This year has been a long and difficult one for South Africa. There have been student protests, political difficulties, a world-wide tightening of belts, and a terrible drought which has ravaged the country.

Despite the bleak landscape of 2015, READ experienced the triumphs of individual teachers that have seen the children in their care excel and achieve success. There were regular highlights of teachers putting in extra effort in their day-to-day work to make sure they give their best to the community. Some received recognition for what they have achieved but the majority did this because they have been tasked to do so, and were executing these tasks with diligence and honour.

A lot can be learnt from these teachers who work hard, work together and continue to do this day in and day out for the benefit of the children in their care regardless of the circumstances they find themselves in.

I have, over the years, told a number of stories to illustrate a point but this year, a small but very significant incident, which occurred at one of the Rally to Read project schools, summed up the work that READ does perfectly:

According to the READ trainer the school was celebrating the Readathon during literacy week. A selected group of children were showcasing their reading abilities and drama talents to their parents and other community members attending the celebrations.

When it was the turn of the Grade 1 learners, they read with passion from their readers, proud of their progress and abilities. One of the little girls stopped half-way through her reading piece, took a deep breath and stepped down from the makeshift stage. Walking into the audience she took the hand of a woman and led her to the front. This was her mother. With pride and some big-eye-gesturing she handed her mother the book she was reading a minute ago. Haltingly the woman started reading and finished the text with a big smile.
Together mother and daughter learned to read this year. Every day after school, the little girl went home and shared what she learnt in school that day. The influence of her teachers, the enthusiasm of the project trainer, the additional books gifted by donors had reached beyond the classroom walls to the heart of the home of one of our children where it really mattered.

When each of us add a little of our knowledge, give a bit of effort and contribute some positive energy to the mix of what our education system needs, the end result will be better quality education across the board.

READ contributed to the upskilling of 3 196 teachers in rural schools in South Africa and saw a 15% increase in terms of project gains in one year – all because of the contribution of everyone involved in the project – the district officials, the School Management Team, the Heads of Departments, the teachers, the learners, the parents, the chiefs of the villages, the project managers, the trainers and most importantly the numerous corporate donors who support education in South Africa.

Without every single person’s input, READ will not be able to do the work it does and will not be able to achieve the results it does. Thank you for your support and your contribution to the economic and political development of the country.

From the National Director

READ has built a strong and decisive vision in its 37 years of operation that involved a literate South Africa, where the level of literacy enables every person to cope with his or her life and contribute to the economic and political development of the country.

Using the expertise and knowledge of the language and literacy field built up over these years READ offered this expertise to a new client base in 2015 while still retaining its core programmes.

Establishing a Learning Centre in Cape Town and focusing on a Community based ECD programme in Limpopo, the programmes fulfilled the vision statement of READ completely and added to the mix of language and literacy services offered by the organisation.

The diagram below explains how READ is adding to its core competencies, extending its services in the classroom to beyond the formal classroom structures. Each section is described below:

**CORE LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES**

READ has been successful in building teachers’ skills through our structured training, coaching and mentoring approach. This approach does not only rely on the improvement of content knowledge, but also helps develop the attitudinal and motivational changes needed to improve teaching practice.

For the foreseeable future, there is a need to continue offering teacher development support in schools. The following statistics support this contention:

In most of the projects more than 40% of the teachers are 54 years or older. This means that in the next five years, many more newly qualified teachers will be entering the educational system.

The attrition rate amongst teachers in government schools is high. In rural schools the number rises to 23% to 25% per year. Focussed teacher development programmes to bring these groups of teachers up to speed is essential.

Newly appointed teachers struggle to teach according to the National Curriculum (CAPS) requirements. In READ projects the poorest performing teachers are the newly appointed teachers.

Evaluations conducted by READ staff indicate that in rural projects 100% of newly appointed teachers cannot...
READ Project Map

2015

349 schools participated in READ projects

336 training sessions were done in 2015 by READ trainers in urban and rural areas

3,196 teachers received development support

1 million Bic pens were distributed to children across South Africa by READ

8,551 classroom support visits were made by READ trainers and mentors to teachers around SA

114,100 learners benefited from READ interventions

33 projects across South Africa

30,000 more RED Reading Boxes were distributed to children by READ

implement the teaching strategies required by CAPS. In urban schools the percentage drops to 50%, but this is still much too high. These findings are supported by research from academics, the education department (NEEDU) as well as educational researchers such as JET, ORT and the Centre for Educational Research at the University of Pretoria.

EXTENSION OF CLASSROOM PRACTICE
READ has developed its training programmes, monitoring tools and assessment protocols within the Early Childhood Development and Primary school phases in the past few years. This has led to improved education and assessment results in all of our programmes. READ introduced a Resource File for Foundation and Intermediate Phase teachers that provides structured and scaffolded activities for learners, to assist in improving the instruction of home language and the first additional language.

Within the school community READ has introduced the concept of Book Clubs, Reading Assistants and Homework Assistants that have improved the language development of teachers and learners significantly. These initiatives speak to the Minister of Basic Education’s development plan for 21st century learners.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POINTS (PDP)
Since the beginning of 2014 school principals and members of the school management teams had to attend Professional Development courses to qualify for Professional Development Points (PDP) to maintain their registration as educators with the South African Counsel for Education (SACE). From 2016 all educators need to do the same. As an extension of existing programmes, READ offers educators and principals accredited training as part of their continued professional development.

The setting up of Language Centres in communities as part of the READ programme is aimed at working with learners, parents and youth in the community. Activities such as storytelling, language and vocabulary development, reading clubs and homework assistance are offered at the Language Centres.

