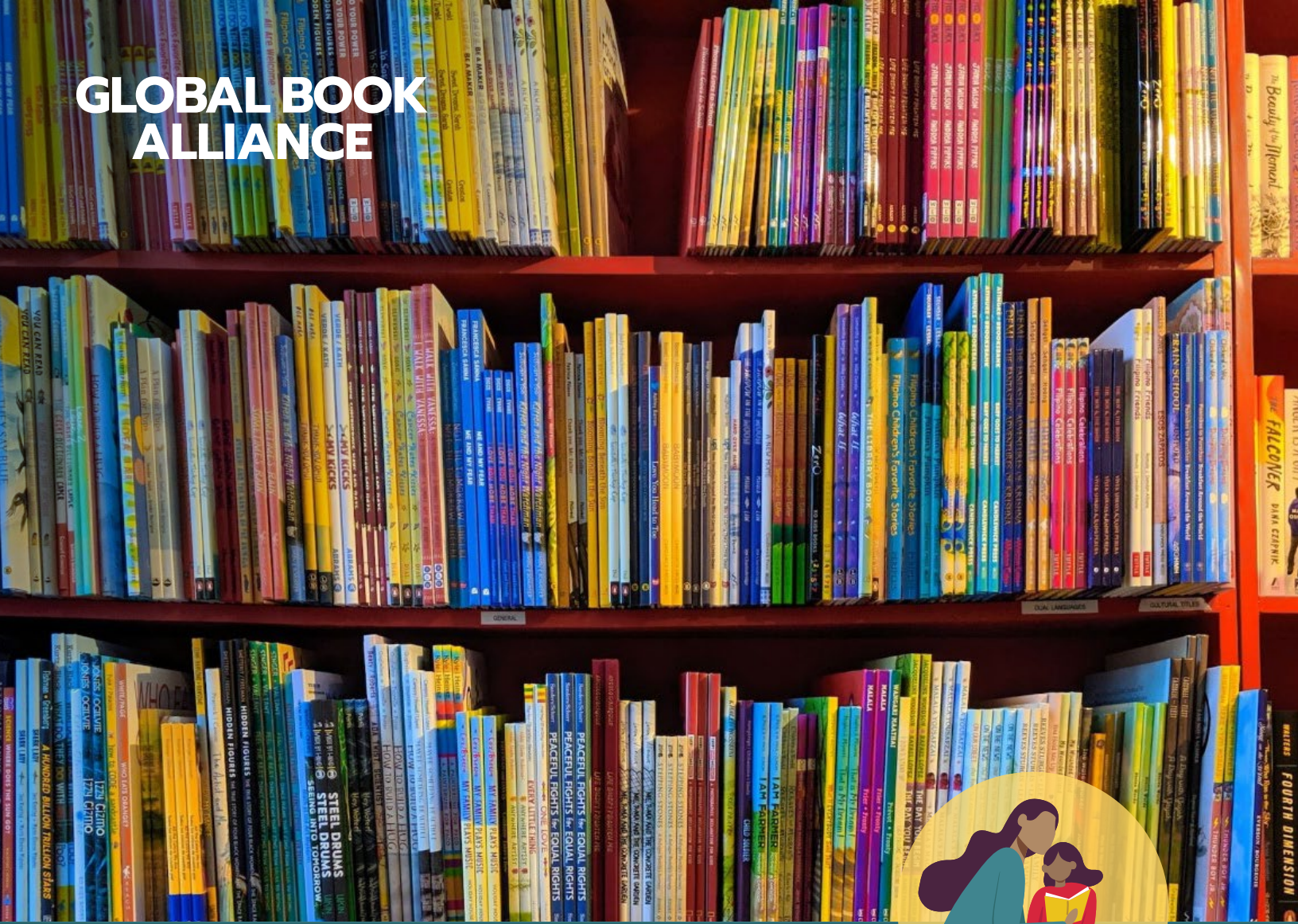


GLOBAL BOOK ALLIANCE



Supply Chain Analysis

Grenada

December 2022



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Table of Contents

RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS	1
Executive Summary	3
High-Level Recommendations	5
INTRODUCTION.....	6
CONTEXTUAL DRIVERS OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS CHALLENGE	7
Educational System.....	7
Percentage of Overall Government Budget Dedicated to Education	9
Curriculum and Language of Instruction Policy	10
BOOK SUPPLY CHAIN ANALYSIS.....	12
Supply Chain Overview: Six Strategic Phases	12
SCA PHASE I: PLANNING AND FORECASTING.....	13
Planning for Tablets	13
Planning for Textbooks	15
Global Book Alliance (GBA) Findings: Planning and Forecasting/Strengths	16
GBA Findings: Planning and Forecasting/Weaknesses	16
GBA Recommendations: Planning and Forecasting	16
SCA PHASE II: TITLE DEVELOPMENT	18
Development of ERMs by Development Partners and NGOs.....	18
Digital Materials by Development Partners and NGOs	20
GBA Findings: Title Development/Strengths	21
GBA Findings: Title Development/Weaknesses	21
GBA Recommendations: Title Development.....	21

SCA PHASE III: PUBLISHING AND PRINTING	23
Curriculum and Textbooks	23
Digital Materials.....	24
Private Sector Publishing	24
Production of Books for Learners with Disabilities.....	25
Government Printery.....	25
GBA Findings: Publishing and Printing/Strengths	26
GBA Findings: Publishing and Printing/Weaknesses	26
GBA Recommendations: Publishing and Printing	26
SCA PHASE IV: PROCUREMENT AND PURCHASING	27
Government Procurement Policy	27
GBA Findings: Procurement and Purchasing/Strengths	28
GBA Findings: Procurement and Purchasing/Weaknesses	28
GBA Recommendations: Procurement and Purchasing	28
SCA PHASE V: DISTRIBUTION MANAGEMENT	29
GBA Findings: Distribution Management/Strengths	30
GBA Findings: Distribution Management/Weaknesses	30
GBA Recommendations: Distribution Management	30
SCA PHASE VI: ACTIVE USE	31
Active Use in Schools.....	31
Active Use in Communities.....	32
GBA Findings: Active Use/Strengths	33
GBA Findings: Active Use/Weaknesses	33
GBA Recommendations: Active Use	34
CONCLUSION	35
ANNEX 1: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEES	36
ANNEX 2: BIBLIOGRAPHY	37

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAPNET	Caribbean Publishers Network
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPEA	Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment
CR	Caribbean Reads
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
ELP	Early Learners Programme
ERMs	essential reading materials
ESC	Eastern and Southern Caribbean Mission
GBA	Global Book Alliance
GBAIA	Global Book Alliance in Action
GDL	Global Digital Library
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GSI	Grenada Schools Inc.
HAS	Hands Across the Sea
HFLE	health and family life
MoE	Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports & Culture
NGOs	nongovernmental organizations
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PEARL	Program for Educational Advancement and Relevant Learning
RtR	Room to Read
SCA	supply chain analysis
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND HIGH-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

This book supply chain analysis (SCA) in Grenada was conducted on behalf of the Global Book Alliance (GBA) by the USAID Global Book Alliance in Action (GBAIA) project. For the purposes of the analysis, the *book supply chain* is defined as a six-phase process:

1. Planning and forecasting
2. Title development
3. Publishing and printing
4. Procurement and purchasing
5. Distribution management
6. Active use

FIGURE 1. THE SIX PHASES OF THE BOOK SUPPLY CHAIN



BOOK TERMINOLOGY

There are different terms used to describe educational books. For the purposes of this report, we are using the following:

Teaching and learning materials: This category includes all the types of books that are typically provided to schools, including textbooks (pupil or student books), teacher guides, readers, e-readers, and reference books.

Teacher guide: A book in print or electronic form, or one that is any combination of print and electronic materials, that guides teachers on how to use the accompanying textbook.

Textbook: A comprehensive learning resource that is in print or electronic form, or that is a combination of print and electronic materials collectively designed to fully support the syllabus of a given level and subject.

The term **essential reading materials** has many different meanings, and what may be *essential* at one stage of learning will be less so at another. For this report, we use the following terms and definitions, per the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) guidance. Note that the term does NOT include textbooks and teacher guides.

Decodable, leveled, and supplementary readers—Collectively described as *essential readers*, these readers are required elements for reading acquisition, but each plays a different role.

Decodable readers are reading materials in which all words are consistent with the letters and corresponding phonemes that the reader has learned. The order of the readers and the order in which the school curriculum teaches letters are the same, and the readers increase in difficulty.

Leveled readers are a set of books organized by level of difficulty of the words, sentences, content, and other factors.

Supplementary readers are used for reading practice. They may not be decodable or leveled, and they do not tie directly to the school curriculum.¹

Although *supplementary readers* is used to describe all general children's books, we at GBA believe that the word *supplementary* is inaccurate, as these books are critical to a child who is learning to read, and should be planned for and procured for early-grade reading classes. Nonetheless, we continue to use the term in this report.

