



2023

Mid-Year Report



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The start of this year has been a whirlwind of decisions and changes. As you will have read in our 2022 Annual Report, our board has decided to launch a **sunsetting** (closure) strategy which will end with the **closure of Shine Literacy in March 2024**.

As a result of this decision, we have implemented two themes of work this year:

1. Fulfilling our existing commitments to our partners and funders.
2. Preparing and implementing our sunsetting strategy in collaboration with our board and many stakeholders.

The following report has **two parts**: the first section outlines the progress we have made this year toward our regular operations and the second is an update on our sunsetting plans and progress.



PART 1: REGULAR OPERATIONS

Our team has continued to support our partners with our Youth 4 Literacy (Y4L), Creating a Culture of Reading at School (CCR @School), and Creating a Culture of Reading at Home (CCR @Home) programmes.

Notably, we have:

- Trained 264 Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) Teacher Assistants (TAs) from 25 primary schools and 30 Year Beyond Mentors who will go on to train other volunteers
- Launched [new training videos](#) in paired and shared reading
- Hosted a World Book Day Event and Africa Day Competition
- Trained over 800 Teacher Assistants, educators, chapter partners, parents, caregivers, and Shine Literacy Programme volunteers
- Distributed @home learning resources to 10,215 learners
- Continued reaching thousands of readers every month with our mobisite



PART 2: SHINE'S SUNSET

Shine Literacy's Board has made the bold and innovative decision to implement a sunsetting strategy which will end in the closure of the organisation in March 2024.

As part of this sunsetting strategy, we have:

- Visited our chapter partners to better understand how we can support and capacitate them over the next 9 months before we close
- Started researching best practice and approaches to open-sourcing our resources for greater and indefinite use by other organisations, caregivers, schools, and government
- Planned the staged and intentional closure of our operations
- Submitted abstracts for presentation at the Literacy Association of South Africa's (LITASA) annual conference to share our learnings
- Initiated planning of a LITASA pre-conference workshop to train others on Shine Literacy Hour elements as well as how to run a Shine Centre
- Planning a Shine Indaba to bring the leaders of our chapters together. Themes we have identified from our chapter visits include fundraising, volunteer recruitment, teacher assistant support, reading for meaning, and ways to continue Community of Practice sessions beyond Shine's sunset

PART 1 : REGULAR OPERATIONS

Youth 4 Literacy (Y4L)

In continuation of our Youth 4 Literacy programme, we trained 264 Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) Teacher Assistants (TAs) from 25 primary schools and 30 Year Beyond Mentors who will go on to train other volunteers. This programme is different from our 2022 offering in that we are not directly overseeing the implementation of reading support in these schools, but rather offering our training expertise to upskill youth who will support literacy programmes in their schools.

The training covered paired and shared reading, Shine's ethos, techniques to ask comprehension questions, book levels, phonics, use of games, and use of the mobisite. The training enables youth to support educators to achieve the curriculum demands of 4.5-5 hours of reading time per week.

We followed up on our training in March and May to identify needs, challenges, and gauge the practical implementation of the learning. We found that most TAs were confident in implementing paired reading. From a school support perspective, TAs acknowledged that teacher support has a positive impact on learning outcomes and principals who are engaged in the programme also have a strong impact on learning outcomes. TAs found our follow-up visits helpful as a refresher, and some learners were already showing improvement in reading. On the other hand, we found challenges with time allocation for reading, difficult learner behaviour and discipline issues. Some schools do not have adequate age-appropriate reading materials, and there was some confusion with the Funda Wande training that TAs also received and it was unclear which approach TAs should use.

Thank you for giving us training so that we can be able to deal with learners. Some of us are not trained for learners but by giving us those trainings you make things easy for us

TA trainee

[The training] assisted me, it gave me new strategies on how to get the learners more eager to learn reading.