Only motivated teachers as well as community members identified by the school management team become involved and are then trained by READ to run these centres effectively. All resources in the community that can support these centres, such as libraries, businesses as well as other NGO or community structures, are identified as partners. READ’s support to these centres continue even after a school based intervention has been completed.

These centres cater for a differentiated level of support according to the development level or grades of the learners. Alternative activities such as sport, cultural and awareness programmes are being investigated to supplement the language programmes conducted in the afternoons.

Through the expansion of READ’s offering to include more focus on expanding teacher skills, activities outside of the formal classroom environment (such as the development of Language Centres) and focussing on Early Childhood Development, READ continues to contribute to the future growth of the nation.
READ Projects 2015

PROJECTS

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<th>Donor</th>
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<th># Projects</th>
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<th># Teachers</th>
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Primary School Projects

Rally to Read

The Rally to Read is a rural school development project in 8 of South Africa’s 9 provinces. There are 10 Rallies in all with 2 in Mpumalanga and in KwaZulu Natal. The rural schools which READ works in are usually far off the beaten track, and sometimes cut-off by weather, by road conditions, and on occasion, by natural disasters such as floods.

The Rally weekends where delivery of resources take place, occur in September. Resources, including books and toys, funded by a collection of donors, are delivered to each school in a Rally area.

The Rally trainers (1 per Rally) train and support teachers over a three year period. Support visits and coaching takes place during the term to make sure teachers are applying what they learn in training. The rally supports the primary school teachers from Gr R to Gr 7.

National

Ledig PS Project

This project takes place in 6 schools in the Ledig area of North West, located near Rustenburg. The schools receive resources and the teachers’ training. The teachers receive coaching to ensure they are comfortable with applying their training in the classroom.

Challenges include:
- Resignation of educators.
- Limited numbers of learning or teaching aids
- Over-full classrooms

Despite the challenges the annual evaluation has shown that a large number of learners (14%) have moved from the lowest level of performance and started developing their language skills. This movement is significant because it is the most difficult to achieve and mostly needs individual attention by a teacher or remedial expert to achieve this.

The number of learners developing their language skills has increased to 45%. This positive forward movement is also significant as learners now start to display skills teachers can build on in the classroom.

Free State

The Project started in June 2014 and was run on innovative lines. The coaches visited the schools as a team, and shared their findings, and their learning. This meant that the more experienced trainers assisted the less experienced trainers, and allowed them to learn new techniques in mentoring. This sharing was an inspiration to the teachers, who in many cases then began to share as well.

The 2015 evaluation of the project showed that learners performed more than 20% better in vocabulary development as well as Listening Comprehension. On average the Foundation Phase learners improved by 11% in 2015 compared to 2014 learners, and Intermediate Phase learners improved by 2.7% compared to the previous year’s learners indicating a positive effect on the teacher development programme.

North West

The Adopt-A-School Foundation Project occurs in 8 Primary schools and 3 high school in the Bodibe area near Lichtenburg.

Primary School:

The rationale behind the Primary school project approach is a focussed curriculum intervention that impacts positively on classroom delivery for the duration of the one year intervention. The focus is on:
- Comprehension
- Language structure
- Phonics
- Writing (visual literacy)

Trainers started by observing classroom practice then spent time on reflection and feedback with the teachers during the afternoon workshop sessions. Goals were set and planning and implementation discussed. Further support sessions included working with exam exemplars, and picking activities from the resource file to address challenges and more coaching.

Classroom support and coaching: were directed by the goals set by the trainer. Workshops were conducted to address findings from the visits.

High School:

The high school approach focuses on assisting the Grade 12 educators and learners with the 3 different papers that they wrote for the matric exam.

The objectives were:
- to share exam tips and techniques on how to answer questions
- to enhance literature and language content knowledge
- to give guidelines on how to deal with the writing examination
- to enhance understanding of exam terminology
The RET schools are 22 carefully chosen schools which have all previously benefitted from a READ literacy intervention. They were selected for their past endeavours in successfully sustaining the language methodologies trained by READ during the Business Trust project. Teachers and principals at these schools consistently demonstrate great enthusiasm and commitment, leading to the hope that with greater assistance they will be able to reach even higher levels of effective implementation. These schools exemplify ways in which poor schools can reach and maintain acceptable levels of literacy in the face of numerous challenges.

The aim of the project is therefore to raise the standard of literacy in the RET schools to a level of merit which matches and exceeds that of suburban schools. In order to achieve this aim, both READ and school staff must concentrate on ensuring progress in reading and writing. Daily extension work is necessary, as well the provision of additional book resources.

Innovations

Teacher

The principal of Leubaneng Primary in Limpopo came first in the PEP Most Amazing Teacher of the Year competition in 2013. Since then the school has received support for teacher development from READ. From a participating educator, Faith Majoz: “The Read/Redis Project has upgraded our school and put it on top of other schools and parents are praising of that. Our classroom has changed to be a cognitive classroom for teaching and learning for young children. The project takes our class from level 4 and puts them to level 7, learners enjoy very much to be in the class every day, and they also tell us that it is nice to be at school. Learners benefit so much in sound introducing and reading the words, they try to read words the way we teach them. Bev’s workshops help so much and we benefit a lot.”

The school has also set up a litary with the help of the trainer for learners to read independently. There is now a roster which allows all learners to use the library - from Grade R to 7. This has had an impact on the learners’ vocabulary development. Learners’ vocabulary, comprehension and confidence have improved. They are exposed to different types of text which they read independently.