We also use the general term **book** when speaking of books in general.

1 Definitions are adapted from USAID, *2020 compendium of standard PIRS*.

Executive Summary

The book supply chain analysis (SCA) focuses on the supply of essential reading materials (ERMs) that children in primary school grades 1–4 need to become proficient readers. The SCA was commissioned to inform the work of the GBA as well as that of the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, & Culture (Ministry of Education, or MoE), USAID Eastern and Southern Caribbean Mission (USAID/ESC), and other key development partners in the country. The SCA gives an overview and analysis of the challenges and opportunities at each of the six phases of the book supply chain in Grenada.

The education system in Grenada begins with pre-primary school (although this is not compulsory) and continues to primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. There are 105 pre-primary schools (64 public, 41 private), three special education centers, one resource center for people who are blind and one school for people who are deaf, 75 primary schools (56 public, 19 private), 25 secondary schools (21 public, four private),² and approximately 23,000 students enrolled from kindergarten to secondary school.³

Because Grenada has no official supply chain for ERMs (the government only plans for and procures textbooks and more recently, electronic devices with curricular content), the GBA analyzed the supply chain for textbooks for children in primary-grades 1 to 4, drawing evidence from the wider textbook supply system where implications are relevant. It is also important to note that textbooks are not developed, written, or printed in Grenada. The government procures textbooks for all grades from international publishers such as Macmillan, Hodder, and Collins, which print their textbooks internationally (in England in most cases). The government buys some textbooks for secondary grades through regional publishers based in Jamaica and Trinidad.

Two major changes have taken place in the Grenadian education system. In 2008, under the current administration, the Ministry of Education moved away from purchasing textbooks directly from publishers and providing them to schools. The ministry now works with a privately owned bookstore, Standard Bookshop, the only established bookshop on the island, to supply textbooks for the entire island. Students are required to have a textbook for each core subject; in primary school this can mean purchasing at least four textbooks, with an average price of 40 Eastern Caribbean dollars (\$14.80 USD). To ensure that this wasn't a financial burden for families, the government instituted the National Textbook Program in the 1990s, where families can rent textbooks for 25 Eastern Caribbean dollars (\$9.25 USD) for the year. Students who meet a certain socioeconomic threshold can have these fees waived. Approximately 80% of families have bought into the rental scheme; at its peak the program benefited 10,000 children. Parents who were interviewed felt that the price was affordable. Parents who want to purchase additional textbooks can do so at Standard Bookshop.

The other major shift came in 2020, when the Ministry of Education provided every child from kindergarten to secondary school with an electronic device preloaded with curricular content and

² Personal communication, Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, September 2022.

³ [Education Policy and Data Center, 2018.](#)

educational apps. This planning has been ongoing, with funds for this initiative coming from the national budget, and from reallocating funds from the Grenada Education Enhancement Project that Caribbean Development Bank funds. UNICEF also assisted the ministry in the procurement process through its networking with an appropriate service provider. Additional tablets were purchased through FortunaPix, the developer of the e-content, as well as through grant funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) under the OECS Academic Recovery Programme. All schools were Internet-enabled, and when schools closed because of COVID-19, the ministry launched its MStar Learning Support Platform, a Web-based teaching and learning platform. The platform includes a virtual classroom, activities, and curricular content that children could access at home, given they had a device and Internet access.

The ministry began distributing devices in a phased approach giving priority to the exit grades at the primary and secondary level, and commenced the distribution of available devices once the COVID-19 regulations allowed. Families were required to rent the devices for the year for 50 Eastern Caribbean dollars (25 Eastern Caribbean dollars for those enrolled in the National Textbook Program). While the devices include some curricular content and educational apps like YouTube Kids, Khan Academy, and Padlet, they do not include digital textbooks for primary grades. E-books were available on the device for secondary students at the time the devices were distributed. Therefore, all teachers who were interviewed talked about using their textbooks to teach lessons, with students using the tablets during recess, after school, and at home. The long-term goal for the Ministry of Education is to make a complete switch to using the devices by having the textbooks converted to digital format, but it was not clear during in-person interviews with the MoE when this will take place.

The Government of Grenada does not print ERMs for children. The majority of ERMs in schools and community libraries are from donations from individuals, a few local nongovernmental organizations, and a few donor-funded projects. These projects, such as the USAID-funded Early Learners Programme, have worked to train teachers on the teaching of reading, developing classroom libraries, and incorporating books, particularly decodable and leveled readers, in language and literacy instruction. Most schools in Grenada have a school library, and many have individual classroom libraries as well. The team visited schools that had well-stocked libraries, supplied by nongovernmental organizations like Grenada Schools Inc., with 800–1,000 titles, and that spanned a variety of reading levels and genres.

Regionally there is only one publisher of children's books; these books are printed either in the United States or in other countries, notably Jamaica and Trinidad, where there is a much larger and more robust publishing and printing industry. Among the teachers we spoke to, there is demand for culturally relevant books by local authors and illustrators, but the market does not reflect this. Neither of the two local bookstores that we visited carries titles by local authors for children, and one bookseller had not heard of the regional publisher of children's books. Parents do read with their children, and some parents do buy books for children, but several parents interviewed mentioned book prices are high and have increased over the years.

High-Level Recommendations

Following are GBA’s short-term and long-term high-level recommendations.

Short-Term Recommendations

- To maximize literacy practice on tablets, the MoE should include a digital library, such as the [Global Digital Library](#) on the tablets, so children can practice reading at home and at school. Assistive technology for students with reading disabilities should also be included, and large-format and Braille options.
- Teachers and librarians should continue to receive training on leveling books, incorporating books into classroom instruction, using library books as a teaching tool, and working with students who are reading below grade level.

Long-Term Recommendations

- The MoE should revitalize and mainstream programs like Young Authors and Readers Circle across primary schools. These programs can inspire children to read and can show them that authors and illustrators play an important role in the development of civil society.
- The MoE should work with local authors and illustrators to create ERMs aligned to the curriculum that can be on the tablets for teachers to use in classrooms and for students to read independently. The ministry should add these ERMs to the student textbook list, similar to what it has been done with secondary schools.
- The MoE should update its policy on teaching and learning with concrete guidance on blended learning and how best to maximize digital tools with supplemental materials like textbooks and ERMs.
- Publishers in the region should form an industry association, which would be individually beneficial and strengthen the entire publishing sector.
- The MoE should consider adding a certification course on librarianship, to train young people interested in careers in schools and education on effective use of library resources and provide them with internships at school libraries as a practicum, with the internship leading to full-time jobs at schools upon graduation.
- The MoE should develop a five-year plan on tablet costing and use with provisions for tablet repair, maintenance, upgrades, and malfunction, as well as projected costs to families for use of tablets.

INTRODUCTION

The report takes as a starting point the research and evidence on the role of high-quality books and materials for children in reading skills acquisition. This includes the necessity of ensuring that children have access to level- and language-appropriate materials, in sufficient quantity, and at the appropriate time in the school year, and that teachers and parents understand and support the use of these materials for literacy acquisition.

High-quality texts and a range of reading materials are key elements required to foster reading skills acquisition for all students.⁴ To ensure that every student learns to read, not only are textbooks required, but every student must also have access to essential reading materials (ERMs) in local languages. Per United States Agency for International Development (USAID) guidance,⁵ a copy of decodable text, whether packaged together in one textbook per learner or in a set of readers, should be provided to each learner in all grade 1 classrooms and should always be available to grade 2 learners. For higher grades, decodables are only a required part of this package if assessment data demonstrate that children's reading levels are so low as to indicate a need for such material. For leveled readers, when a complete set of leveled paragraphs and stories are bound together in one book, each learner should have a copy of the compilation. If materials are provided in sets of books, each set should be shared by no more than three students in a classroom. A set of leveled readers should include no less than one book per week of the school year. Supplementary readers can be provided at the classroom level. Sets should include no less than one supplementary book per week during the school year.

This supply chain analysis (SCA) report identifies strengths and weaknesses in each link of the book supply chain and provides recommendations to ensure that learners can access sufficient, appropriate, high-quality reading materials to improve reading outcomes in Grenada.

4 USAID, 2016. [Global Book Fund Feasibility Study](#).

5 USAID, 2019. [Education Reporting Guidance](#).

CONTEXTUAL DRIVERS OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS CHALLENGE

Educational System

Grenada, one of nine member states of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), is made up of a main island and two smaller islands, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. The centralized education system under the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, & Culture (MoE) manages the education of the approximately 23,000 students enrolled in 105 pre-primary schools (64 public, 41 private), three special education centers, one resource center for people who are blind and one school for people who are deaf, 75 primary schools (56 public, 19 private), and 25 secondary schools (21 public, four private).⁶ Some government schools are called “denominational” schools, reflecting the religious organization that is involved in the schools’ administration. These schools are identical to nondenominational schools and follow the same curriculum, the only distinction being that they have a board of management that provides a level of oversight and is involved in decisions related to school management.

