

Civil Society Manual on Monitoring Department of Education Programs

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Introduction

This Manual builds on the experience of the Government Watch project in Monitoring programs and projects of the Department of Education (DepEd). The Manual also takes into account key reforms that were introduced in the agency such as the Textbook Count Project.

The Government Watch project hopes to institutionalize monitoring at the community level through the active involvement of local NGOs and people's organizations in the monitoring initiative. Ultimately, programs and projects of government agencies should be monitored by its target beneficiaries at the local areas. G-Watch recognizes the need to monitor whether public funds are being spent efficiently and effectively, while making government systems, procedures and transactions more participatory and effective.

Background

In 2004-2005, the Department of Education (DepEd) manages a total of 37,000 public elementary schools and 4,769 public high schools. As the key agency tasked with providing quality basic education, DepEd is allotted with a sizeable share of the overall government budget with almost PhP 1B budget per year. Also in a yearly basis, the agency spend billions pesos for procurement of one of its basic educational inputs, the textbooks and school buildings. These items take up most of the agency's budget aside from salaries of almost half a billion teaching and non teaching personnel of DepEd.

In the Republic Act 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act) the Central Office is tasked with the formulation of national policies and plans. It is also mandated to conduct overall monitoring, assessment and coordination of such policies. Regional Offices are responsible for the administration of basic education at the regional level while, division and district offices monitor the different schools at the district. The schools function as the basic management unit of the agency. The Governance Act has strengthened school-based management, encouraging schools to assume a bigger role in management and planning at the school level, working hand in hand with the key stakeholders in the communities.

The current management structure in DepEd consists of five main levels, namely:

1. Central Office
2. Regional Office
3. Division

4. District Offices
5. School

Systems and Processes

While most of the management and decision-making authority has been decentralized to lower levels of the educational bureaucracy such as Division Office, Districts and Schools, through the Governance Act, some of the major functions like planning, procurement and the delivery of major items remain at the Central Office. This applies to programs relating to textbooks, school furniture like tables and chairs, milk-feeding program and school buildings.

Bidding is conducted every year at the DepEd Central Office. The number of books bided out are based on the needs of schools as submitted by the schools, district and division offices and consolidated by the Central Office. For textbooks, allocation is divided into four zones: Luzon had two zones, while provinces in the Visayas constituted one zone, as did those in Mindanao.

For logistical concerns, deliveries for bulk procurement such as textbooks and furniture (armchairs, desks) are directly delivered to High schools and District Offices (for elementary schools).

Monitoring Framework

The basic framework of monitoring that is used by G-Watch is through comparing the actual accomplishment vis-à-vis the planned outputs. The said framework was also used in monitoring other projects in the previous run of the G-Watch Projects. These projects are the Textbooks, Schoolbuilding Program, Milk Feeding Program, Government Assistance for Student and Teachers in Private Education (GASTPE), and the Computerization Program.

Monitoring Workplan

This phase shall include preparation of detailed tasks and deliverables/ outputs within a given timeframe. The work plan for the monitoring may include the following:

1. What are the programs that can be covered in the monitoring project?
The programs that can be included are textbooks, schoolbuilding, and other
2. What are the sample geographical areas (Region, Division, Districts, Schools) to monitor and evaluate?
3. What are the necessary coordination tasks/ work that must be accomplished?
This includes preparation for a possible Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the agency, meetings, and official communication to explain the monitoring project.
4. How long will data-gathering take?
5. How long will processing, organizing and analysis of the data take?

Textbooks Monitoring

Steps in Textbooks Procurement

The following provides an overall picture of the textbook procurement process at the Department of education.

Pre-Delivery

1. Bidding process is conducted at the DepEd Central Office
2. Inspection of printing, binding and packaging of textbooks in warehouses and printing presses
3. DepEd Central Office disseminates Memorandum on Guidelines and forms on the delivery, acceptance, and distribution

Delivery

1. Suppliers' forwarders deliver the textbooks to District Offices and High Schools
2. District Offices and High Schools inspect and accept deliveries
3. Authorized Receiving Personnel of DepEd sign the delivery receipts and IARs

Post-Delivery

1. District Offices submit Certificate of Final Acceptance to DepEd Central Office
2. DepEd Central Office consolidates and verify the data
3. DepEd Central processes payment to suppliers

The DepEd suppliers are tasked to deliver the textbooks directly to the district offices for the elementary schools. While high school textbooks are delivered directly to the recipient public high schools. The actual delivery of textbooks can be verified through the delivery receipts or Inspection and Acceptance Report (IAR) that are submitted by the suppliers to the Central Office. The deliver receipts and IARs are signed Authorized Receiving Personnel at the delivery points. The Authorized Receiving Personnel at the Districts and Schools are: district property custodian or supply officer, district supervisor, school head, or any designated authorized school official.

