THE LEARNING TRUST

Western Cape Community of Practice

Learning Brief

June 2023

LITERACY IN AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

Literacy is a vital skill required to participate meaningfully in the modern world. Lacking literacy skills holds a person back at every stage in their life. As a child, they will struggle to succeed in school; as an adult, they may find it hard to enter the job market, and as a parent, they won't be able to support their child's learning journey. **Nal'ibali Trust**, a leading literacy-focused non-profit organisation, defines literacy as the ability to read, write, speak, and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world.

After School Programmes (ASPs) are perfectly positioned to support learners to close the alarming literacy gaps highlighted in the most recent **Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)** released in May 2023, which revealed that despite South Africa making steady gains in literacy levels in the decade up until 2020, 81% of children in Grade 4 cannot read for meaning in any language. This percentage is highest in quintile 1-3 schools in underresourced and lower-income areas.

The After School sector has enormous potential to shift this reality through integrated literacy activities and awareness into their programming.

WHAT ARE THESE PROGRAMMES, AND HOW CAN THEY BE IMPLEMENTED

Shine Literacy seeks to transform children's prospects in Grades 2 & 3 in low-income communities across South Africa with the help of volunteers, community members, donors, and non-profit partners to foster a culture of reading at home and school. Practitioners are trained to conduct a paired reading using the 'social franchise model", which encourages practitioners to work with children once or twice a week on a one-on-one basis during the school day for at least one year. Shine also runs an online mobile site called "**Story Time**", which offers e-books in multiple languages such as IsiXhosa, Afrikaans and English.

According to **Shine Literacy's' July 2022 Literacy Report**, internal assessment results showed that learner literacy levels in learners who consistently attended the Shine Literacy Hour increased.

46.4% of learners who participated in the Shine Literacy Hour intervention are no longer categorised as "At Risk" compared compared with 65,2% at the start of the programme.

At Risk' learners are learners who face the risk of not being to read and write by Grade 4.

During the baseline, only 0,4 % of learners were found to be reading on the required level, and in just six months, this number increased to 8,6%.

This reinforces the importance of the Shine Literacy Hour Programme and further demonstrates the benefits for all learners who participate in it.

CLOSING THE EDUCATIONAL GAP

Loxion Mobile Library is a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) established in 2020 during the rise of Covid-19 to breach the learning gap as a result of the pandemic. The organisation is the brainchild of four young people who saw the need for an early-grade learning programme to support learners affected by the disruption of classes, school closure and rotational timetables. The organisation aims to get leaners in Grade 2 & 3 in underresourced areas to engage in the world of books and improve their reading and writing skills and get into higher education and off the streets. The Founders approached parents and presented them with the opportunity to hold the "**Shine Literacy Reading Hour**" sessions with children in their homes. Parents revelled at the opportunity, and the project grew and spilt over into the local playground. They are now operating out of the local community centre, implementing additional programs such as "Library Day".

Shine Literacy trained Litha Sam-Sam (pictured), who is the founder & project manager of their "Creating a Culture of Reading" model. Loxion Mobile Library has built a strong and collaborative relationship with Shine Literacy, which has proved essential for the programme's success.

WORDWORKS

Wordworks' Together In My Education (**TIME**) programme is a great programme that ASPs and aftercare programmes can adopt. The TIME home learning programme is a set of daily story-based activities for Grade R and 1 learners. They provide language and maths activities for learners to use at home and in afterschool programmes to build foundational knowledge and skills. The activities align with the CAPS curriculum and complement what is being taught in the classroom. WordWorks provides training opportunities to interested partners on engaging and using these materials. Organisations that have an interest in partnering with WordWorks can follow the **link of this form**

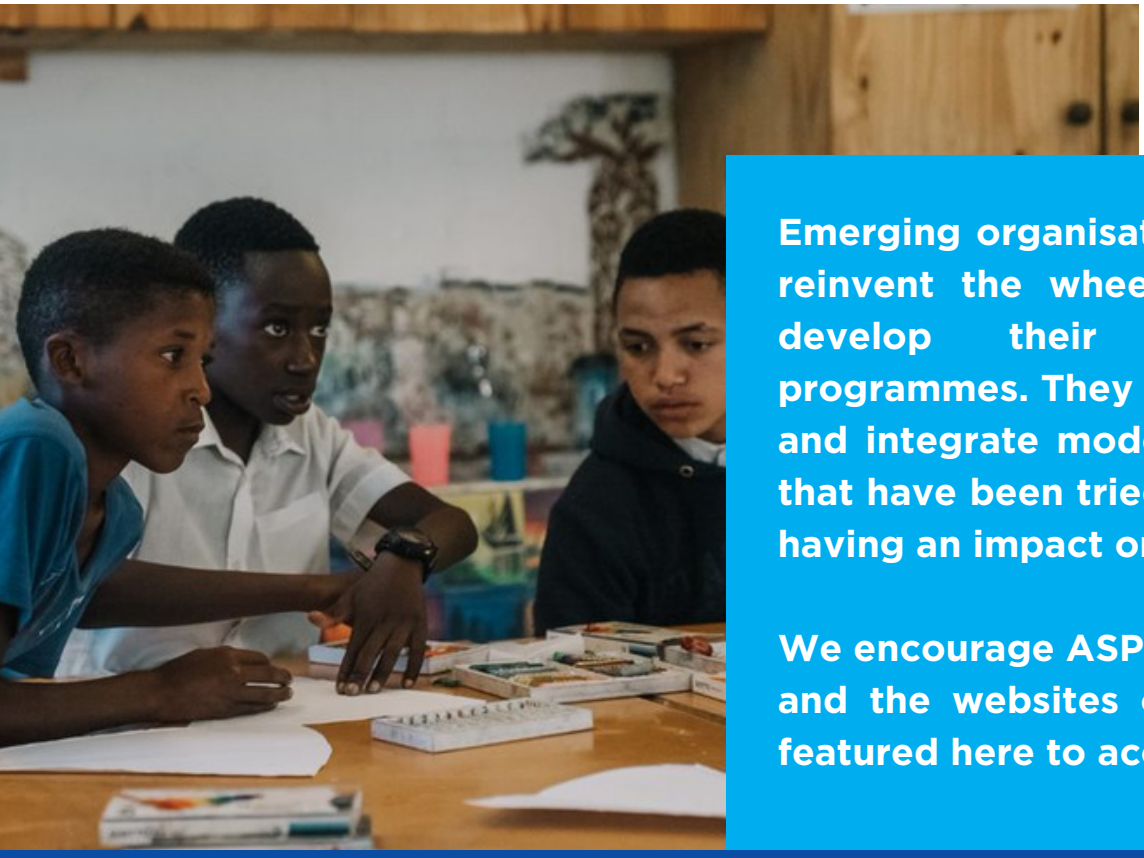
FUNDA WANDE

Funda Wande is an African language literacy programme that aims to equip teachers to teach reading for meaning and calculating with confidence for learners in Grades R-3 in South Africa. The organisation develops and designs materials and teacher training tools and guides broken down by term to make it easy to navigate and implement alongside the school calendar in the languages children speak and understand, maximising literacy learning in these early grades.

The Funda Wande website has free resources that ASPs can adopt and use as guidelines within their programmes.

Click the below links for some useful resources we've picked:

Teacher Guide
IsiXhosa Grade 3 learners book



Emerging organisations do not need to reinvent the wheel by attempting to develop their literacy support programmes. They can learn, work with, and integrate models and programmes that have been tried and tested and are having an impact on literacy outcomes.

We encourage ASPs to visit our website and the websites of the organisations featured here to access more resources!