Universal preschool is available, which is currently at 80% enrollment.⁷ The 1976 Education Act mandates children ages 5–16 attend school; however, universal secondary education was only launched in 2012. Gross enrollment rates at secondary schools remain low, comprising 80% of the secondary school-going population and closer to 50% in some underserved parishes.^{8,9} According to the most recent statistics from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute of Statistics (2018), the net enrollment rate for pre-primary education was 85.3% and 95.9% for primary school.¹⁰ Transition rates from primary to secondary school is 97.7%, with more male students dropping out at secondary than female students.¹¹

Private schools make up a small part of the educational landscape and are predominately operated by religious institutions. Private schools account for 39% of preschool enrollment, 15% of primary enrollment, and 2% of secondary enrollment (data from 2012).¹²

Although attendance in secondary schools is relatively high, quality in secondary education is a concern. Secondary schools suffer from insufficient teaching and learning materials, overcrowded classrooms, and limited teacher training opportunities.¹³ Results from the Caribbean Secondary

6 Personal communication, Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture, September 2022.

7 Ibid.

8 Government of Grenada, [Strategic Plan for Educational Enhancement and Development](#) (SPEED).

9 World Bank, [More Classrooms Plus Better Trained Teachers Equal Better Education for Grenada](#).

10 UNESCO Institute of Statistics: Grenada. <https://uis.unesco.org/en/country/gd>. Accessed 23 September 2022.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Government of Grenada, [Strategic Plan for Educational Enhancement and Development](#) (SPEED).

Education Certificate (CSEC) exams have been worrying; secondary students in Grenada performed lower than the regional average on math and English in the most recent exams (Table 1).¹⁴

Table 1. Pass rates for the CSEC exam 2019–2021.

	2019		2020		2021	
	Grenada	Region	Grenada	Region	Grenada	Region
Subjects	% Pass		% Pass		% Pass	
Mathematics	38.59	46	43.56	52	34.98	40.57
English A	78.28	72	82.65	82	71.71	73.39

Since 2012, a higher number of boys have been dropping out of secondary school than girls, and while the reasons for this vary, analysis conducted in 2012 revealed that poor performance and having to repeat grades in secondary school was the main reason for boys dropping out.¹⁵ Across the region, boys drop out at a higher rate than girls; the dropout rate from lower secondary to secondary is 6% for boys and 1% for girls.¹⁶ This has repercussions into tertiary education, where female students enroll at almost twice the rate of male students (2012–2013 data).¹⁷ The low quality of secondary education continues to plague students when they start college, with many unprepared to meet curricular demands, particularly in math and English.

Issues related to quality of education, particularly at the secondary level, have been addressed in the most recent OECS Education Sector Strategy, 2012–2021. Secondary education has been flagged as a major area needing reform across the nine member-states, with three distinct objectives: (1) expand the provisions of secondary education in the sub-region; (2) reconceptualize the nature and content of secondary education in the sub-region; and (3) improve the quality of secondary education.¹⁸ Funding from development partners and multilateral agencies such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the World Bank have also been focusing on improving quality in secondary schools. The Basic Education Reform Project, funded by the World Bank, has focused on increasing quality in teaching and learning materials and ensuring textbook provision for all students in secondary school, which led to the National Textbook Program, which brings the costs of textbooks down to a level where most families are able to afford them. GPE’s regionally focused Program for Educational Advancement and Relevant Learning (PEARL) is working to increase access and equity to early childhood education, improve curriculum and assessment, and strengthen leadership and management. GPE has also provided grants for electronic devices for all students, and training for primary and secondary teachers on pedagogical skills and evidence-based approaches to online learning.

14 Preliminary Results of the May/June 2021 CSEC Examinations. *Grenada Now, 2016*. Accessed 27 November 2022.

15 Ministry of Social Development and Housing, [Gender Equality Policy Action Plan](#).

16 [UNICEF, Global Initiative on Out of School Children, Eastern Caribbean Summary \(2016\)](#).

17 Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development Grenada. [Statistical Digest 2014, Past Trends, Present Positions and Projections up to 2015/2016](#).

18 OECS, [Education Statistical Digest, 2018-2019](#).

Percentage of Overall Government Budget Dedicated to Education

The most recent data (2017) from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics show that Grenada allocated 3.6% of its budget to education as a percentage of GDP, which is below the average for the OECS (Table 2).¹⁹

Table 2. OECS government's budgeted spending on education: 2018–2019.

	Grenada	Dominica	St. Lucia	OECS Average
Spending on education as percentage of GDP	3.6	5.27	3.22	4.11

However, internal projections of education expenditure by the Grenada government allocated amounts that were on the higher side of the average and more aligned with Dominica (Table 3).²⁰ The bulk of this budget is allocated toward primary education (74.5 million Eastern Caribbean dollars), with 27.3 million Eastern Caribbean dollars allocated to secondary education and 50.2 million Eastern Caribbean dollars allocated to other programs.²¹

Table 3. Government of Grenada actual and projected education expenditure at current prices in relation to gross domestic product, 2000–2001 to 2015–2016.

	Year	Educational Expenditure	GDP at Current Prices	Educational Expenditure as a Percentage of GDP
Actual	2000/01	48.9	958	5.1
	2001/02	74.3	951	7.8
	2002/03	77.8	980	7.9
	2003/04	90.4	1063	8.5
	2004/05	75.1	1047	7.2
	2005/06	95.7	1225	7.8
	2006/07	85.2	1243	6.9
	2007/08	88.6	1349	6.6
	2008/09	114.5	1519	7.5
Projected	2009/10	116.8	1580	7.4
	2010/11	119.1	1643	7.3
	2011/12	121.5	1709	7.1
	2012/13	123.9	1777	7.0
	2013/14	126.4	1848	6.8
	2014/15	128.9	1922	6.7
	2015/16	131.5	1999	6.6

Source: Educational Expenditure: Tables 182 and 185
 GDP: Table 182 for actual figures. For projection purposes the GDP, has been assumed to increase at an annual rate of 4 percent.
 Educational Expenditure is assumed to increase at an annual rate of 2 percent.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development Grenada. [Statistical Digest 2014, Past Trends, Present Positions and Projections up to 2015/2016](#).

²¹ Ibid.

Curriculum and Language of Instruction Policy

Curriculum

Education in Grenada is divided into four main cycles: pre-primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary. Pre-primary education is aimed at ages 3–5, after which students begin primary school in kindergarten and graduate in grade 6. To continue to secondary school, students must take an exit exam, the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA), administered by Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). The secondary cycle is divided into two parts: Forms 1–3 (lower secondary) and Forms 4–5 (upper secondary). Students also take an exit exam at the end of secondary school, the CSEC, also administered by CXC; those who wish to continue to tertiary school apply directly to the programs they are interested in.

The Curriculum Development Department—within the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs, and Information—develops, revises, and implements the national curriculum. A senior education officer heads the unit, and it includes curriculum development officers: one per each core subject (social studies, mathematics, science, and language arts), and one for visual arts, health and family life (HFLE), food and nutrition, and physical education. The officers provide professional development to teachers at the school level, including teacher training, and monitor and evaluate the programs. Literacy coaches support teachers in schools and oversee between 10 and 15 schools each, depending on the district.

The national curriculum has undergone several revisions; currently members of the OECS use the same curriculum, known as the “harmonized” curriculum. Core curricula in mathematics, language arts, and natural and social sciences were developed through a collaborative process and implemented across primary schools. A revision of this curriculum is underway, with support from GPE’s regional PEARL project and local education experts. OECS member-states had a national curriculum consultation earlier this year. The Ministry of Education had its consultation during April. Notes from the completed consultation were sent to the Program Management Unit of the OECS for forwarding to the consultants.

OECS has also been involved in initiatives on improving literacy in primary schools and has implemented USAID’s Early Learners Programme (ELP). The ELP was implemented from 2015 to 2019 across six OECS member-states, including Grenada. The project has focused on training teachers on effective literacy approaches, increasing access to ERMs, and developing relevant reading materials. The Write to Read project was developed under ELP to create more culturally relevant books for children that are written by local authors. Caribbean Reads published 43 books under this project, in both print and digital formats, and distributed them to participating schools across the region.

ELP also supported the development of a holistic language of instruction policy. The program had seven overarching goals, including teacher training and professional development, creation of supplementary reading materials for children in languages they read and understand, and developing language policies. The program encouraged the six participating countries to develop language

policies that recognize “students entering primary school may have a mother tongue different from English which is being taught in schools.”²²

Teachers, principals, and other staff have generally supported the project and have noticed improvements in student reading skills, interest, and in their own pedagogy while participating in the project. While the ELP ended in 2019, successful elements have been retained. For example, in Grenada, a national focal point has been appointed and sits within the MoE. ELP coordinators provide classroom-based support, workshops, and trainings, and the MoE covers travel costs to remote locations, including the island of Carriacou. Materials for trainings, as well as office space for meetings, workshops, etc., are also available within the MoE.