The receiving personnel at district offices or schools sign the delivery receipts and IAR to validate that right number of books and in good quality are delivered by the suppliers. Otherwise, under deliveries and defects in textbooks are reported back to the Central Office for corrective measures. A copy of the IAR is given to suppliers for billing purposes at the Central Office, while the other copies of the delivery receipt and IAR are left in the district offices for monitoring purposes.

Step-by-step Process of Textbook Delivery

1. DepEd suppliers deliver the textbooks directly to the district offices for the elementary schools and high schools

- a. Books and titles are counted, inspected and verified with the allocated number of textbooks for the schools or districts
2. Authorized Receiving Personnel at the districts and schools sign the delivery receipts and Inspection and Acceptance Report if there are no defects or shortage in the delivery
3. Districts and High schools submit the delivery receipts and IARs to Central Office

Entry point for Textbooks Monitoring

The introduction of Textbook Count Project in 2003 (?) provided a venue for participation of nongovernment organizations and other civil society groups in monitoring the delivery of textbooks to public schools. It has formalized the collaboration between the Department of Education and civil society both at the national and local level in monitoring textbooks from pre-delivery to post-delivery of textbooks.

Documents to be Accessed

The documents that can be accessed in the monitoring of the textbooks delivery include:

- Textbook Allocation list per districts and schools
- Actual Report of Delivery
- Inspection and Acceptance Report (IAR) or Delivery Receipts

Actual Monitoring

The Textbook Count Project outlines the tasks of a civil society monitor in each phase of textbook procurement.

CSO Monitoring Activities¹

Stage of Procurement Process	CSO Activity
1. Bidding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and ensure the transparency of the pre-bid conference • Be signatories in the abstract of bid during bid opening • Observe and ensure the transparency of the bidding proper • Observe in the conduct of content evaluation

¹ *Textbook Count and Civil Society Participation: Effecting System Reforms in the Department of Education*, a case study written for the Government Watch- Ateneo School of Government, Grace Leung, March 2005.

2. Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect the quantity and quality of textbooks, and ensure that they are according to contract specifications • May recommend the rejection of books that do not pass quality standards
3. Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help in the counting and inspection of books, making sure that the right quantity and quality were delivered on time • Record notable incidents and observations in the Inspection and Acceptance Report (IAR), which will be submitted to DepEd • Sign the IAR's Third Party Monitor section. With this signature, the division need not inspect the deliveries to the district and the high schools. This aids in the processing of documents, which in turn helps the supplier collect payment within a shorter period of time.

Guide Questions for Monitors in Textbooks Monitoring

Apart from the involvement of the monitor as outlined in the Textbook Count Project, the following questions may also help the monitors in monitoring the textbook delivery:

1. Did the districts conduct quality inspection of the textbooks that were received?
2. Who were involved in the inspection of delivered textbooks?
3. Are the number of textbooks delivered match the number specified in the allocation list?
4. Were the schools in the districts informed in the textbooks delivery?

Schoolbuilding

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) directly implements the school building program except of the Deped's "principal-led construction" that consists of 10% of the schoolbuilding program in every given fiscal year.

With the relatively sizeable amount of resources that go to this program, not to mention the incessant classroom needs in public schools, the general public has a high stake in the school building program implementation.

The Department of Education is in charge of the programming and allocation functions while the pre-construction and construction work are implemented by the District Offices of the DPWH in coordination with School Head or Principal of the recipient schools.

For instance, in 2003 Schoolbuilding program which has an allocation of Php3 billion, 90% of which is implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) while the other 10% remains with DepEd for implementation. Also in 2003, the World Bank's then Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) also allocated Php1B for the program for 2003-2004.

Procurement Process

The following outlines the step-by-step process of the schoolbuilding of DepEd:

1. Identification of SBPs for construction by the Department of Education
2. Allocation list submitted to DPWH
3. DPWH districts implement the SBP construction
4. Actual construction starts at the school level
5. DPWH monitor the construction
6. School head accept and sign the Certificate of Completion
7. DPWH District Office turns over the newly-constructed schoolbuilding to the recipient school

Fund Sources

The funding for textbooks, schoolbuildings may come from the following sources:

1. Government funding through General Appropriations for DepEd, "Pork Barrel", and Special Education Fund of local governments
2. Foreign Fund (World Bank, AusAid etc.)
3. Private Organization (Coca-Cola, Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce)

Entry Points for Civil Society Monitoring

The Civil Society monitors may start through the review of necessary documents. These documents include:

1. List of Schoolbuildings for construction in a given school year.
The list contains the project cost as well as location of schoolbuildings that are to be constructed. It can be obtained from Central Offices of the DPWH or DepEd.
2. Accomplishment Report on Physical and Financial Aspect.
The report provides an updated status report of the schoolbuilding construction. This can also be obtained from DPWH and DepEd Offices.

From the list of the schoolbuildings for construction, the monitor may come up with the list of schoolbuildings that will be monitored per school in a certain division/ or province.