The workshops have also been helpful in refreshing basic methods and have given us good ideas to consolidate phonic sounds and words. I am thoroughly enjoying the programme.” Mrs B van Wyk

Redis ERP

The Reds Early Reading Project involves working in the early grades to establish Book Corners and Reading Corners. This is the fifth year of project implementation and the project has significantly improved the learning conditions in the selected schools. The early readiness programme in the Grade R’s has been very successful and the learners are currently “reading ready”.

From a participating educator, Faith Majoz: “The Read/Redis Project has upgraded our school and put it on top of other schools and parents are praising of that. Our classroom has changed to be a cognitive classroom for teaching and learning for young children. The project takes our class from level 4 and puts them to level 7, learners enjoy very much to be in the class every day, and they also tell us that it is nice to be at school. Learners benefit so much in sound introducing and reading the words, they try to read words the way we teach them. Bev’s workshops help so much and we benefit a lot.”

Redis

McMillan

The Thebe Primary School project, funded by the Thebe Foundation, has 2 components. READ is working in 9 primary schools in the Gert Sibande district to establish book clubs at the schools and in 7 primary schools in Nkangala, Mpumalanga bringing literacy and language support to Gr 3 educators in the school. The Book Club component is intended to allow schools to develop a book club, which will help develop a love of reading at the schools.

The teacher development component is there to help teachers develop the literacy levels of the learners in the classes.

KZN

The Smiths Classroom Library Project is focused on schools in the townships of Durban. The starting point for the project is the setting up of Book Corners in Grade R and Reading Corners in Grades 1 to 6.

This project has given us exposure to more exciting books – New Heights series and Sunshine series. We are now able to do Shared Reading the correct way because we now have big books and small books for the learners to do guided reading. The books are exciting and the children are thoroughly enjoying them.

We also have a set of fun books which are at a level the children are able to read – they cater for all levels. The learners really enjoy these books. It has helped improve their vocabulary and fluency.

The workshops have also been helpful in refreshing basic methods and have given us good ideas to consolidate phonic sounds and words. I am thoroughly enjoying the programme.” Mrs B van Wyk

Limpopo

Leubaneng Primary

The Bev’s workshops have also been helpful in refreshing basic methods and have given us good ideas to consolidate phonic sounds and words. I am thoroughly enjoying the programme.” Mrs B van Wyk

The Book Club component is intended to allow schools to develop a book club, which will help develop a love of reading at the schools.

The teacher development component is there to help teachers develop the literacy levels of the learners in the classes.
The Singita Growing to Read project is an ECD practitioner development project located in schools near The Model ECD project is a training and mentoring ECD project within crèches where the practitioners are. The goal of the project was to support and assist Grade R Practitioners in their application of the Grade R curriculum so that young children in their care will enrol in Primary schools having acquired the required skills to cope with formal schooling.

The Grade R development project includes sites that are part of formal education structures (schools) as well as community sites that operates outside these formal structures. The project used a differentiated support approach as some of the sites needed more support than other sites. More time was spent with those practitioners that needed additional assistance. The willingness of practitioners to learn and to apply their training has been remarkable. The growth in the development of practitioners has been astounding and is supported by the evaluation findings.

The main goal of the project is to improve Foundation Phase learner performance in literacy in Home language and First Additional Language. Teachers are trained and coached in improving literacy, language development, setting up the classroom and managing resources.

The project has 4 components:
- Training and coaching of Foundation Phase teachers
- Training and coaching Foundation Phase HODs
- Top up resources - graded readers, Big Books, leisure readers, book shelves and mats
- Caregiver support (2017)

Coaches observe in the classrooms and teachers are given feedback before the coaching session in the afternoon. The coaching session topic is determined by the classroom observation or other project objectives. Teachers have become expert reading teachers by being passionate about reading and creating a caring inclusive classroom. They are also teaching reading using CAPS and the reading methodologies - Shared Reading, Group Guided Reading, Paired and Independent Reading.

HODs’ training focuses on curriculum management, running effective meetings (phase and grade) and using data (dashboard) to inform their planning. HODs were also trained in designing vision statements for their phases.

In each visit to the school coaches have scheduled meetings with the principal to update them about the project.

The evaluators accompany coaches to the schools daily. Twice a year, they present an evaluation report during the steering committee meeting - attended by the District, SGB, principals and HODs. Learners are evaluated at the end of each year.

The programme was implemented in two phases; Phase 1 (the “pilot”) was implemented between 2011 and 2012, and Phase 2 from 2013-2015. Phases 1 and 2 of the Growing to READ programme have been implemented in 15 and 25 ECD centres respectively.

The Growing to READ programme has four key areas of intervention: capacity development and support to Caregivers of children between the ages of 0-4 years through training and mentoring; support to parents (i.e. parents and guardians); provision of learning and play resources to ECD centres; and relationship building with key stakeholders, particularly government. This model seeks to holistically develop learners through not only directly intervening in their learning environment, but also through developing a community of support through engaging parents, community leaders and the government.

The impact study report, evaluation observations and interviews show that the children who attended the READ/RFF ECDs performed comparatively much better on child development impact indicators than those who attended other ECDs.

The Model ECD project is a training and mentoring ECD project within crèches where the practitioners are already proficient and hard working. The rationale behind the project is to equip these leader practitioners with the knowledge and expertise to allow them to help other practitioners, in an exercise of community development. Training and resources were provided to these practitioners, and they were mentored and encouraged to begin working with others.