Language of Instruction Policy

While English is the official language of Grenada, residents of the island speak Grenadian Creole and French Creole or patois (approximately 2% of the population). Students are expected to speak, read, and write Standard English starting at preschool. During interviews, teachers mentioned that children entering school for the first time had trouble speaking in English. Teachers try to ease students into the language of instruction by using some elements of home language, but this is not encouraged. Neither the Government of Grenada nor the OECS has addressed in recent policy documents the issue of language of instruction or language policy. During in-person meetings with the MoE, the issue of language policy was brought up; staff did not think this was something that Grenada needed to address.

22 Organization of Eastern Caribbean States: Early Learners Programme. <https://www.oecs.org/en/elp-about>. Accessed 24 September 2022.

BOOK SUPPLY CHAIN ANALYSIS

Supply Chain Overview: Six Strategic Phases

The book SCA for Grenada examines the six strategic links in any book supply chain. An effective book supply chain requires accurate forecasting and planning, high-quality title development in languages and formats children can use and understand, access to those titles by publishers and printers, a functioning distribution system to deliver books, and appropriate knowledge and support to ensure use and to build a population of active readers. Each of these phases is summarized with discussion, findings, and recommendations. A list of participants in the focus group and phone discussions can be found in Annex 1; the research methodology in Annex 2; and bibliography in Annex 3.

SCA PHASE I: PLANNING AND FORECASTING

Planning and forecasting are recurring work carried out by governments and publishers to assess the need and demand for books, and to arrange for the financial and material resources to meet that demand. To do this, ministries of education need timely information not only on enrollment, but on projected enrollment and realistic estimates of book waste over time. Publishers must plan for, and be prepared to respond to, demand from ministries and schools, as well as parents who may purchase supplementary books for their children's reading practice. For an MoE, the collection, management, analysis, and use of data on book needs/demand and provision is integral to education planning. For the publishers, it is market research. For both, accurate and timely data collection is essential for a functioning book supply chain.

The Ministry of Education has not purchased textbooks for students for the past few years, as they are intending to shift to digital content, delivered through tablets. The ministry has planned a phased-in approach to tablet use, starting with secondary schools and moving into upper primary. They have also been working on the [MStar Learning Support Platform](#) for all students, starting in preschool, which includes digital curricular content, educational activities, a virtual classroom, and areas for students and teachers to interact with one another.

The COVID-19 pandemic fast-tracked the ministry's plans for implementing their e-learning approach. In March 2020, when schools shut down in-person learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education launched the m-star platform, so students could stay connected to learning opportunities while schools were closed. In August 2020, when schools reopened but learning was still remote, the ministry decided to provide all students with tablets, rather than only secondary students, again in an effort to ensure that learning would not be disrupted during the pandemic.

Planning for Tablets

The ministry had allocated funds from their annual budget for the purchase of tablets for every student in the country. They supplemented this with funds from the Caribbean Development Bank under the Grenada Education Enhancement Project. The OECS Commission provided more funding for tablets through the GPE-sponsored COVID-19 accelerated grant. Through a bidding process that the government implemented, an e-content developer was identified: [FortunaPix](#). Wireless distribution of Internet service in schools was supported by a grant from the National Telecommunications Regulatory Committee through the MESH project, and Internet service was provided by the CARCIP project.

The ministry has allocated funding in the budget for regular maintenance of tablets, based on data from previous years. However, it would be important for the ministry to create a more thorough plan that includes provisions for tablet repair, maintenance, upgrades, and malfunction, as well as projected costs to families for use of tablets.

The ministry used data collected by the Student Support Services office on enrollment and attendance to determine the number of tablets they needed. Students keep the tablets over the summer and into the new school year. At that time, the MoE will conduct an audit to determine the condition of each tablet. The government has used projections from the initial year of tablet use to plan for future maintenance and upkeep of tablets (email correspondence with ICT Officer, Ministry of Education, Grenada, 30 June 2022).

FortunaPix has developed content-based products that are installed on every tablet. Descriptions on their website for two products called LernBag and LernBook state: “LernBag is a repository of 50,000+ digital learning objects—3D videos, interactive activities, simulations, virtual labs, quizzes—that transform abstract concepts into great engaging experience for teachers and students”; and LernBook, “an intelligent digital book designed to replace costly and heavy textbooks. LernBook is futuristic, multi-subject, curriculum aligned, embedded with rich multi-media and analytics that increases students’ productivity.” The MoE also has plans to develop additional curricular content in partnership with UNESCO.

It is important to note that aside from these products and others like Khan Academy, YouTube Kids, and Padlet, there is no curricular content aligned to the state standards or the national curriculum in the form of a digital textbook on the tablets. However, the tablets do include e-books for secondary school students, and primary grade students could access e-books online via the ministry website. This year, the e-book reader was pushed to the primary school devices, and content can be consumed from the reader. Many teachers interviewed talked about the content on tablets being presented in snippets, with not enough background or detail to provide a full explanation to students; therefore they needed to supplement the content with textbooks. Teachers at one school mentioned that their Internet was unreliable, and therefore they couldn’t use the tablets. In an interview with the Grenadian representative for Macmillan Books, one of the main textbook companies that provide textbooks to Grenadian schools, the representative felt that the digital content on the tablets was not only insufficient but also wasn’t culturally relevant for the context. In interviews with officials from the MoE, they spoke of a plan to have textbooks digitized and uploaded on the tablets, but it wasn’t clear whether permissions for this have been secured and what the timeline is.

A needs assessment was conducted to determine the level of teachers’ technology capabilities. Many teachers had a very basic level of digital literacy, and a series of workshops was held to get teachers ready to use tablets. These trainings targeted mostly use of tablets and troubleshooting, not how to use the apps and FortunaPix’s products on the tablets. The e-learning department plans to provide further training on use of the products and apps on the tablets, but it is not clear what type of training teachers will get or when this will happen. During meetings with staff from the e-learning division, a training plan for the year was mentioned, with specific types of workshops for teachers. Teachers had not heard of any workshops that the ministry was going to conduct. The ministry still has a fair bit of work to do to get teachers on board with e-learning, starting with providing a series of robust trainings on integrating teaching and learning apps into lessons and including a fully digitized series of textbooks to replace print textbooks.

Planning for Textbooks

In Grenada, the government does not produce textbooks. Commercial publishers—including Macmillan, Hodders, and Collins—have been tasked with textbook provision for primary and secondary grades, and the MoE will purchase books from them. Typically, the publishers will share copies of their existing textbooks for various subjects with MoE officials. The publishers, through a local representative, will work with the MoE to align the existing textbook to the curricular standards, then print the textbooks, mostly overseas. Textbooks are reviewed after four to five years, and publishers make changes under the MoE’s supervision. Regional publishers, such as Caribbean Book Distributors and Caribbean Educational Publishers, based in Trinidad, produce some textbooks for secondary grades.

The Ministry of Education collects enrollment and attendance data from schools to determine the number of textbooks needed. Using these numbers, they work with a local, privately owned bookstore to order textbooks (additional details are in the Publishing and Printing section). Why the government goes through a privately owned bookstore to purchase textbooks for schools is not clear. In the past, the government put out a tender for bookstores to bid on, but in recent years Standard Bookshop received the contract exclusively, and it remains the sole vendor today.

In the past, before the advent of tablets, students were required to have a textbook for each core subject. In the primary grades this includes language, math, science, and social studies. Each textbook can cost upwards of 40 Eastern Caribbean dollars, which is a huge financial burden for many families. In the early 1990s, the government instituted a textbook rental scheme, where parents could rent textbooks for a nominal price. This ensured that all families, particularly those from lower socioeconomic brackets, could afford the cost of textbooks. Currently, the cost to rent books is 25 Eastern Caribbean dollars per year and students can take the rented books home. Approximately 80% of families enroll in the textbook rental scheme; at its peak, the scheme supported 10,000 students. Parents who can afford to purchase books for their children choose to buy them, as the condition of these books is better than rented books. Teachers in focus group discussions reported that there are no problems with textbook delivery and that each student has the appropriate number of books and books arrive on time and in good condition.

Schools collect data on student enrollment and attendance, as well as teacher attendance and qualifications, school and classroom infrastructure, revenue, and expenditure, and the Ministry of Education keeps the statistics. While a pilot project to shift to an electronic management information system (EMIS) was conducted in 2011,²³ these data are currently captured in a written format, collected by teachers, verified by district education officers and then sent to the Schools Administration Unit, within the Ministry of Education. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when schools were closed, the ministry created an electronic attendance system to track children’s attendance and absence. The OECS Commission hosts a working group of all statisticians in the OECS. This group helps develop the *OECS Statistical Digest*, in which the data sets are made public. This digest is published yearly and hosted on the website of the OECS Commission.

