

# Textbook Program

## Why Textbooks?

Roughly 90% of middle schools in rural Guatemala don't have access to textbooks. Without them, students waste most of their learning time copying the teacher's notes from the blackboard. Not surprisingly, they quickly lose motivation and enthusiasm for school, and drop out. Of every 10 children in Guatemala, only four will make it to middle school, and only two will complete high school. This means that a staggering 80% or more of young Guatemalans never graduate from high school.

## How the Program Works

Cooperative for Education (CoEd) provides a low-cost, sustainable solution for giving students access to textbooks. Every program participant "rents" a set of books in core subjects like math, science, Spanish language, and social studies for a small monthly fee (about \$1.50). These fees are collected into a "revolving fund" which is used to replace the books as they wear out.

Books are purchased in bulk directly from a large Guatemalan publisher, thus securing the lowest possible price and contributing to the local economy. Teachers also receive training on how to effectively use textbooks in their classrooms.

The Textbook Program has a 28-year track record of increasing the amount of material covered in classes, improving the learning experience, and reducing dropout rates. Studies show that, simply by staying in school, young people in Guatemala can improve their earning potential by as much as 182%. With higher wages, they can escape the hardship that has plagued



"With the books, the class becomes more student oriented. I'm not the only one who has the benefit of access to materials and information—now [my students] can verify what I say and challenge me."

—Eladi Chiquin Chamán, science teacher at La Parroquia

their families for generations—breaking the cycle of poverty once and for all.

An independent study of the Textbook Program also showed that Textbook Program students score higher on standardized math and reading tests than students at comparison schools.

## Sustainability

CoEd's innovative revolving fund model enables programs to thrive and survive into the future. All student rental fees go into a fund managed by CoEd. After five years, enough money has accrued to replace the books, which means that after the initial investment, each Textbook Program becomes 100% self-sustaining.

Thanks to the revolving fund model, the community has a financial stake in the program and thus a vested interest in its success. Once their programs are up and running, schools take over day-to-day management of the programs and experience the pride, confidence, and dignity that come from helping themselves.

## Results

21,570 students 180 schools

91% of program schools active for 5+ years have renewed their textbooks through their revolving fund.

With textbooks, teachers spend 53% less class time dictating information, and 98% say their students become better critical thinkers.