The Singita Growing to Read project is an ECD practitioner development project located in schools near the Singita Sabi Sands Lodge and the Singita Kruger Lodge. Each lodge supports its own set of crèches, with a total of 20 centres divided between the two lodges. The project aims to assist local crèches with resources and development so that children attending the centres receive a proper start to their schooling. Child-care practitioners and caregivers are trained in childcare and early childhood development practices. This is associated with the provision of learning resources to all schools. Caregivers are taught hygiene, nutrition, and how best to develop children’s fine and gross motor coordination, and cognitive skills, through physical activities, puzzles, and play.
### Inner City ECD

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<th>Donor</th>
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<th># Projects</th>
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The Inner-city ECD project is aimed at supporting crèches in the inner city of Gauteng where practitioners are looking after young children in a variety of circumstances. Some of these ECD centres operate from high rise buildings or small structures tucked between shops.

The project enables the ten ECD centres to receive the correct language resources needed, the training and the support that the practitioners need and innovative ways of giving children the freedom to learn through play.

### After School Projects

#### PEP Academies

| Social Innovations | 4 | 1 | 12 | 24 | 1 800 |

The PEP Academy Project aims to train and support PEP Academy staff in implementing a Language and Literacy programme in after-school care centres to enhance the language skills of Grade 4 learners in disadvantaged areas. The project was initiated in mid-February 2008 and the project is now in its eighth year of implementation. PEP Stores is sponsoring a literacy, numeracy and life skills assistance class in these centres. READ has been contracted as the literacy partner for that component of the project.

It should be noted that the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) changes from Home Language to English or Afrikaans in the beginning of the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4). This means that from the beginning of that year, all subjects are taught in English, not in Home Language as in the Foundation Phase. For many learners this is the first time they are being exposed to so much English and to English terminology and descriptions of concepts in content areas. Most learners struggle to make this shift easily. The Grade 4 slump has been widely documented in literature and is unfortunately a common occurrence in South African schools.

Internal evaluation of learner performance has shown that learners need more opportunities to read in English and those struggling to read should read texts at lower levels.

#### Ceramic Homework Assistance Project

| Ceramic Foundation | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 192 |

The project involves Grade 4 to 7 learners at Setlabaotjha Primary School. The project is run for three hours after school from Monday to Thursday during which learners are given additional support by teaching assistants sourced from within the community. The assistants are young people who have completed Matric but are currently unemployed. Assistants are coordinated and mentored by a READ trainer who spends time at the school once per week. The target group of this project is learners who are the weakest in their grade and who are considered academically at risk. In the case of the Grade 4s, this is the whole cohort of learners in the school.

#### Adonai Centre

| Hollard Volunteers | 1 | 1 | n/a | 32 | 170 |

READ is assisting caregivers at two Adonai Care Centres in North West province with a language programme at the centre. The project commenced in the 3rd term of 2015 and the centres cater for Grades R – 12 learners. The learners are brought to the centres by transport (buses) from their different schools. The nature of the activities at the centre is fluid and the afternoon programme accommodates the changing nature of the day to day operations.

The project is mindful of the fact that the caregivers are not qualified teachers. Therefore even if the need to improve learners’ skills is high, training of the caregivers are done in small doses (step by step) for them not to be confused and intimidated by the work load.

### Grand Totals

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<td>353</td>
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READ established its first Community Language Centres in 2015 in Lavender Hill and Hanover Park, Cape Town to work with learners and parents in a fun way to develop language skills, build confidence and promote a culture and love of reading.

The maximum number of learners attending a session is between 20 and 25 per time slot. The venue layout consists of four tables with a language activity on each. Learners are divided into groups at each table working towards a learning outcome in an informal way.
During the 36 years of READ’s history, READ Trainers have honed the offering READ provides, so that it is appropriate for the classroom situation, while providing expert help for teachers and learners.

Leonardo da Vinci was said to have remarked “Simplicity is the highest form of sophistication”, and an anonymous commentator has said that to be able to explain something simply is an indication that you understand it completely.

The READ model is simple, and while it looks easy to implement, is actually quite tricky to deliver, primarily because getting people to change patterns of behaviour requires care and subtlety, and constant vigilance. Several factors, if well executed, will lead to quality classroom practice.

The structure below shows what needs to be in place for this change to be visible in classrooms.

**Teacher**
- Use the planning format correctly.
- Plan at least a week in advance.
- Use the correct time allocations for the different topics.
- File planning neatly in a planning file.
- Use the books on a daily basis.
- Mark the books—some daily, some weekly.
- Mark corrections in their books.
- Use Class workbooks: Goals are set for each week in the books. Teachers to achieve these goals.

**Classroom Organisation**
- The classrooms to be neat and organised; learners to behave well in the classrooms.
- Relevant resources displayed.
- Update the charts on the walls regularly.

**DBE Books**
- Activities to be completed by the learners.
- Teachers to mark the books—some daily, some weekly.

**Other Aspects Which Must Be Present**
- Phonics & Spelling
- Handwriting
- Creative Writing
- Comprehension tests

**The Goals Are:**
- Two or three handwriting activities per week.
- Two spelling activities plus a spelling test on a Friday.
- One creative writing activity per week.
- One Comprehension test per week.
- One or two Grammar (Language Structure) activities per week.
The project aims to do, and the circumstances of some of the crèches, and how the project has helped people grow and change.

The Urban Rally: Inner-city ECD project is aimed at supporting crèches in the inner city of Gauteng where practitioners are looking after young children in a variety of circumstances. Some of these ECD centres operate from high rise building or small structures tucked between shops.