23 World Bank. 2011. [Education Management and Information System, Country Report, Grenada](#).

Global Book Alliance (GBA) Findings: Planning and Forecasting/Strengths

- Ministry departments communicate well and regularly, and information on enrollment and attendance get passed on to the relevant groups.
- The Ministry had begun planning for e-learning prior to the pandemic and had prepared the m-star website, which was launched in March 2020 and proved fortuitous as the COVID-19 pandemic shut down schools.
- Delivery of tablets to schools and students was smooth and planned for well.

GBA Findings: Planning and Forecasting/Weaknesses

- While purchasing and distributing tablets was effective, the curricular content on the tablets is lacking. It is not possible for teachers to use tablets to conduct lessons, as there is no digital textbook available on the tablets and content is provided in snippets.
- Training on how to use the tablets has been limited. Teachers are confused about the various products and apps on the tablets, which has led to the tablets being underutilized. Clearer guidance on the use of the e-learning content, particularly training on how to integrate technology into teaching, has been missing.
- Students and teachers still rely on textbooks to supplement e-learning. Since 2020, new textbooks have been hard to come by, and students and teachers have relied on older copies, some of which are not in the highest quality condition.

GBA Recommendations: Planning and Forecasting

GBA recommends:

- That a five-year plan on tablet costing and use be developed, which includes provisions for tablet repair, maintenance, upgrades, and malfunction, as well as projected costs to families for use of the tablets.
- That textbooks and, more importantly, the National Textbook Program, continue to be included in the ministry's planning, and that the budget reflects this inclusion (despite the introduction of tablets and e-content) until the use and adoption of tablets and e-learning is widespread.
- That a teaching and learning plan be developed, where concrete guidance on blended learning be shared with teachers on how best to maximize digital tools with supplemental materials like textbooks and ERMs.
- That the e-learning and curriculum development teams be combined, to create a more streamlined "blended" curriculum, to maximize the benefits of e-learning.

- That the e-learning team provide details on how devices are being used by students and provide this information, along with any recommendations for changes to the applications on the devices, to teachers and parents, and other stakeholders.
- That the member-states of the OECS leverage economies of scale and work together to purchase textbooks in bulk, similar to the strategy used for buying medicine in bulk.

SCA PHASE II: TITLE DEVELOPMENT

Title development refers to the creation of texts and books intended to support acquisition of reading skills in languages children use and understand. In Grenada, the language of instruction is English, and all curricular materials are in this language. ERMs are also in English and are provided by a few well-known local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that work with private publishers.

The next section, Publishing and Printing, will discuss the publishing of textbooks and ERMs, including digital materials by the Government of Grenada. First, we discuss the efforts of development partners and local NGOs to create ERMs.

Development of ERMs by Development Partners and NGOs

Grenada has received donor funding for various education initiatives, from development of education sector strategy plans, to refurbishing schools and purchasing equipment, and teacher professional development and training. International development partners and international NGOs include USAID, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), UNESCO, the World Bank, Room to Read (RtR), UNICEF, and GPE.

Of the various donor-funded projects, two have focused on ERMs—USAID/OECS’ ELP and RtR’s Accelerator project—which a local NGO, Grenada Schools Inc. (GSI), conceived and implemented. ELP held workshops for local community members and produced 43 titles written by children and adults from the community. The GSI/RtR project trained local authors and illustrators and produced 13 children’s books showcasing local culture, themes, and characters. This initiative, in collaboration with MoE, also produced the “Spice Reader,” a phonics-based workbook with activities and lessons targeting students in grade 1. The 13 children’s books were distributed to schools and classrooms. Each child in the country also received two titles for their own “home library.” Both sets of books were also digitized and are available on the [Global Digital Library \(GDL\)](#) and RtR’s [Literacy Cloud](#). Students also received resources when schools were closed in the COVID-19 pandemic, through an innovative strategy that the OECS spearheaded through the ELP. They provided worksheets, assessments, and other print-based learning materials, and also worked with the private sector to provide Internet access to students who didn’t have it.

School libraries and classroom libraries are common in primary-grade classrooms. Two local NGOs—GSI and Hands Across the Sea (HAS)—provide most of the materials in these libraries. Most of the ERMs in primary-grade classrooms in Grenada are the direct result of the persistent efforts of these two organizations.

GSI was established in 2014 with the aim of improving literacy in primary schools in Grenada. Their work is focused on creating, refurbishing, and sustaining libraries in all primary schools. To date, they have worked with 26 of the country’s 52 primary schools, with plans to reach

every single school in Grenada. Two former Ministry of Education officials with backgrounds in curriculum development and literacy head GSI; as such GSI has excellent relations with the MoE and works closely with them in school selection and provision of books. Using a set of criteria, they work directly with schools to either build or refurbish libraries and outfit each library with a carefully selected variety of books. Developing and strengthening literacy skills in primary school-age children is a main goal, and many books focus on beginning and emergent literacy, including decodable books, and books that feature equitable and positive representation of children from all backgrounds, particularly children from the Caribbean region. GSI works directly with publishers and vendors to source these books and distributes books to schools through a network of staff, who ensure books arrive in excellent condition and all books are accounted for. GSI has conducted training for school staff in collaboration with the MoE.

HAS, a U.S.-based organization with local focal points in six countries in ESC, solicits book donations and purchases books from several commercial publishers, including a regional publisher, Caribbean Reads (CR), which was started by a local currently residing in the United States who saw a gap in availability of culturally relevant books. CR works exclusively with authors and illustrators in the region and is committed to creating books by locals, featuring themes and characters that are relevant to children in Grenada and the ESC region. The books are published and printed either in Jamaica, Trinidad, or the United States; HAS manages the distribution to all its partner schools. HAS also publishes resources like teacher guides and librarian guides, and short videos to help support the use of books in libraries and classrooms. They have conducted workshops on using books in libraries and classrooms that some of the teachers who were interviewed have attended. HAS manages book distribution to each of its partner schools directly.

The MoE has provided access and permission for these NGOs to operate without issue in Grenada. Both NGOs have signed memorandums of understanding with the government, and work together with MoE to provide training and resources for teachers, in addition to providing books for schools. MoE contributes by providing in-kind support, which includes a space for conducting training, covering meals during training, and some remuneration to staff for conducting training. The NGOs have freedom to choose the books they find appropriate for primary grades, with little interference or oversight from the government on book type or quantity. Teachers feel comfortable reaching out to focal points from HAS and GSI to ask for more books or for specific titles, particularly the ones that have been developed locally.

While schools that were visited had well stocked libraries with a variety of genres and reading levels, some of the libraries seemed underutilized. Few librarians had received librarian training, and teachers still have some resistance to using books in classrooms, much of it stemming from a lack of understanding on integrating books into lessons. District education officers and volunteers with HAS provide mentorship and support to teachers to use books as instructional tools in the classroom.

Table 4 summarizes recent and current activities of development partners and NGOs in developing books.

Table 4. Development partner and NGO book development projects in Grenada and ESC.

Organization	Activity/ Materials
Caribbean Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (2003–2005)	➤ USAID-funded program focused on best practices on teaching reading. In collaboration with the University of the West Indies, reading instruction materials were produced for teachers, and students wrote their own short stories and poems. Leveled and decodable readers from Scholastic were purchased along with shelves for displaying the books. This led to the emergence of classroom libraries.
CR	➤ Publisher of children’s books focused on the ESC region, based in St. Kitts and the United States. Works with local NGOs to increase the number of culturally relevant books in the region.
ELP (2015–2019)	➤ Four-year USAID project aimed at improving literacy in the early grades, implemented by OECS in six member-states. Activities include teacher training, mentorship and support, material development, and monitoring and evaluation. Write to Read, an initiative of the project, resulted in the production of more than 40 titles for children written by local community members.
GSI	➤ Local NGO focused on creating and refurbishing libraries in primary schools in Grenada. The goal is to create a library in every primary school on the island. Books are provided free of charge. They have worked in collaboration with RtR to create a set of children’s books featuring local themes and characters written and illustrated by local authors and illustrators. They have provided at least one of these books to each primary school-age student for their homes.
HAS	➤ Working with six countries in ESC, including Grenada, to provide English language children’s books to primary schools. Volunteers support teachers and librarians with training and resources. Books are provided free of charge.
Various community libraries	➤ A small number of community-based libraries exist in Grenada, operated by family foundations, such as the Foundation for Needy Students in St. David’s and the Grenada Community Library and Resource Center in St. George’s, started by a group of local community members. The centers have books for adults and children to borrow, have computers with Wi-Fi, and some provide tutoring services for exam support to students.

Digital Materials by Development Partners and NGOs

RtR

RtR has established its own online library—[Literacy Cloud](#)—and has included the 13 titles developed as part of the Grenada Accelerator/GSI project on this library.

GDL

The [GDL](#) is a free online library developed with support from NORAD, UNESCO, and USAID. Books published as part of the ELP have been digitized and included on GDL. However, neither staff within

the MoE nor teachers or principals at schools that were visited had heard about the GDL or knew that the materials from ELP had been digitized and are available on the site.