TA trainee

My favorite parts of the training was the games that the training taught us to use to help learners understand better

TA trainee

[Click here](#) to read about the progress of the 2022 cohort of Y4L youth funded by Year Beyond.



Creating a Culture of Reading at School (CCR @School)

Our Programmes Team is passionate about work which grows and creates reading cultures in schools, communities, and homes. The heart of the Creating a Culture of Reading (CCR) banner is our sixteen Youth 4 Literacy School partners in the Western Cape. In addition to the Teacher Assistant training and support visits discussed above, we have continued to support literacy in these schools by sharing information, resources, competitions, and offers for training.

A significant resource shared with Y4L schools, chapters, and other organisations earlier this year is the new, professionally produced Shine Paired and Shared Reading videos (in isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English) which demonstrate how to read to and with children. These videos support parents, caregivers, educators and Teacher Assistants and we are very proud of these resources which are available on Shine's [YouTube Channel](#).

Another exciting new initiative is the Rosmead Central Primary School Shine Reading Centre. Rosmead Central is one of our Y4L schools and was previously a Shine Literacy Centre. The beautiful mobile classroom on the school premises is now a reading centre with a dedicated reading co-ordinator who facilitates all classes from Grade R to Grade 4 once or twice per week. Classes visit the centre to access resources, listen to stories and to read in 'Book Buddy' pairs and participate in literacy related activities.

Y4L schools have also received quarterly Little Issue Magazines for all Grade 2 and 3 learners and many schools have received additional @home resources at Shine Family Literacy Workshops (FLWs). FLWs are held on Saturday mornings and parents of foundation phase learners are invited to learn fun and easy ways to support @home learning. Participants receive the Shine Parent Handbook as well as books, Nal'ibali supplements, and other resources. The team has offered FLWs to most of our Y4L partners and so far 157 parents have been trained with plans to run another ten workshops in Term 3. All schools will be invited to a 'Train the Trainer' Family Literacy Workshop in Term 4 so they have the materials and knowledge needed to run their own workshops in the future.



World Book Day Event

Shine also hosted two new CCR events in Term 2: A World Book Day event for Zonnebloem Campus Grade 1 – 3 learners and an Africa Day Competition. The World Book Day event was a great success which saw learners and their teachers moving around the campus to enjoy stories, learn about online story sites, participate in writing stories and watch a dramatised story. Learners and educators were treated to break time snacks and learners went home with a goodie bag with crayons sponsored by Santam, books sponsored by the Otto Foundation, and other literacy related resources.



Africa Day Competition

The Africa Day Competition asked schools to submit stories, poems, performances or visual art which celebrate Africa and being African. We were thrilled to receive more than forty entries from schools across the country and in the end it was so difficult to choose a winner that we awarded six schools with prizes for their submissions!

Creating a culture of reading is central to Shine's vision, 'To create a nation of readers' and we believe that our work this year will equip our partners to continue creating reading cultures in their schools, homes, and communities.



Shine Training

The Programme Team has prioritised training this year and our small team of three people has trained more than 800 Teacher Assistants, educators, Shine Literacy Programme volunteers, parents and caregivers and non-profit partners so far this year. The objective of our training is to equip people to promote and support literacy in homes, schools and communities. This year there is also an added objective - we want to leave our partners, chapters and associates with all the information, resources and training they need to thrive once Shine has completed the sunsetting process.



Mobisite

Shine Literacy held World Book Day on 21 April and a Family Literacy Workshop on 22 April. Both of these events included promoting the Storytime with Shine mobisite and our analytics show an increase in users after the events. The graph below shows the number of page views received for the period 17 April to 17 May.