- This crèche only has 11% of the children coming from JHB. The rest are immigrants or migrants. The average income for a single parent is R869. They provide free education to 100 children. (50 Pre Gr R and 50 Gr R)
- They raise funds with fundraising functions.
- The children from all the classes receive Private Music and Dancing lessons twice a week.
- The crèche employed parents as caregivers; five of the parents received training and three qualified as ECD practitioners.

Envolvement

Examples of the environment at the schools:

In one school, the play area is a colourful painted cement floor. In another, two Jungle Gym areas are on the outside of the crèche.

There is a school situated in a high-rise building. You enter at street level and go up some steps to a small outdoor play area and then about twenty steps up to the huge room. The room is divided by lockers into four classroom areas.

There is a crèche situated in a house with an outside building and two Jungle Gym areas for the children.

Another site is not yet compliant but is in the process of submitting all documentation. It is a small house with four rooms without an outdoor area.

Innovation

Use of mobile messaging app

The practitioners started a WhatsApp group where they post photos of their theme tables for the week to share with each other. In this way, they inspire each other and help those who are struggling. Similarly, they have started to share their movement activities and the resources they use for babies.

Challenge

Registration with the Department of Social Development

This is a challenge for all the crèches. They have to re-zone, have new plans drawn for their sites, and acquire nutrition- and health certificates which cost them a lot of money. They have to go to different offices and have to re-print and fill in extra forms and it is never the same people they deal with. It costs between R50 000 – R80 000 to register schools. Agent fees are between R10 00 – R15 000.

Pastor Ben from Stesh Kids has lots of orphan children in his school. He works with the youth and single parents and offers programmes for them.

He was in the process of moving the Grade R’s to one of his houses as they are currently sharing the space with the ECD children in one big room without partitioning. It is very noisy and impossible for practitioners to teach.

Due to the lengthy time it took to gather all the documents required and the difficulty in complying to the regulations to register, Pastor Ben decided to forgo registering.
3. Monitoring the centres

It is common knowledge that the success of any training and intervention programme lies in monitoring and the support given to maintain the programme. In very deep rural settings like these, practitioners have no one to rely on to give them the necessary support or guidance. The trainer’s visits to these sites ensured that suggested changes were implemented at the various centres.

The importance of monitoring in sustaining quality programmes cannot be overemphasised and it is suggested that it receives the highest priority.

4. Provisioning of toys and resources

Addressing only the lack of knowledge and skill among the practitioners would not have solved the problem of low quality programmes being offered to the children. Teaching children in this phase is directly dependent on the availability of resources. The fact that these were provided, along with the necessary training on how to use them, contributed to the quality of the programme.

Growing to READ project

The following is an excerpt from Professor Marike de Witt’s analysis of the work done by READ trainers in the Roger Federer Foundation funded project, Growing to READ.

INTRODUCTION

A growing body of research highlights the pre-school period as being of utmost importance in emergent literacy and the development of skilled readers. Early literacy skills, which include oral language, phonemic/phonological awareness and print knowledge, are predictive of children’s reading success once they are exposed to formal reading instruction (Lonigan, Allan & Lerner, 2011). The GROWING TO READ PROGRAMME is developed to address this shortcoming amongst children in the rural area of the Limpopo Province and particularly the Vhembe and the Giyani regions.

STRONG POINTS OF THE INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

The following strong points contributed to the success of this intervention initiative.

1. The Trainers

The trainers, who also acted as mentors, proved to be dedicated workers. Their sensitivity to the uniqueness of young children and the approach required to teach them equipped them with the necessary skills to succeed in this intervention programme. Though the geographical setting of the centres did not contribute to the accessibility of the centres it did not prevent them from visiting the centres on a regular basis. An intellectual, positive and enthusiastic approach was displayed by the trainers during the visits as well as the training sessions.

2. The programme implemented

Both the practitioner training programme and the programme implemented at the centres addressed the identified needs of practitioners and children alike. The well planned programme empowered the practitioners to improve the quality of their offerings.

3. Monitoring the centres

It is common knowledge that the success of any training and intervention programme lies in monitoring and the support given to maintain the programme. In very deep rural settings like these, practitioners have no one to rely on to give them the necessary support or guidance. The trainer’s visits to these sites ensured that suggested changes were implemented at the various centres. The importance of monitoring in sustaining quality programmes cannot be overemphasised and it is suggested that it receives the highest priority.

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Addressing only the lack of knowledge and skill among the practitioners would not have solved the problem of low quality programmes being offered to the children. Teaching children in this phase is directly dependent on the availability of resources. The fact that these were provided, along with the necessary training on how to use them, contributed to the quality of the programme.

Professor Marike de Witt

Professor Marike de Witt is a Professor in UNISA’s College of Education. She is a qualified social worker and pre-school teacher, with qualifications in the psychology of education. She has 35 years’ experience teaching and lecturing, as well as 25 years’ experience in practical work in schools. She is an expert in the importance of ECD for a child’s holistic development.
What is the Resource File?

The Foundation Phase Resource File contains seven key components of literacy including Comprehension, Visual Literacy, Language Structure, Phonics, Poetry, Writing and Assessment. The file is geared towards teachers and learners for whom English is a First Additional Language (FAL).

Each component of the file is CAPS compliant and contains a variety of topics. Each topic is defined, examples are given to contextualise it, and differentiated activities are provided. A teacher wishing to introduce, revise or expand on a topic will find the step-by-step lesson instructions and the levelled activities useful.

Compatible with DBE workbook

The file can be used in conjunction with the DBE workbooks and the topics within the file span the Foundation Phase, moving through the grade levels incrementally. The file does not have to be worked through sequentially, but can be dipped into to access required information.