GBA Findings: Title Development/Strengths

- There is interest in writing for local audiences, and local authors and illustrators have created books for children and adults that have been well received.
- The move to online learning via tablets and digital content can open the door to more reading resources for children.
- Schools have dedicated spaces for libraries, and classrooms have individual class libraries.

GBA Findings: Title Development/Weaknesses

- Local organizations working on developing and supplying ERMs work independently. While they try not to duplicate efforts, more deliberate collaboration would be beneficial.
- The government does not allocate funds to the development of ERMs or provide oversight into the types of books that are being provided to schools by local NGOs. MoE should take a more active role in the types of books schools receive, particularly around book leveling, to ensure there are books at the right level for all readers.
- There is no mandate by the government to include ERMs within the primary school curriculum.
- Teachers and staff are not aware of the various Open Education Resource platforms available free for children to read and practice literacy skills, such as Kolibri, iLearn, GDL, and African Storybook project.

GBA Recommendations: Title Development

GBA recommends:

- That the MoE make the same mandate that was recently made for secondary schools and include ERMs in the book list for primary schools. This will indicate to parents that reading should be valued and seen as an activity that should be done both at school and in the home.
- That programs like Young Authors, which gave prizes to school students for writing stories, be reinstated and organized by the MoE at local, district, and national levels.
- That programs like Readers Circle, where local authors are invited to schools to read out loud to children, are revitalized and mainstreamed across primary schools, to inspire children to read and to show them that authors and illustrators have an important role to play in the development of civil society.
- That local authors and illustrators work with the government to create ERMs aligned to the curriculum and in a digital format, which can then be uploaded to tablets for teachers to use in classrooms and for students to read independently.

- That USAID support an OECS-managed entity linking authors and illustrators in the region to create materials for children and leverage publishers, printers, and economies of scale to produce more books for children.
- That community colleges include workshops on writing for children, to grow local talent and foster development of a local book industry, and that teacher training programs be enhanced to feature best practices on using books as teaching tools.

SCA PHASE III: PUBLISHING AND PRINTING

Publishing generally encompasses the contracting of authors, and all the steps of title development (writing, editing, illustrating, graphic design, and page makeup). It also includes the ownership, licensing, and marketing of intellectual property. In the case of a private sector publisher, publishing is a for-profit business. Where state publishing exists, the MoE staff generally creates the curriculum and accompanying textbooks.

Printing refers to the manufacturing process, whereby the final PDF is transformed into a printed, bound book by means of ink, paper, and a printing press, and then binding equipment. Sometimes private publishers have their own printing press, but more often, they contract out the printing. In the case of a state publisher, books may be printed by a state printer or tendered out to a private printer.

Curriculum and Textbooks

Curriculum Development

Over the past three decades, the OECS has embarked on a series of reforms to better integrate the education systems and curricula of its member-states to ensure that education standards for the region are aligned with global best practices. To guide the reform project, an Education Reform Unit was established in 1994 with representation from each member-state (this unit has recently been renamed the Education Development Management Unit, guided by the OECS Education Sector Strategy, 2012–2026). Over several years, strategy documents and guidelines, a regional education framework, and a harmonized curriculum along with teacher guides, and assessment tools have been developed.²⁴ Grenada has been implementing this harmonized curriculum in primary schools in four core subjects: math, language arts, science and technology, and social studies. In Grenada, the curriculum is being reviewed, and a national consultancy was recently held in partnership with the MoE and GPE’s PEARL project to provide feedback on changes to the curriculum.

Textbooks

As described in earlier sections, textbooks in Grenada are not produced by the government. For various reasons, textbooks have been purchased from commercial publishers and distributed to schools. Since 2008, the ministry ceased buying textbooks directly from publishers. The ministry now coordinates with a local private bookstore, Standard Bookshop, to purchase textbooks. The Ministry of Education provides information on quantities they require to Standard Bookshop, who places the order. Once the order arrives, the books are delivered to the MoE, which then delivers books to each school. Principals reported having no issues with these deliveries, with books arriving on time and in good condition. Standard Bookshop also orders extra copies of textbooks

24 Watts, Andrew. 2011. [Issues in Curriculum Development and Harmonization in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States](#).

for parents to purchase on their own. This practice has continued, despite the MoE shifting to digital content on tablets, as many teachers supplement what is on the tablets with the textbooks.

Digital Materials

Government of Grenada

The Government of Grenada has been working on moving from printed textbooks to digital textbooks, although the tablets students use do not currently have digitized textbooks on them. In interviews with the government, it was not clear whether they have secured permissions for digitizing the print textbooks purchased from publishers in the past, or if they intend to do this.

The tablets that the Ministry has provided to all students and teachers include digital content developed by [FortunaPix](#), a company based in the United States and India. FortunaPix has developed proprietary products called LernBag and LernBook, which, from descriptions on their website, include videos, quizzes, labs, and multi-subject curriculum-aligned content for use by primary and secondary grade students. The tablets also include educational and research apps, such as YouTube Kids, EdModo, Nearpod, and Padlet.

Private Sector Publishing

CARICOM's 10th edition of the *Directory of Caribbean Publishers* include 18 private publishers in Grenada.²⁵ There may be more, as the list includes only those who have registered with the Caribbean Regional ISBN Agency. Most of those listed are one-person companies, and it was not possible to contact them to find out what they publish. One publisher with a functioning website self-publishes adult books featuring the history of Carriacou.

CR is one of the few private publishers of children's books in the region. Established in St. Kitts by a local resident who could not find books for children in the local bookstores, CR focuses on producing books for children written by local authors. CR keeps local authors and illustrators on retainer and publishes books under their own imprint. Books are printed in Trinidad, Jamaica, or the United States, depending on cost for the particular run of books. CR has worked with HAS to provide books written by local authors and produced by local publishers to schools in Grenada; CR has also been commissioned by the OECS through funding from CIDA to produce children's books. Papillote Press is another local publisher based out of Dominica. Their focus is on books by local authors and illustrators, but they do not currently publish books for children.

Caribbean Publishers Network (CAPNET), based in Jamaica, was established in 2000 as an industry association of regional publishers. CAPNET has about 75–100 members throughout the region but has not received much support or recognition from governments in the ESC region. Despite this,

25 Caribbean Community Secretariat, [Directory of Caribbean Publishers, 2016](#).

CAPNET has organized international conferences on publishing, participated in and sponsored international book fairs, and participated in the Congress of the International Publishers Association.²⁶

CR has struggled to find purchasers for their books. They have tried working directly with governments within the ESC, but the costs associated with book production, distribution, and duties and taxes make them out of reach of most governments. Small, independent bookstores are scarce and have limited budgets for procuring books outside of textbooks. A lack of demand from customers for books for children compounds this problem, making it very hard to find locally published children’s books in Grenadian bookstores. The owner of Standard Bookshop had some titles by local authors but none for children and had not heard of CR.

Production of Books for Learners with Disabilities

In Grenada, students with disabilities attend specialized schools. Students with mild learning disabilities attend general education schools, where specialized resources for reading (e.g., large-format books) do not exist. Email correspondence with four schools—Resource Centre for the Blind, Victoria School for Special Education, St. Andrews School for Special Education, and Grenada School for Special Education—about the use of books and teaching learning resources, revealed that assistive reading materials are limited. The schools have either a class library or a school library, but students seldom go to the library or check out books. The school schedule does not include time for reading; if students do read, this is during recess or after school. Only St. Andrews reported having books in large format; no schools have books in Braille, and one school reported needing to make large-print books for students, as these are not readily available in the market.

Technology is used at all schools, with some integrating this into instruction more than others. At the Resource Centre for the Blind, students use apps like Immersive Reader, a Microsoft tool to support students with dyslexia, which is built into the tablets students have been given. Immersive Reader also has a read-aloud function that is used. At the Victoria School for Special Education, students use a range of sensory manipulatives, and teachers use American Sign Language where required. Assistive technology like [Starfall](#) and [TouchMath](#) are also used with students. Most teachers at the schools have not received formal training on working with students with special needs. Some teachers have received in-house, just-in-time training, particularly when a new resource is being used.

Government Printery

The Government Printery in Grenada has been in operation since 1885. It is mostly involved in printing products to facilitate the operations of the government, including the printing of forms, office stationery, recording ledgers, receipt books, financial reports, posters, booklets, brochures, and ballot forms. The *Government Gazette*, a weekly newsletter with information for the public about actions

²⁶ Randle, [The impact of trade and technology on the Caribbean Publishing Industry](#).

and decisions taken by the government, is printed by the Government Printery. Digital copies of the gazette are available on the Printery's website.²⁷

GBA Findings: Publishing and Printing/Strengths

- The harmonized curriculum has been embraced by teachers and families and undergoes periodic revision for relevance and updating content.
- Textbooks, while not produced locally, are of good quality, and publishers go through a revision process to align them to curriculum and standards and make them more culturally relevant for the context.
- Children's books published by CR are of high quality and feature themes and characters relevant to children in Grenada.

