



Our key plans for 2021

Covid-19's impact on education:

The impact of Covid-19 on our school children calls for all stakeholders in education to take stock of our current projects and the systems we work in.

It is time to review, reimagine and even transform education going forward. There are already strong indications that the majority of children will be promoted to the next grade in 2021 not having mastered the skills needed for the previous grade and we don't need to be reminded that the literacy levels in South Africa had already placed them at a huge disadvantage.

In keeping with the National Development Plan 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 4, Shine Literacy seeks to create a culture of reading in South African schools, homes, workplaces and communities, thereby improving literacy outcomes for young children from low-income communities. It is through our collaborative partnerships with teachers, volunteers and parents/caregivers, where we endeavour to provide effective and sustained support to children as they learn to read and write, helping to foster a life-long love of books and learning.

Shine's response in unstable Covid-19 times:

Shine has worked at delivering well-resourced reading support at homes providing caregivers and children with invaluable tools to help reduce the literacy gap between high and low achieving learners.

As a result of the global pandemic which has resulted in so many children being far behind the expected literacy levels. There is still so much uncertainty regarding our Shine volunteers being allowed back into schools; there are also questions around school timetables. In 2021 we want every child in the Foundation Phase to get individual support in order to help them recover their literacy losses. Therefore, we have the following projects as a key focus for 2021.



Creating a Culture of Reading at School - CCR@school

“A reading culture provides children and young people the support, encouragement, role models, resources and opportunity to read for pleasure. School leaders prioritise the development of the will to read, not just the skill, among students of all ages. They foster collaboration among staff, helping to weave reading for pleasure into every class, across the curriculum and into the daily life of the students”. (UK Department of Education 2015, p.17).

More than ever schools need to be a place where daily reading of books and writing activities are a priority. To this end Shine Literacy Centre Managers will spend the first six months of 2021 working closely with the school principals, governing body, teachers and HODs of both Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase, Western Cape Education Department (WCED) officials and a number of other key stakeholders that also support the school to ensure that systems, policies, activities and daily behavior reinforces a love of books, storytelling, individualised reading practice and creative writing. The emphasis is that these activities need to be school based and school led. Each Foundation Phase class will have a trained youth reading assistant that will ensure that every child has individualised reading each day and takes home a reader too.

Creating a Culture of Reading at Home – CCR@home

“Books in the home are the single biggest indicator of academic success – surpassing income, parents’ education, family composition and all other factors” (Jeff Mcquillan: The Literacy Crisis: False Claims, Real Solutions 1998).

Our focus is to drive an individual giving campaign where we ensure that every child in the Foundation Phase receives a monthly and quarterly (for our Chapters and Youth 4 Literacy schools) literacy resource with the objective of having their own reading and writing treasures. This will be enhanced by messaging in the form of a Chatbot for parents where we are driving a ‘read with your child; read to your child campaign using Paired and Shared Reading methodology.



Shine Online

South Africa's lockdown gave us a unique opportunity to explore what we were doing on the ground and expand our reach from the child to the parent. By the end of 2020 Shine Literacy will have distributed reading material to 10 000 children across 46 schools. Using WhatsApp API/ Chatbots we will be able to communicate with the parents of these 10 000 children, without needing to increase our internal human capacity. We will be able to direct the conversation with the parents to a guided reading exercise and gain feedback from them on child engagement.

WhatsApp is a great channel to engage with people. In the past, schools have relied on children to pass messages between the teacher and the parent. As parents can easily relate, this is a significant challenge to deep parent involvement. WhatsApp channels have a high response rate with many messages being sent back and forth. This feedback loop will give us valuable insight into our future literacy distribution packs as well as the content we make available on our zero rated website and eventually help us to increase our reach and impact.

Through the use of our website we will be able to make content i.e. resources to print, training and links to downloadable material accessible to people who do not have access to physical resources. Shine Literacy's WhatsApp Chatbot will then be able to consolidate this information and increase our impact not only in our schools through the distribution of pack links but also to anyone with access to our website.

Youth 4 Literacy

In 2021, Shine Literacy will be implementing the Youth 4 Literacy (Y4L) programme, where unemployed youth matriculant volunteers will become reading partners in Grades 2 and 3 classrooms. The youth will be trained to conduct paired reading with each child every second day as well as read a story to the whole class daily. They will also be tasked with supporting the administration of books going home in their respective schools. Shine Literacy will be encouraging the youth partner to work with the relevant teacher(s) and conduct any extra-curricular reading activities e.g. Book Buddies.



In 2021 the programme will span across 7 Shine Centre Schools in, 6 Metro Central schools and 9 former Khanyisa schools. This will be a total number of 144 Shine Youth in schools in 2021 in 22 schools. All schools are based in the Greater Cape Town Metro area. Depending on the need and ability of existing Chapter schools, they will also be in a position to opt in the programme should they have the capacity to do so.

Partnering with government in 2021

Collaboration is important to achieving a wider reach of beneficiaries, as a result, we have forged a deeper partnership with like-minded NGO's and the WCED under a joint project called @Homelearning. This programme is led by the WCED, where support will be provided to parents to support their children to learn at home.

Shine Literacy in collaboration with the Western Cape Government After School Programme Office is in its sixth year of implementing the YeBo programme. This programme places trained unemployed youth in Grade 3 and 4 classrooms with the aim to provide children with structured time to practice reading in class to improve their reading skills.



The project seeks to increase children's exposure to levelled texts on a daily basis, with the support of a trained reading partner, putting reading at the core of their daily schedule in the Foundation Phase. Class sizes are large (often in excess of 40 children) and many teachers are overwhelmed, without adequate support and resources.

In 2021, the programme will see 500 youth reading assistants, known as Yeboneers, in over 70 schools in the Western Cape region. They will be supporting reading in Grade 3 and 4 classes.

Each class has a total of 20 children opting in to the programme and receive paired reading support two times a week. Shine Literacy trains youth mentors and the youth reading partners, known as Yeboneers, for 3 hours at the beginning of the school year. YeBoneers are based in schools for the academic year where they support reading in class and after school.

Through the YeBo programme, youth in schools provide a platform for bridging this gap through guided and structured reading opportunities for children. Shine Literacy provides the training for the youth while the ASPO provides support on the personal growth and development of the youth. YeBoneers are thus able to support this area as they are based in



class and can extend children's reading while the teacher works on the foundational skills of reading.



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