As part of READ’s collation, recording and sharing of our best practice, the Teacher’s Resource file provides teachers with a tool to teach First Additional Language, in conjunction with curriculum resources provided by the Department of Education (DBE).

The file is available for sale to teachers and schools with or without training. It is designed to be a complete resource for teachers.
READ’s response to the changing education landscape has been to focus on the setting-up of Language Centres in communities. These centres, completely aligned to the READ language philosophy and programme, allow READ to work directly with learners outside the formal school structure. Funding has been received to pilot this initiative in the Western Cape. One of READ’s best qualified and experienced trainers in the Western Cape runs the programme.

**AIM**
To establish Community Language Centres working with learners and parents in a fun way to develop language skills, build confidence and promote a culture and love of reading.

**WHERE**
Western Cape: Lavender Hill Community Centre & Hanover Park

**The need**
Effective after school programs bring a wide range of benefits to children, families and communities. After school programmes can boost academic performance, reduce risky behaviours, promote physical health, and provide a safe, structured environment for the children who are interested in improving their academic performance. National research found that over 40% of learners attending 21st Century Community Learning Centre programs improved their reading, and that those who attended more regularly were more likely to make academic gains (Naftzger et. al., 2007).

**Developing Language Skills**
Development and consolidation of language skills are vital for communication in children. Children’s ability to communicate and use language effectively will impact on their lifelong capacity to learn. Not all children develop these skills in the classroom because struggling learners do not learn optimally in large classes as they do not receive the individual attention they need. Many teachers also do not have the competencies to teach in a multi-grade classroom which has become the norm in South Africa. Children learn differently and it is often challenging to teach to the different learning styles and individual needs in large classes.

**Parental involvement**
When parents are involved in their children’s education, both children and parents are likely to benefit. Researchers report that parent participation in their children’s schooling:
- enhances children’s self-esteem
- improves children’s academic achievement
- improves parent-child relationships
- helps parents develop positive attitudes towards school and a better understanding of the schooling process.

Despite these advantages, it is not always easy for parents to find time and energy to become involved or to coordinate with schedules for school events. For some parents, a visit to school is perceived as an uncomfortable experience, perhaps a holdover from their own school days.
Rural Schools: Challenges and successes

Rural schools are usually so isolated they are not regularly visited by education department officials for mentoring and monitoring purposes.

There is a higher teacher turnover in these schools because of their remoteness and lack of basic resources in the community such as proper housing, clinics and shops. Schools lose trained educators and every term new ones have to be trained. This makes the training of the school management team and heads of departments particularly important for sustainability.

Despite this, there are rural schools that are particularly successful. The success factors, gleaned from studying the Rally to Read programme, which indicate successful implementation are:

- **Empowered and well trained educators**

  However dedicated a school manager is, it is only possible to implement the Rally to Read programme if the educators in the school have been properly exposed to the methodologies taught in this programme. They need to take ownership of the programme, and feel empowered to use it properly. Their buy in and cooperation is important.

  All educators implementing the programme can only do so successfully if they believe the programme is worthwhile. This is something that comes from management buy-in, but is also a personal thing for each teacher.

  An example of this taking ownership is the deputy principal of one school, who tirelessly works to support all educators in the implementation of the new methodologies. When she feels that the class is not print rich, she makes the teaching aids herself. The school also has a dedicated leader teacher who helps the deputy principal in the training of new recruits who are then handed over to the trainer for refinement.

- **Dedication of the school manager and the school governing body**

  School managers who are passionate about their work and demonstrate superb leadership skills

  They encourage teamwork in their schools, attend all planned training and motivate their staff to implement every course. They create a warm atmosphere which is conducive to monitoring and learning in their schools. They lead by example in the implementation process.

  School managers that are willing to go the extra mile (often quite literally)

  School managers who are passionate about their work and demonstrate superb leadership skills

  Examples of this type of behaviour are:

  - The manager who attended all training sessions, and called the trainer to help her school even when it was not her school’s planned time. She led by example in the teaching of science and literacy, and introduced new teachers to the programme. When the Rally to Read trainer arrived she would ask the trainer to check the training she had done with new teachers. She lived far from the school, but was always prepared to be at school with her team getting advice from the trainer long after school hours.

- **Support from the Department of Basic Education**

  Above all, the support of the District circuit manager has been extremely important to the success of the project. The department plays a key role in helping organize when training and evaluation visits can take place. Without their support the programme would not be possible.

- **Continuous and stringent quality assurance**

  The Rally to Read programme has as part of its core the mentoring and quality assurance of the educators, which is done by the Read Trainers. It is as important for the trainers to have a passion for the programme, and for educators, as it is for the educators implementing the programme. Where trainers are dedicated and hardworking, and flexible enough to problem solve where problems arise, the programme runs more smoothly.

- **Success is not an accident**

  Based on the experience of working in rural schools in the Rally to Read project, it can be argued that passionate, dedicated, and self motivated principals and teachers are the key to success.

  The commitment of the school management team who works under guidance of the dedicated school manager, the support of the school governing body and the mentoring and monitoring of regional directors and officials are key factors to effective education.
The assessment has two parts, an oral component and a written component. The oral assessment is based on the format of the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) test. This test is gradually being accepted as best practice in terms of reading assessment in developing countries and READ has decided to align itself with this trend.

Grade 2 learners have improved most (27.1%) and have passed the National Goal of 50% for language proficiency by 10%, while Grade 4 learners improved by 15.7%. Their scores for English as an additional language are good if one takes into account that these are rural learners that have a very limited exposure to English. Grade 6 learners improved by 12.3% in the past year.