GBA Findings: Publishing and Printing/Weaknesses

- The curricular e-content on the tablets is not in the form of a textbook but rather notes and short informational texts.
- Teachers continue to use printed textbooks to supplement the e-content on the tablets, and there is confusion about how to use educational apps on the tablets.
- A limited selection of children's books is available in bookstores, and high costs of books keep families from purchasing books for use at home.

GBA Recommendations: Publishing and Printing

GBA recommends:

- That the publishers within the region form an industry association, which would be individually beneficial and strengthen the entire publishing sector.
- That ERMs be seen as educational texts and that taxes and duties not be charged on these materials.
- That the mandate of the Government Printery be expanded to include printing ERMs for use in schools and classrooms.
- That donor-funded projects that engage in providing books to schools should involve private publishers both in Grenada and in the region in developing and publishing these materials, instead of developing them in-house or abroad. Engaging the private sector provides opportunities for publishers to build capacity, and it guarantees sustained availability of these materials in the book market even after donor funding has ended. It also provides opportunities for scale by the government or other development partners when the original development partner is no longer active.

²⁷ Grenada Government Gazette. <https://gazettes.gov.gd/>. Accessed 23 September 2022.

SCA PHASE IV: PROCUREMENT AND PURCHASING

Procurement and purchasing is the acquisition of books and texts to support reading skills. In the education sector, the largest procurer of books is often the government, which will select vendors, establish payment terms, negotiate contracts for per-unit and print-run prices for reading materials, and pay vendors. Purchasing may also involve nonstandard financing models, such as the use of advanced market commitments or purchasing consortia. Individual teachers, families, and students are also book consumers and may purchase books depending on their interest and ability to pay for them.

Government Procurement Policy

In Grenada, under the current administration, textbooks are purchased by a local private bookstore, Standard Bookshop. The ministry had a policy where at least three bids be procured from various providers, but for many years, Standard Bookshop has been the only provider. The ministry's current policy of single sourcing recognizes Standard Bookshop as the sole provider of textbooks to both the ministry and the general population. The ministry communicates directly with Standard Bookshop on numbers and types of books they require. This year, the ministry has only placed orders for social studies books for primary grades. The Ministry of Education's budget is a lump sum; there are no specific amounts for different types of spending. Senior officials within the ministry determine how much and what areas to spend on in a given year. Table 5 lists costs of required grade 1 textbooks at Standard Bookshop.

Table 5. Grade 1 textbook list and prices at Standard Bookshop.

Textbook and workbook	Publisher	Price (EC\$)
Language arts	Macmillan	\$30
Language arts workbook	Macmillan	\$25
Math textbook	Hodder Education	\$45
Science textbook	Macmillan	\$36
Science student workbook	Macmillan	\$26
HFLE	Macmillan	\$30
HFLE student workbook	Macmillan	\$20

Public Schools: School Grants

Primary schools in Grenada receive monthly “school grants” in the amount of 800 Eastern Caribbean dollars (296.02 USD). Principals use these grants as they see fit, and sometimes have bought textbooks that teachers have requested from these grants. Mostly, however, the grants are used for minor repairs and purchasing of supplies such as chalk, pens, and other administrative materials.

GBA Findings: Procurement and Purchasing/Strengths

- The relationship with Standard Bookshop is well-managed, and textbooks arrive in time and in good condition.

GBA Findings: Procurement and Purchasing/Weaknesses

- The introduction of tablets by the MoE has been confusing for teachers and families. Families are still purchasing textbooks to supplement content, but no new textbooks are available. It is not clear what the textbook policy will be going forward.
- There is no specific amount allocated to textbooks in the Ministry of Education’s budget.

GBA Recommendations: Procurement and Purchasing

The GBA recommends:

- That the MoE develop guidance around the use of textbooks and tablets for both teachers and families and that new textbooks remain available to rent under the textbook rental scheme.
- That the MoE develop a budget that specifies amounts for important line items like textbooks and tablets, and plan for how these amounts will change year to year through forecasting activities.

SCA PHASE V: DISTRIBUTION MANAGEMENT

Distribution management encompasses the organization, oversight, and activities involved in moving books from the point of origin to the point where learners access them, and includes packaging, inventory, warehousing, and logistics.

For the past few years, the Government of Grenada has not bought textbooks for students because of the shift to e-learning. The ministry had been planning for a shift to e-learning as early as 2014. In early 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic shut schools down, the Ministry of Education launched the MStar Learning Support Platform, a Web-based online platform that includes digital curricular content, age-appropriate learning activities, virtual classrooms, a site for teachers to upload content, and a site for students to communicate and collaborate with other students and teachers. Students and teachers began the transition to e-learning by using the resources on this website and when schools opened in person in late August 2020, tablets were distributed to all students and teachers in primary and secondary schools. Initially planning to phase in secondary schools first, the ministry decided to provide tablets to all students, across grades, to ensure learning was not lost because of COVID-19.

Prior to the use of tablets and e-learning in classrooms, the Government of Grenada purchased textbooks for all students in pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools. The Procurement and Purchasing section has more details on this process.

Distribution of Electronic Devices to Schools

The Ministry of Education purchased tablets for students through the e-content vendor, FortunaPix, as well as through UNICEF. Tablets were distributed at the school level to parents, who signed a contract and paid an annual registration fee of 50 Eastern Caribbean dollars for the use of the tablets (25 Eastern Caribbean dollars if they were enrolled in the National Textbook Program).²⁸ Students keep the tablets over the summer and into the new school year (unless they are graduating from primary or secondary school). During the new school year, the MoE will conduct an audit of the tablets to determine their condition and make necessary repairs, or purchase new devices.

Distribution of Textbooks to Schools

The MoE determines which textbooks to purchase from international publishers such as Macmillan, Hodder, and Collins. The MoE has designated Standard Bookshop as the purchaser of the textbooks. Once books are procured by Standard Bookshop and delivered to the island, the MoE receives the books at the port. From there, they are driven to the ministry's main office in St. George's and kept in an air-conditioned room. Ministry staff stamp each book with the school's name; then teams of staff, with support from Imani Trainees (recent graduates who volunteer with government agencies), deliver the books to individual schools. Principals sign for the books once they are received at the school level.²⁹

²⁸ Email correspondence with ICT Officer, Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture. 30 June 2022.

²⁹ Email correspondence with Student Support Services Officer, Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, and Culture. 20 June 2022.

Distribution of ERMs to Schools

The two NGOs that provide ERMs to schools—HAS and GSI—receive shipments of books once a year at the Port of Grenada. Each organization works differently to get the books to schools. GSI takes the books to schools directly, through their own team of staff and volunteers. HAS liaises with the MoE to collect the books at the port and bring them to the MoE warehouse, where the boxes are labeled for individual schools. HAS then liaises with school staff to pick up the books. Principals and other staff may use their personal vehicle for this task or rent a car if there are many boxes.

GBA Findings: Distribution Management/Strengths

- Book distribution is well-managed, and schools receive books in time and in good condition.
- Distribution of tablets was planned in advance, and most students and teachers received these before the start of school and in good condition.

GBA Findings: Distribution Management/Weaknesses

- Global supply chain issues could delay the delivery of key materials like textbooks and tablets in the future. Plans should be put in place to mitigate this; textbook orders can be placed earlier than usual, for example, or additional tablets can be procured ahead of time in case they are needed.
- Duties and taxes on books were mentioned by many of those working in the book sector in Grenada as a major contributor to the high cost of books.

GBA Recommendations: Distribution Management

GBA recommends:

- That the process for collecting ERMs at the ports be streamlined by MoE to ensure books arrive quickly and in good condition.
- That the MoE work with other sectors of government to waive duties on ERMs, as these are primarily materials used by schools for instruction. Textbooks do not have duties, and ERMs should be seen the same way.

SCA PHASE VI: ACTIVE USE

Active use refers to the effective use of books by learners, their teachers, and children’s family members and caregivers. Children’s development of reading skills hinges on the effective use of books in classrooms and homes and is directly affected by an adequate provision of essential and supplemental reading materials.

Factors that impact book use, both in and outside of school, are therefore essential considerations in analyzing the book chain. Evidence has shown that teachers and families often do not know of the importance of reading practice and how to support it effectively. Further, unstable book supplies and penalties for book damage can lead teachers to restrict access to books, and delays in distribution mean that teacher training occurs without any of the materials teachers will use in the classroom.

In Grenada, active use of books is limited to schools that have a library and some community libraries scattered throughout the island. Bookstores are limited, and the cost of books is high, which leaves many families without any books of their own in their homes. One of two organizations—HAS and GSI—provides books in school libraries. Details of these organizations are included in the Publishing and Printing section and the Title Development section.

Focus group discussions with teachers, principals, and librarians were held during this research, in three different primary schools in St. George’s and St. David’s parishes to discuss active use in schools and communities. Phone conversations were held with parents of primary school-age children. Their perspectives on use of ERMs are captured below.