The monitoring can be focused to five main parameters: time, quantity, quality, cost and implementation process, as the key variables for assessing performance. The matrix below summarizes the framework and methodology:

Parameters	Performance Indicators		Variance between planned and actual outputs	Possible Reasons for Variance	Source/s of Info.
	Planned	Actual			
Time					
Quantity					
Cost					
Quality					
Process					

Time

This variable aims to measure if the construction is completed according to the specified time period of construction. The variance for time may be measured by comparing the target time for completion vis-à-vis the actual date that the project was completed. The computation may done in terms of number of days/ months.

Cost

In monitoring the cost of the schoolbuilding, the monitor may look at the actual cost of the project and compare to the original project cost in the work plan. The outcome may be expressed by the amount of cost variance. The sample computation is:

$$\text{Cost variance} = \text{Original Project Cost} - \text{Actual Project Cost}$$

Quality

A key document in monitoring the quality of the schoolbuilding construction is the program of work. The program of work may be obtained from the school's principal or head or at the District Office of the DPWH in the division/ or province.

Adherence to work specification as set by the DepEd must also be noted by the monitor. In a typical program of work, the standard size of a classroom should be 8m x 7m, with 2 doors at the opposite sides of the room, with a floor of .75m thick and windows provided with glass, steel or wood jalousies. The actual features of a constructed classroom may be compared against the said standards.

STANDARD CLASSROOM TYPE		ACTUAL FEATURES OF CONTRUCTED BUILDING
Classroom size	8m x 7m	
Door	2 doors at the opposite sides	

Floor thickness	.075m	
Windows	Glass, Steel or Wood jalousies	

The monitor may evaluate the constructed schoolbuilding according to other specifications as indicated in the Program of Work. The monitor should examine the programmed activities and other deliverables in construction. The observations can be noted in the matrix under planned output for the Quality indicator.

Process

During the monitoring, the monitor may check other processes that were undertaken in relation to the school building construction:

1. Was the principal given a copy of the Program of work?
2. Was the certificate of completion signed? Who were the signatories?

In the normative process, the principal are given copies of the Program of Work as main recipient and stakeholder of the schoolbuilding so that the principal can also check the construction and progress of work.

Monitoring of schoolbuilding program may also include benchmarking of the DPWH-implemented schoolbuildings to schoolbuilding that are constructed through private donors i.e., Coca Cola Foundation, Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce etc.

Parameters	Type of School Buildings Constructed			
	DepEd-led Construction	Foreign Funded (such as WB, JICA)	DPWH	NGO/ Private (Coca-Cola/ FilChi)
Location (Name of School, Division)				
Time (Planned vs. Actual)				
Quantity (Planned vs. Actual)				
Cost (Planned vs. Actual)				
Quality (Planned vs. Actual)				

The monitor may benchmark the school buildings across its types by taking note of the planned vs. actual indicators e.g., planned cost vs. actual cost. In this case, the monitor gets a better sense of the value for money. In cases of discrepancy, the possible factors that affected the performance may also be noted by the monitor.

Milk Feeding Program

The Milk Feeding Program aimed to develop the milk-drinking habit among schoolchildren so as to combat malnutrition among its target beneficiaries. The recipients of the project were Grade 1 entrants from different schools all over the country. Although, the program does not constitute bulk of the agency's procurement, deliveries may also be monitored by civil society because the goods are a somehow time-sensitive.

Procurement Process

Unlike in the textbooks procurement, wherein the DepEd was able to establish a system for deliveries and coordination mechanism among the different players involved, procurement for the milk feeding program especially in the area of delivery may need more enhancements of systems and processes.

Deped Central Office administers the bidding process and even allocation different districts for the milk-feeding program. Deliveries of the goods are direct to the district offices, the districts then distribute the milk to different schools within its area.

The following outlines the process for milk-feeding procurement:

1. Bidding is conducted at the DepEd Central Office
2. Milk are delivered directly to district Offices
3. Districts distribute the milk to different schools
4. School administers the milk feeding program among its students

The documents that can be accessed for the project monitoring include:

1. Allocation list per District and School from the DepEd Central Office
2. Project Accomplishment or Status Report

In monitoring the delivery of milk, a key indicator/ parameter for monitors is the actual amount of milk received at the districts and school level compared to the allocated amount of milk by the DepEd Central Office. The key indicators in the monitoring are time, quantity, and quality. Again, the following framework can be used by the monitor:

Parameters	Performance Indicators		Variance between planned and actual outputs	Possible Reasons for Variance	Source/s of Info.
	Planned	Actual			
Time					
Quantity					
Quality					

Compared to other projects of DepEd, the milk program is a bit time-sensitive. In taking note of the planned versus actual date of milk delivery, the monitor can also check the expiry dates indicated in the milk packs. Since the milk-feeding is usually administered for 120 feedings days, the expiry date must at least cover for the said number of days.

Reporting of Findings and other Concerns

Recently, the Department of Education has set up a reporting mechanism wherein stakeholders can easily report any problem at the field. Reports can now be sent through DETxt 0919-4560027.