The assessment was carried out in the different Home Languages for Foundation Phase learners and English at the First Additional Language (FAL) level throughout the Intermediate Phase.

The objectives for the assessment are to establish an internal evaluation of the project while at the same time enabling the use of learner performance data to guide strategic project decisions.

The evaluation benchmarks learners’ literacy levels at the start of the project as part of an impact evaluation for external stakeholders. The Follow-up assessment has shown that there has been significant improvement over all grades tested.

The primary school results provide strong evidence for the success of this resource based programme over a three year period. Higher order language skills of the older learners show significant improvement from year two of the project.
In 2015 the theme for the competition was the *World of Fantasy*. Entrants were asked to submit their original short story based on their interpretation of the picture given as inspiration. READ received entries from all over South Africa. They were then assessed by a team of educationalists from READ.

The winner was Thato Katane, from Fields College, who won R1 000 for himself, and R5 000 worth of books for his school. His story “The Dream” about Mr Dingles, the very rich donkey had fresh ideas and was written from the perspective of the donkey and very, very entertaining!

An initiative within the annual Readathon Campaign, the Word Warrior competition, aims to create interest in reading and writing amongst young readers. The competition is open to learners between the ages of nine and sixteen.

In 2015 the theme for the competition was the *World of Fantasy*. Entrants were asked to submit their original short story based on their interpretation of the picture given as inspiration. READ received entries from all over South Africa. They were then assessed by a team of educationalists from READ.

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**WORTHY AND WONDERFUL ENTRIES (in no particular order)**

THABISO MORELO – *The woodcutter and his donkey*

ANNE VOGES – *The donkey who dreaded dark woods*

AMANDI RIVA – *Jack and the princess who couldn’t laugh*

HAPPINESS FAKUDE – *The boy who loved donkeys*

AZRA ALLY, LAURA KROG, LAILA ASSAMO & CAELI THOMAS – *The terror of the donkeys in a top hat*

KERYN-LYNNE SCOTT & KARA JANSEN VAN RENSBURG – *The Magician and Miss Maharashtra*

NIHLAMANDISO DLANGINI – *Mr Orange and his donkey James Claude*

LERATO AKHONZA – *The Talent Show*

LANDI ADENDORF – *The magical donkey*

KHANYA CABANE – *The Magical Donkey*

SAIMA PATEL – *The Magician in the Forest*

JAMES LOCK – *Donkey Trouble*

IBRAHIM ISMAIL – *Loyiso Life Lessons*

AZRA BHIKHA – *A kind and helpful boy*

TARCIA GALESHEWA – *All lizards’ tricks*

“Once, long ago there was a mean, old, lonely and grumpy donkey, who lived in a big mansion. He was known as the richest donkey in the land. His name was Mr Dingles, the donkey who always traded things for money, millions to be exact. He was known for his money, his cars and his luxurious houses.

“Extra, extra” the mailman passed with his bicycle one morning. Mr. Dingles picked the newspaper up with hot coffee in his hand. He then took a sip from his coffee and slurped in delight. He opened the newspaper and saw that the hunters were coming for the big hunting game. “Clink!” small bits of glass knocking together fell right in front of him — and there he stood, standing like a statue, frightened.

‘The hunters are coming to hunt us down because it is open season. If they find us, we are dead!’ said Mr Dingles in a frightened voice.

Mr Dingles hired cars so that they could go to another town and settle there for a few weeks until the hunters go back home at the end of the open season. While on the way they ran out of fuel. They were stuck in the middle of nowhere so the only choices were to walk or swim in the Crocodile River. They all decided to walk in the creepy, scary, haunted forest with eerie voices and scary scarecrows and owls in the tall trees.”

**WORTHY AND WONDERFUL ENTRIES (in no particular order)**

THABISO MORELO – *The woodcutter and his donkey*

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TARCIA GALESHEWA – *All lizards’ tricks*
Acker Family Educational Trust
Adapt a School
Assmang Iron Ore - Khamuni Mine
Assmang Ltd - Beeshoek Iron Ore Mine

Barberry Group cc
Bidtrak
Bidvest Afcom (Pty) Ltd
Bidvest Facilities Management Co (TFMC)
Bidvest Financial Services
Bidvest Foodservice Corp
Bidvest Group Ltd
Bidvest Insurance Brokers
Bidvest Managed Solutions
Bidvest Panalpina Logistics
Bidvest Steiner
BPW Axles (Pty) Ltd
Bridgestone SA (Pty) Ltd
Brooks & Luyt Attorneys
Brooks, Mrs M
Brother International (SA) (Pty) Ltd

Cadbury, Sir Adrian
CAFSA GAYE - Hollard
CAFSA Square Deal - Hollard
Campkin, Ms J C
Carl & Emily Fuchs Foundation
Cataler SA (Pty) Ltd
Ceramic Foundation
CIDA Empowerment (Pty) Ltd
CSS Credit Solution Services

CTP Ltd
Davies Foundation
Delmas Coal
Deloitte Helping Hands (CAF GAYE)
Dept of Education - W/Cape
Din Din Trust
DNA Logistcs cc t/a Nandos
Emperors Palace
Doculam (Pty) Ltd
Donaldson Filtration Systems
Douglas Jooste Trust

Eldon East IDZ
Ellerine Holdings Trust Fund
Eris Property Group (Pty) Ltd

Finch Diamond Mine
First National Bank Volunteers
First National Battery Co (Pty) Ltd
FirstRand Foundation
FirstRand Volunteers Programme
Flosolve (Pty) Ltd
Formby, Mr J R
Frank & Edna Bradlow Charitable Trust
Fulton Trust
Future Growth Asset Managers