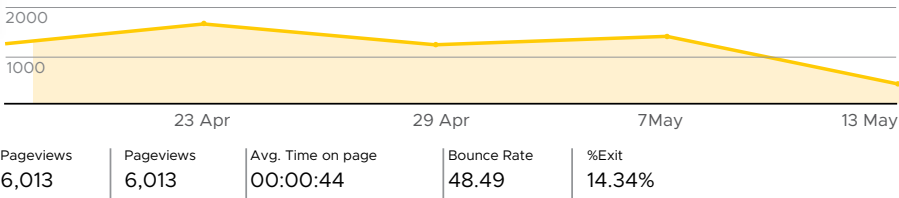
At the World Book Day event, the mobisite was promoted to various audiences including 261 learners along with teachers, principals, and teacher assistants. Mobisite flyers were distributed as part of the gift packs to learners. Litha from Loxion Mobisite Library and our Director, Maurita Weissenberg showed the audience how to access the site.

The following day after the event, on 22 April, our programmes team conducted a Family Literacy Workshop with 43 parents in attendance. The programme showed parents how to support literacy learning at home. The mobisite also gives support and resources to parents, and children use the Mobi Site to read and listen to books, with fun games and activities.

After the two events we can see the average number of page views increased and the increase has remained reasonably consistent.



Pageview (17 April 2023 - 17 May 2023)





More Chapters

Shine's Chapter Partner in Gauteng, also named **SHINE**, has opened a second Shine Literacy Chapter at Lakeside Primary in Boksburg. The official launch of the new centre was held on 3 February and Shine's Chapter Manager and Chapter Coordinator, Claudia and Trudy, were there to celebrate the occasion.

Another long-standing Durban organisation, **Anchor of Hope**, added a second chapter school as well, Natest Primary School. Again, Shine's Social Franchise Manager and Chapter Coordinator were on hand to train the volunteers and help set up the new centre. In their first term of operation, the Chapter delivered 159 hours of literacy support.

A few of our chapters have also expressed interest in opening another chapter before Shine sunsets. These chapters and any other interested parties will be supported and trained to open, operate, and manage Shine Literacy Hour Centre as part of our sunset strategy.



Creating a Culture of Reading at Home

(CCR @Home) - @Home Packs

The importance of quality learning materials in the homes of South African learners continues to drive Shine to provide @Home learning packs. A recent study commissioned by the Department of Basic Education and Unicef indicates that 43% of households report that they have no access to books at home. Furthermore, a recent national representative survey of South Africans found that 70% of respondents did not have at least one children's book at home.

So far this year, Shine has provided TIME (Together in My Education) Packs and Shine @Home Resource packs for 10,215 learners and their teachers at our Chapter Schools. We have also provided 3,549 Little Issue Magazines for our Youth 4 Literacy school learners. The materials are distributed to the learners each quarter so there are always new and exciting materials to stimulate and challenge learners. Funding for @Home resources has dwindled due to the fact that learners are back at school full-time, but Shine believes in the value of the @Home resources and continues to provide them.

Learners, educators, parents, and our chapter partners regularly express gratitude for the materials. One educator said, "The learners appreciate the magazines and the pencils they receive. It is really, really a great benefit that is filled with various activities to stimulate them and they absolutely enjoy it."

In a survey of learners from our chapters, 68.3% of learners had zero or only a few books at home before receiving their @Home packs. The data also showed that 78.9% of learners enjoy the @Home materials with a parent or caregiver. Finally, only 4.4% of learners said that they do not use the @Home materials, with 13.3% reporting that they share the materials with other children in their home and 85% reporting that they read the resources one or more times.

Parents that were interviewed agreed that the @Home packs are beneficial.

The packs are good for him. He is using them. He reads a story every night from the books he got from the packs. The magazines are there too. He has a library with all books and materials.

Shine parent

The packs were very educational and cause excitement for the learners. The children want to read the materials. It is very good and provides extra reading material.

