

COMMONS LESSONS LEARNT FROM SPENDING REVIEWS ON LTSM

A BRIEF BACKGROUND:

In 2014, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) published the Draft Policy on Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) defining it as the “variety of learning and teaching materials used in a classroom. These range from teacher and learner created resources to commercially produced classroom resources such as wall charts, textbooks, e-books, readers, stationery, science kits, dictionaries, encyclopaedias etc.”

However, the policy was never finalised because it proposed the centralisation of procurement of textbooks which undermined the autonomy given to Section 21 schools in the Schools Act.



VARIED DEFINITIONS AMONG PROVINCES

Provinces have adopted their own definitions of LTSM and developed their own policies. Definition of LTSM ranges from print and electronic resources used in curriculum delivery to includes textbooks, classroom materials, equipment, desks and chairs (school furniture)

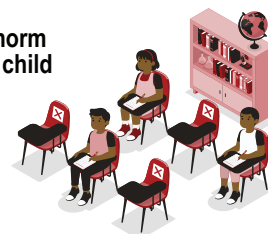
Section 29 (1) of the Constitution provides that “everyone has the right (a) to basic education including an adult basic education”.



The courts have ruled that the right to basic education encompasses LTSM which places an obligation on government to provide access to textbooks, stationery and related educational materials to learners and teachers.

12.5 MILLION children are in basic education at present

130 MILLION books needed to meet the minimum norm of one textbook per child for each subject



TWO IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS TO NOTE



① **E-learning and the digitisation of textbooks and workbooks**

② **Curriculum and catalogue changes**



LESSONS FROM THE NATIONAL WORKBOOK PROGRAMME

1. Workbook content designed internally – so very low development costs
2. Centralise procurement and negotiate bulk discounts
3. Actively look for cost-saving measures (optimise distribution routes, save on paper etc)
4. Establish strong oversight and accountability mechanisms

GTAC KEY FINDINGS

Although there is a national sector LTSM plan, **this is not enough**. A clearer and adaptive national LTSM policy is required.



Several provinces have experienced challenges in identifying their LTSM needs accurately.



Procurement models differ across provinces and lead to varying levels of efficiencies and cost savings.



Incomplete and unreliable data on LTSM produced by SA-SAMS, BAS and LOGIS affects planning and procurement.



Provinces follow vastly different strategies for digitisation and e-LTSM leading to limited coordination and duplication of efforts in terms of content development.



The introduction of new textbooks will require considerable additional investment by provinces over the 2022 MTEF.



RECOMMENDATIONS

DBE should develop a national LTSM policy that guides the planning, procurement, distribution and delivery of LTSM.

Provinces should improve their processes and systems for identifying textbook needs (including their capturing and management of textbook inventory data).

DBE must explore the possibility of developing a transversal contract with publishers for textbooks listed in the National Book Catalogue.

DBE and provinces must develop a strategy to improve the quality, reliability, and completeness of data on LTSM on SA-SAMS, BAS and LOGIS.

DBE and provinces must develop costed e-LTSM plans (where appropriate) to save costs through a reduction in the purchase of textbooks.

DBE and provinces must prepare a detailed costed implementation plan that identifies the optimal approach to procuring new textbooks for the Foundation Phase.