G S Elkin Residuary Trust
GCCL Squared Management Services (Pty) Ltd
Genesis Steel (Pty) Ltd
Gillian Hofmeyr Family Trust
Given Gain
Govender, Mr D G

Harvey’s of Durban cc
Hollard Foundation
Hollard Insurance Co Ltd
Idwala Lime
Ikageng Irrereleng Project
Illovo Sugar Ltd
Inkon Labels (Pty) Ltd
Isidore, Theresa & Ronald Cohen Charitable Trust

Jack & Ethel Goldin Foundation
Judith Maxwell Family Trust
Kagiso Development Trust
Kagiso Shanduka Trust
Kallides, L

Lanxess Chrome Mining (Pty) Ltd
Loyiso Industrial Solutions
LVR Plant (Pty) Ltd
LVR Plant Ngagane (Pty) Ltd t/a Nandos Parktown
Lynette Croudace Trust

MAC Consulting (Pty) Ltd
Marger Training & Properties (Pty) Ltd
Marger Training & Properties (Pty) Ltd t/a Transvaal Training
Maxwell, Mrs M J

Mercedes-Benz SA Ltd
Momentum/MMI Foundation
Mones Michaels Trust
Muller, Mr T

Namaqua Wines SA (Pty) Ltd
Nedbank Ltd - Motor Finance Corp
New Concept Projects
Nick Green Consulting
Nissan SA (Pty) Ltd
Noakes Family Charitable Trust
Novare Actuaries & Consultants (Pty) Ltd

Oelofse, Dylan and Alice
Old Mutual Investment Group
Oliver McIntyre (Pty) Ltd
Onelogix (United Bulk)
Oppenheimer Memorial Trust
Orion Engineered Carbons (Pty) Ltd

P J Carew Consulting
Paddy and Sue Kell Family Trust
Parktown Convenience Centre

Reading Matters
Red Alert TSS (Pty) Ltd
Redhill Steel Management (Pty) Ltd
Redis Charitable & Educational Foundation
Red Alert TSS (Pty) Ltd

Roger Federer Foundation
Ronnies Motors Trust
Rural Housing Loan Fund

Sandvik Mining & Construction
Sasfin Bank Ltd
Shapiro, Mr Daniel
Shell SA Energy (Pty) Ltd
Shell SA Refining (Pty) Ltd

Shumani Mills Communications (Pty) Ltd
Silverhill Seeds & Books

Solomon Ruben & Ann Winer Educational & Benefit Trust
Sprigglass, Mrs M G
Sugar Industry Trust Fund for Education

Telkom Foundation
The Customer Equity Company
TMS Group Industrial Services (Pty) Ltd
TNS Research Surveys
Tongaat Hulett Sugar Toolquip & Allied
Total Facilities Management Company
Toyota South Africa Motors (Pty) Ltd
Tracker Connect
Trencor Services (Pty) Ltd
TSB Sugar RSA

Vision Transport

Wesizwe Platinum Ltd
Wynberg Boys Junior School

ZA Central Registry
Zenex Foundation

Board of Trustees

Prof. IL Rensburg (Chair), Mrs I Menell, Mr SG Pretorius, Mr CS Beck (National Treasurer), Mr PL Mann, Mr BK Motlana, Ms CL Smith, Mr WJ Luthuli, Mr MS Masithela, Mrs MS Motlana, Mrs ME Mopeli, Ms E Mabuse, Ms BL Senne, Ms Y Nambari, Ms Z Njali. National Director: Mr AAC Matthee.
I have audited the annual financial statements of The READ Educational Trust, as set out on pages 5 to 24, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 March 2015, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in funds and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and the notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

TRUSTEES’ RESPONSIBILITY
The trust’s trustees are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these annual financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of annual financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

AUDITOR’S RESPONSIBILITY
My responsibility is to express an opinion on these annual financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the annual financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the annual financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors’ judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the annual financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity’s preparation and fair presentation of the annual financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity’s internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the annual financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

OPINION
In my opinion, the annual financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The READ Educational Trust as at 31 March 2015, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards.

EMPHASIS OF MATTER
Without qualifying my opinion above, I draw attention to note 29 to the annual financial statements which indicates that the previously issued annual financial statements for the year end 31 March 2014 contained prior period errors. These errors were corrected and the annual financial statements now present accurate figures for the past 3 financials years.

Moore Stephens MWM Inc.
Registered Auditor
Per: CA Whitefield
Partner

The Read Educational Trust (Reg. No. 000774 NPO)
Audited Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2015

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As at 31 March 2015

<table>
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<th>ASSETS</th>
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<td>CURRENT ASSETS</td>
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<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
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<td>Trading account with related entity</td>
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<td>Other investments</td>
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<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>3 221</td>
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</table>

| FUNDS AND LIABILITIES | | | |
| FUNDS | | | |
| Stabilisation fund | 16 989 | 20 274 | 20 308 |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Finance lease obligations | 2 000 | 5 069 | 6 172 |
| Operating lease straight-lining liability | – | 82 | 216 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 2 082 | 5 151 | 6 388 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Trade and other payables | 3 104 | 1 299 | 2 016 |
| Trading account with related entity | – | 28 | – |
| Finance lease obligations | 2 555 | 2 592 | 2 153 |
| Unutilised project funds | 15 702 | 11 641 | 12 458 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 21 361 | 15 560 | 16 627 |

| TOTAL FUNDS AND LIABILITIES | | | |
| R’000 | R’000 | R’000 |
| 40 350 | 40 985 | 43 223 |