Shine parent

PIRLS and Western Cape Systemic Assessment Results

Progress International Reading and Literacy Study (PIRLS) tests are written every five years with two African countries represented, including South Africa. The 2021 results were recently released and showed that South Africa has lost a decade of progress in terms of reading for meaning ([read more](#)). The assessment tested 12,426 Grade 4 learners across the country (in all 11 official languages) and compares them to students at a similar age level across 42 other countries. South Africa's results indicate that 81% of Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in any language, up from 78% in 2016. It should be noted that schools serving poorer communities suffered the greatest losses due to lack of resources and contact time during the pandemic. Better resourced schools did not suffer such great losses as they were able to move to online instruction more quickly.

Although schools in the Western Cape reportedly fared better than those in other provinces, Shine has seen concerning drops in Systemic Assessment results here in the Western Cape. The Western Cape Department of Education (WCED) conducts annual systemic mathematics and language assessments on learners in Grade 3, 6 and 9. The table below shows Systemic Assessment Results for the twelve Shine Chapters in the Western Cape. The number in each block indicates the percentage of learners that passed (above 50%) the Grade 3 Language Assessment.

The results for the schools listed above show dramatic learning losses for many schools compared with pre-pandemic results in 2019. This does not come as a surprise since our chapters serve low-income communities and most were unable to offer much support when schools were closed due to the pandemic. When schools opened again, the rotational attendance schedule caused further learning losses. In addition, many of our chapters are still reeling from volunteer losses due to the pandemic and it will take time to grow numbers again.

Shine has responded to these learning losses with @Home Packs for all of our chapters and providing additional training to our chapter and partner schools. But there are two schools that have bounced back or are exceeding pre-pandemic levels. This is notable and we believe that one of the reasons is that the schools took up every opportunity provided to them to make sure that every child in Grade 2 and 3 had regular paired reading sessions with a trained TA or Shine volunteer.

Systemic Assessment Pass Percentage:

Percentage of learners that scored 50% or more on Grade 3 Language Systemic Assessments.

YEAR	2109	2020 No systemic COVID-19	2021	2022
School 1				
Gr 3	56.4%	x	37.5%	39.1%
School 2				
Gr 3	46.7%	x	33.3%	21.4%
School 3				
Gr 3	29.8%	x	10.7%	27.4%
School 4				
Gr 3	45.6%	x	12.8%	19.2%
School 5				
Gr 3	38.8%	x	14.3%	13.7%
School 6				
Gr 3	54.1%	x	14.7%	10.3%
School 7				
Gr 3	60.7%	x	27.4%	60.4%
School 8				
Gr 3	66.1%	x	42.1%	69.4%
School 9				
Gr 3	32%	x	51.7%	46.2%
School 10				
Gr 3	90%	x	57.7%	73.2%
School 11				
Gr 3	36.9%	x	47.4%	42.6%
School 12				
Gr 3	11.3%	x	2.6%	13.7%

WELA Assessments

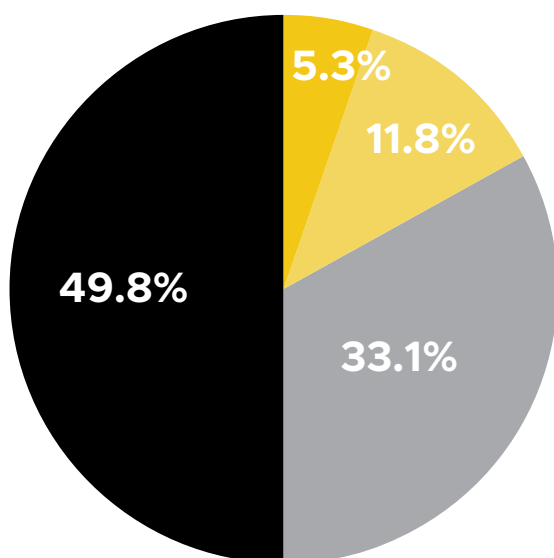
The Wordworks Early Literacy Assessment (WELA) is administered to Grade One children (pre-test) at the end of the year and is used to select At Risk and/or Below Level children to attend the Shine Literacy Hour Programme the following year. The aim of this assessment is to provide an early screening of children's emerging literacy skills by assessing their letter knowledge, the ability to write a sentence from dictation, read a list of words and write a story from two picture cues.

