside from the revolutionary introduction of the synchronized delivery schedule, which made civic engagement possible, two more innovations stood out as

Textbook Count's unique contributions to the anti-corruption effort, particularly in the area of transparency. These were, first, making the children and youth an important and effective contributor to the effort and, second, tapping the logistics strength of a softdrink company to address the DepED's textbook distribution problem.

The innovation in engaging these two sectors was not only in the creativity of the solution, but also in the inspiration that their participation generated. The images of young Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts counting delivered textbooks basically provided images of hope and empowerment. The powerful statement was that children, even at their tender age, could do something and share the solution to the problem of governance. Meanwhile, the red vehicles of Coca-Cola visiting a school in a far-away barrio to bring the books supplied concrete pictures of private sector reaching out to poor communities.

G-Watch undertook effect studies concerning these two innovations and they basically affirmed the value of civic spirit. Some steps, however, must be taken to optimize the benefits from these unique modes of participation.

The effect study on youth participation shared the following insights:

"The challenge really is to make a few key connections: that the *Textbook Count* is a very positive experience for the youth, and that this was met with much enthusiasm. However, there is a need to engage the youth better starting with ensuring that there is reflection on their experience, as a means to deepen their understanding of their experience, for them to see the bigger significance of their effort. It would be good if the youth are engaged at an earlier age and up to a later age so that it deepens the knowledge of the youth engaged in the *Textbook Count*, collectively. There is also a need to strengthen the reporting and feedback mechanism to improve the monitoring system as well as to capture lessons learned from the field to inform the redesign of the system.

In the final analysis, if the youth are able to recognize pressing social concerns and issues and that they are able to act on these given the guidance of adults, then the question of the youth recognizing what good governance is becomes a question of being guided into recognizing that this is what nation-building and good governance is all about. After some years, it would be good to locate them to find out how the experience has affected them."

See **Annex 18** for the full text of “Youth Participation in *Textbook Count*”.

On the other hand, the effect study on private sector identified significant factors that made *Textbook Count* an effective public-private partnership:

“Corporate Social Responsibility is interpreted in ways relevant to the firm, their stakeholders and to the nation, as a whole. For C&G [Campaigns & Grey], it’s using its power as a communicator to inform and alert the stakeholders about the textbook deliveries so as to curb corruption. For CCFPI [Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines, Inc.], it’s about educating the youth and helping the government address the textbook delivery problem by mobilizing their company’s strength, which is logistics.

The *Textbook Count* was an easy choice for both organizations because it matched well with the companies’ strengths and CSR agenda. The very well defined roles and activities and the clear expectations and outputs also helped convince companies of the doability of the project.

...[*Textbook Count*] points to key aspects of the engagement: (1) a clear need to ensure the delivery of textbooks, (2) a clear strength of a private sector entity that actually fills a void of the government, (3) a willingness to work together, and (4) a visionary and catalyst in government to get things moving.”

See **Annex 19** for the full text of “Private Sector Participation in *Textbook Count*”.

Pursuing Institutionalization

Admittedly, the biggest and most difficult challenge to *Textbook Count* is its institutionalization. G-Watch tried to understand how this challenge can be addressed through focus group discussions (FGDs) with concerned DepED officials and CSOs. The FGDs were conducted with the following framework in mind.

Institutionalization means different things for different people. It can also take various forms.

The most common understanding of institutionalization is the formalization of a widespread or long-standing practice or project through the enactment of an enabling legislation and the corresponding creation of implementing and coordinating mechanisms. An example of this is the institutionalization of people's participation and empowerment in the Local Government Code through the creation of Local Development Councils (LDCs) and Local Special Bodies and sectoral representation in the various Sanggunians. The experience with LDCs in the Philippines, however, has not been encouraging. According to a 2001, DILG cum Philippine Australia Governance Facility study, only around 10 to 20% of Local Development Councils are functional. The functionality of the LDCs depends largely on the orientation and priorities in the Sanggunian. The fiscal deficit does not help any. According to the Department of Budget and Management, there are a lot of mandates or laws without funding, and the situation is not going to improve considerably in the near future.

A variant of this would be integrating the project and the project management office within existing offices of a government project to ensure continuity when the project life ends. An example of this would be the Early Childhood Development (ECD) project of the DSWD. The ECD PMO was eventually abolished and the functions absorbed by the existing offices of the DSWD.

The second form of institutionalization will be through the adoption of a particular project or practice by a political party. This political party espouses the idea, project, or practice and implements these in their bailiwicks and formalizes them when it gains majority control of the Parliament or the government. An example of this is the participatory planning and budgeting process in Brazil, particularly the Porto Alegre experience. In the Philippines, this is not a viable option, because of the absence of a strong party system.

The third form of institutionalization would be inscribing the idea, project, or practice within the larger society itself. An example of this would be certain celebrations initiated by the Church or other institutions that eventually become a tradition. For instance, the City government of Bacolod, Negros Occidental during the dismal days of the sugar crisis in the 1980s initiated the MassKARA festival to lift the spirits of city residents. It has been celebrated since.

Textbook Count is now on its third phase. At each phase, various improvements had been introduced to ensure the cost-effective procurement of textbooks and the efficient and reliable delivery of the same to the districts and finally to the different schools.

The object proposed for institutionalization is the management of the various volunteer groups that inspect the textbooks while they are in production and that check if these textbooks are indeed delivered in the right quantities within the specified dates at the district level. At present, the overall coordination of these volunteer groups and troubleshooting any problems that may arise is lodged with G-Watch. The G-Watch being a project of the Ateneo School of Government, there is no guarantee that it can continue to do so in the future. There is also the concern that once the personalities disappear from the scene (both G-Watch and DepED) and are replaced with a new set of officers, *Textbook Count* will cease.

The FGDs on institutionalization sought to explore various scenarios with involved DepEd officials and CSOs on how *Textbook Count* can be sustained (which is not co-terminus with institutionalization) beyond the departure of so-called “charismatic individuals” and the end of the project life. In short, how *Textbook Count* becomes a habit or routine.

Towards this end and following the result of the FGDs, a Memorandum Order entitled “Institutionalizing NGO and Private Sector Participation in the Department’s Procurement Process” was drafted and proposed to DepED. The DepED management currently studies the merits of the proposed policy.

(See **Annex 20** for the Results of FGD and copy of proposed Memorandum Order)

ANNEXES

1. Commitment of Support and Cooperation
2. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts Provincial Assignments
3. Procurement Report; MAPEH Evaluation
4. QIT Training Materials; CSO Inspectors' Code of Conduct
5. Copy of Inspectors' Reports
6. Materials Distributed to Volunteers
7. Materials Used in the Briefing-Orientation on Civil Society Undertakings in *Textbook Count 3*
8. Transcript of Proceedings: Briefing Orientation for Luzon
9. Transcript of Proceedings: Briefing Orientation for Visayas and Mindanao
10. HS and District Allocation and Schedule
11. Distribution List per Elementary School
12. CSO Coverage
13. Minutes of the Evaluation
14. Materials Used in the Evaluation
15. Transcript of Proceedings: La Union Evaluation
16. Transcript of Proceedings: Cebu Evaluation
17. Textbook Count MTV
18. Effect Study: *Youth Participation in Textbook Count*
19. Effect Study: *Private Sector Participation in Textbook Count*
20. Summary of FGD Results; Memorandum Order