

BookPower

# BookPower

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## Books for developing countries at affordable prices

### WHAT IS BOOKPOWER?

BookPower is a unique charity. It provides high quality, affordable textbooks for tertiary students in developing countries at prices that they can afford. BookPower works closely with publishers in the UK to provide run-ons of up-to-date textbooks. These are then sold to students through booksellers in low income countries. Because the books are bought, not given away, there is no wastage. BookPower operates in 37 countries in English speaking Africa, the Indian subcontinent, and the Caribbean.

BookPower takes great care to ensure that the books provided are the best ones available for the local market. They work in close collaboration with their overseas partners who are able to provide up-to-date and reliable advice about the needs of students in tertiary education and about existing market conditions. A panel of academic advisors provide BookPower with special expertise in each of the different subject areas where they provide textbooks.

The charity uses its funds to reduce the price of the books to levels that students in the poorest countries can afford—usually about one fifth of that which would be paid by UK students.

### WHAT BOOKS ARE PROVIDED?

Currently BookPower makes available textbooks to cover medicine and nursing; business and management; hotels, catering and tourism; information technology; and veterinary medicine and animal welfare. Forthcoming titles will cover agriculture and game conservation, with books on economics,

engineering, and science to follow when funds permit. Current titles are listed on the website: [www.bookpower.org](http://www.bookpower.org).

BookPower made available 83 000 copies of textbooks during 2002, an increase of over 70% on the figure for 2001. Past experience has shown that on average each copy will be used by six students. Therefore, almost half a million students in the poorest developing countries will have benefited from BookPower's work in 2002.

### HOW LONG HAS BOOKPOWER BEEN GOING?

Until March 2002, BookPower was known as ELST (Educational Low-Priced Sponsored Texts). ELST was set up as a charity in December 1996 in response to a clamour from academics and students in low income countries disturbed by the decision of the British government to close the former scheme, ELBS (English Language Book Scheme), which it had funded since 1960. ELBS had provided over a million textbooks to students in developing country and the termination of the scheme was greeted with alarm by those students and by university staff.

BookPower is the new name for the charity but its mission remains the same—to continue to provide much needed, up-to-date textbooks to some of the most committed students in the world.

### HOW DOES BOOKPOWER WORK?

As a registered charity BookPower's work is governed by a board of trustees who have a range of relevant skills.

BookPower's patrons are Amartya Sen, Nobel laureate and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Michael Palin, actor, broadcaster, and writer. Administration is handled by International Book Development Ltd from its offices in Chiswick, West London.

BookPower receives no funding from government and relies entirely on donations from voluntary sources.

### WHERE DOES BOOKPOWER OPERATE?

BookPower generally works in countries where the gross national income per capita is less than US \$1000 per annum and where English is the main language used in college and university teaching. In these countries, there is very little support available for students to help them fund their education. There is also little access to electronic media—books are still the primary source of information in developing countries.

The 37 countries in which BookPower operates are listed on their website. Students coming to the UK to study should buy the textbooks they need in their own country before they reach the UK in order to benefit from the BookPower scheme. Developing country academics and students should purchase or order the books from their local campus or academic bookshop. Books cannot be obtained direct from publishers or from BookPower directly. A list of academic bookshops in the developing country is available from the nearest British Council office and also from: BookPower Administration, International Book Development Ltd, 305–307 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4HH, UK (BookPower@ibd.uk.net).

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