WELA is administered again in June of the following year to Grade Two children (post-test) to track their progress in the Shine Literacy Hour Programme. Because Shine Literacy assesses children before and while they are in our Centres, we are able to track both individual progress and the efficacy of the Shine Literacy intervention.

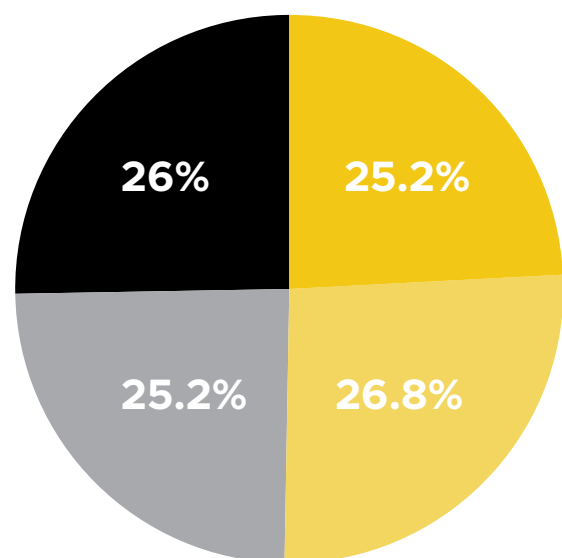
The results below are an amalgamation of WELA results from all Shine Chapters who completed these assessments. Our Chapters have adapted the Shine Literacy Hour (SLH) approach to meet the specific needs of their communities and the requirements of the schools where they operate, so we cannot make conclusions about specific dosage, selection, and application of the SLH approach with the combined results, but share them because of the overwhelmingly positive results we see. Overall we see a significant increase in children's reading ability in all our Centres and our wish would be that more children were able to come on to the programme.

All Chapter WELA Results

All Chapter WELA Results End 2022



All Chapter WELA Results Mid 2023



● At Risk ● Below Level ● Near Level ● On Level

PART 2 : SHINE'S SUNSET

The Way Forward

We have really appreciated the generous feedback from our stakeholders as we have shared the news of our sunset. We look forward to continuing to work with our partners and funders to provide training, resources, and capacity for others to carry on supporting young readers after we close.

We have made the following commitments to our partners and the literacy sector. At the end of the sunsetting process, in March 2024, we plan to have achieved the following:

- Strengthened our Chapters to continue, deepen, and grow their work in the schools and communities they support
- Open-sourced our materials for wider use so that they can continue impacting readers indefinitely
- Built awareness, skills, and knowledge about key reading support skills in volunteers, paraprofessionals, and the people who support them
- Fulfilled all of our existing programme, funder, and partner commitments alongside the sunset process
- Sunset with integrity to our values and ethos with accountability to our team, partners, and funders and to all financial and government requirements
- Shared our learnings from this process with the sector, with honesty, integrity and courage, to share best practice and inspire others