Active Use in Schools

Teachers in the two schools in St. George’s parish report that they have received training in teaching reading through projects such as USAID’s ELP and RtR’s Accelerator project. These teachers especially praised the mentorship and support portion of these projects, where literacy coaches visited their classroom to observe lessons and offer feedback and support. However, once these projects ended, while the literacy coaches continued to provide supervision and support, the level of support was not the same. Teachers report using books in their instruction as a tool to explain concepts, do picture walks, and discuss vocabulary. In schools where RtR provided libraries, librarian training was also offered. Books provided by RtR have been leveled; however, upon visiting libraries, there did not seem to be a system of leveling that was being used consistently. Librarians report using a guide developed by HAS, which provided training to the schools they partner with on how to use books with children. In St. George’s parish, in addition to having school libraries, each classroom had its own small class library, with books at the reading level of that grade.

While independent reading is not expressly included in the school’s timetable, principals, literacy coaches, and district education officers report that teachers are encouraged to give students

time to read independently daily. Whether this is implemented varies from school to school and within schools, by classroom. Some teachers reported reading out loud to their students three to four times a week and giving them time to read daily.

Each class also visits the school library once a week and students are encouraged to borrow books, although one school reported that students in kindergarten and grade 1 are not allowed to check out books, because they are not old enough to properly take care of the books. Librarians report that between 65% and 75% of students borrow books to take home. Most librarians have limited training on what to do when students come to the library. Some mentioned that they do activities—like having children color in coloring books or read a book out loud. Some librarians also mentioned using resources developed by HAS to conduct interactive and engaging activities in the library. When asked how they help children choose the right books to borrow, librarians mentioned asking children what genre of books they like and directing them to that area. Librarians had not heard of the five-finger rule (a tool that children and teachers can use to determine whether a book is at the right level for their reading skill), and many didn't understand how leveling worked. Many teachers interviewed were more aware of book leveling and helping children choose books at the right level. A few conducted fluency checks and kept running records and tracked student progress on fluency. Teachers discuss book maintenance with children, and say children know to take care of books and generally bring them back in good condition. They noted that more girls check out books than boys; teachers also have been requesting books that are geared toward boys, in order to pique their interest in reading.

Active Use in Communities

According to teachers and principals, parents could do more to support literacy at home. Some parents interviewed do read to children and encourage their children to read. But for the most part, children do not interact with books at home, and owning books is not common. Books produced by RtR's Accelerator project provided two books for each child to keep at home to build a home library. The cost of books at the local bookstore is high: 8–10 Eastern Caribbean dollars (\$3–\$7USD) for a softcover book for a grade 2 reader, making this out of reach of most families.

Schools report they have tried to organize events where they provide parents with tools to support literacy in the home. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has put these events on hold. Teachers reported, however, that reading isn't something that children or families do on their own. If they are told to do it, they may, but it is not an activity they prefer to do.

Parents who were interviewed said that they do have some books at home and encourage their children to read them. One parent reported either reading with her children or having her children read out loud or with a sibling. Ladybird books seem to be popular in homes; these are short, easy readers geared toward the emergent reading level. One parent noted that the price of these books has significantly increased over the years, making it a hardship to purchase books for their children. Parents recognize the importance of reading, as it helps them with other subjects, such as math, and have noticed their children reading a lot more since they have received the tablets from the schools.

GSI

GSI, started by a former member of the ministry, is an NGO whose primary focus is on providing books to children. GSI purchases books from a variety of sources, including major publishers such as Scholastic and Harcourt, and then gives these books to schools. They work with all primary schools in Grenada, and their goal is to ensure that every primary school has a functioning library. GSI communicates and works directly with individual schools and coordinates the distribution of books to each school it works with. Each school gets books once a year.

HAS

HAS is an NGO that refurbishes books, replenishes book supplies, and provides books to pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools, and community libraries in six countries in the ESC region. They have pivoted from building libraries to developing training and resources for librarians to improve their effectiveness in using books with children. “Literacy links”—who are retired school teachers, principals, and education professionals—are assigned to different schools to mentor and support teachers to integrate books into the classroom. To date, HAS has provided more than 1,500 books to 16 schools in Grenada.

Community Libraries

A small number of community libraries operate on the island. These libraries are run by community members, and books come in through donations made by individuals as well as local companies. The libraries are used by children and adults and are also used as spaces for older students to do homework, use the computer, and at times, receive tutoring or homework support.

GBA Findings: Active Use/Strengths

- Some teachers have received training on reading instruction and librarianship.
- Many schools have a school library as well as individual class libraries.
- Teachers receive regular mentorship and support from literacy coaches and curriculum officers.
- Teachers provide opportunities for students to read independently.
- Children can borrow books from the main library as well as the classroom library.
- The library consists of a variety of books, including decodable and leveled readers, as well as books across genres and levels.

GBA Findings: Active Use/Weaknesses

- Most children do not have books at home and are not read to at home.
- Teachers require additional professional development to use books more effectively in classrooms.

- Librarians require additional support and development to maximize the school libraries as a space for students to learn and be engaged in reading.
- Not all students are borrowing books, especially boys and those who struggle with reading.

GBA Recommendations: Active Use

GBA recommends:

- That the GBA support government efforts to integrate reading materials (other than textbooks) and more reading activities into the classroom and to change the class schedule to ensure it includes reading time.
- That the technical and vocational division within the MoE consider adding a certification course on librarianship, to train young people on effective use of library resources and provide them with internships at school libraries as a practicum, with the internship leading to full-time jobs at schools upon graduation.
- That the MoE include the GDL and online libraries on the student tablets so students can read e-books at home independently and with their families.
- That school libraries be expanded to serve as community libraries during non-school hours and on the weekends, to increase access to books for children and to engage parents in literacy activities with their children.
- That the government and NGOs working in the books and literacy space collaborate on engaging parents with books and literacy, through workshops, activities, and events to increase parental involvement in supporting children at home.

CONCLUSION

The Government of Grenada has worked hard to improve the quality of education in primary and secondary classrooms, by providing each student with the required textbooks and now, tablets with e-content. The partnership with private organizations such as GSI and HAS has provided schools and children with ERMs, and the dedicated work of these organizations continues to support the book sector in Grenada.

Strengthening this public-private partnership—by making more deliberate investments into teacher training and the development of local authors and illustrators—would go a long way in improving the quality and content of children’s books in Grenada. Working with independent local publishers, such as CR, to create supplemental reading materials linked to the curriculum would be an investment. Such an investment would both support the local publishing industry and increase the number of culturally relevant titles that feature equitable representations of children, particularly children from the ESC region. Continuing to work with teachers on using books in classrooms for instruction, particularly leveled and decodable books, is integral for students to have strong literacy skills that support their future academic goals.

The move to using tablets and e-content in the classroom is bold and future facing. However, much research points to the critical component of robust teacher training in ensuring effective delivery of apps and products, among other principles, for digital learning success.³⁰ Therefore, it will be essential for the Government of Grenada to provide continuous teacher training on use and integration of educational apps into instruction. At the same time, the Government of Grenada must develop guidance for teachers on integrating textbooks and tablets, as the tablets in their current form do not have adequate curricular material to be used as standalone instruction or learning tools. Finally, while digital content is convenient and easy to access if devices and Internet are readily available, from a comprehension perspective, print material is superior to digital content.³¹ Students across the learning spectrum, from primary to tertiary grades, absorb more from printed material, particularly when reading nonfiction texts. For this critical reason, to properly assess this new technology, it will be important for the Government of Grenada to continue investing in print materials and simultaneously develop a plan to capture impact on student learning via tablets.

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31 Delgado, Pablo, Cristina Vargas, Rakefet Ackerman, and Ladislao Salmerón. 2018. “Don’t throw away your printed books: A meta-analysis on the effects of reading media on reading comprehension,” *Educational Research Review*, (25).

ANNEX 1: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEES

1. List of participants in focus group discussion at the MoE:

Focus Group 1:	Focus Group 2:	Focus Group 3:	Focus Group 4: Grand Anse Roman Catholic School	Focus Group 5: Calliste Government School	Focus Group 6: St. Dominic's Roman Catholic School
Acting Permanent Secretary—Ministry of Education	Early childhood officers (2)	Literacy coaches (2)	School principal	School principal	School principal
Acting Permanent Secretary—Human Resource Development	District education officers (3)	Curriculum officer, literacy	Librarian	Librarian	Librarian
Acting Chief Education Officer	Deputy Chief Education Officer	IT officer (e-learning department)	Grade 1 teacher	Grade 1 teacher/literacy lead	Language teacher
	Head of Student Support Services				

2. Face-to-face and phone interviews with participants in the NGO and private sector:

OECS Commission	UNESCO cluster office for the Caribbean, national education officer, staff members	Standard Bookshop, owner	HAS, local representatives	GSI CEO and project support officer	CR, founder
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3. Phone conversations with parents:

Parent 1: two children in grade 3	Parent 2: one child in grade 2	Parent 3: one child in grade 2
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ANNEX 2: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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