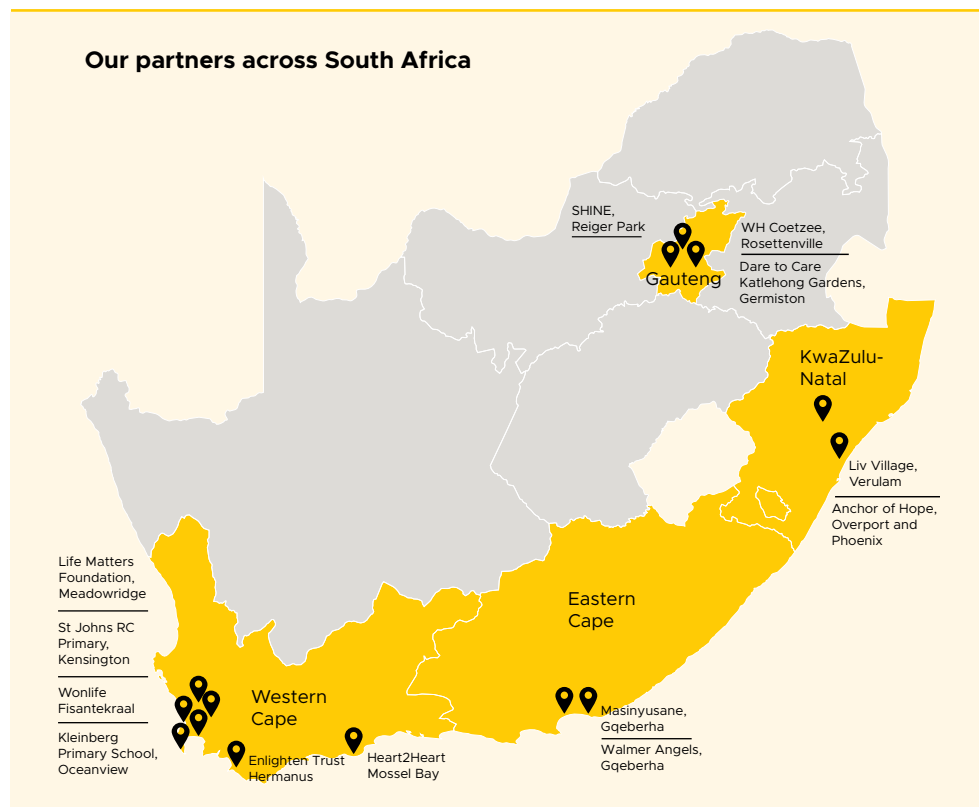


Chapter Strengthening

Over the last 10 years, Shine has partnered with a diverse group of organisations and individuals who are interested in and committed to literacy support. These partners have extended the reach of Shine's literacy hour programme into many under-resourced communities in Gauteng, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape, working in primary schools typically with high learner-teacher ratios, limited access to books and literacy resources, and poor results in systemic tests.

As Shine closes its head office, these partners will continue to fly the Shine flag in the years to come. Over the last two months, Carol-Ann Foulis, together with Maurita and Sharleen, met with or visited 13 of the 14 partners across the 4 provinces to better understand what support they would like from Shine before it closes and what support would help to sustain their work in the future. Many expressed their sadness and sense of loss at Shine's departure. In particular, they noted what an important role Shine has played in building a strong brand around literacy support; the ongoing development and innovation of its programmes and curriculum which has provided these organisations with the confidence of a 'tried and tested' plug-in to their own work; and the outstanding support, mentorship and care provided to them through their relationships with the staff of Shine. They all recognise the importance of continuing a quarterly Community of Practice (CoP) with one another to ensure they don't feel alone in having to take on the challenges of literacy work, including the recruitment and retention of volunteers and Chapter Managers, finding ways to reach more children who need catch-up support, negotiating timetable scheduling so that sufficient time can be given to this work, securing funds for greater reach and sustainability, and continuing to develop their own agility and skill to work in the often fraught and contested terrain of schools.

In the next month, the sunset team working with Shine will use the findings from these visits and meetings to draft a programme of support for the partners to be implemented in the last 4 months of the year. It is expected that a highlight of this programme will be an Indaba in September/October where partners will have the opportunity to deepen their relationships with each other, build the skills and know-how to run the Shine programme independently, and begin to map their own way forward for the continued reach and impact of Shine's work.





Training and Sector Support

We've identified a need and opportunity to upskill the literacy sector, our partners, and other organisations before our closure next year. In an effort to do so, we are planning to open-source our materials for broad and indefinite use and we are planning several training opportunities.

Once our materials are finalised for the easiest sharing and widest use, we will launch and share them with anyone who wishes to support children reading. We hope that these resources will be used widely and adapted to suit the changing needs of the literacy sector.

We plan to host a training session before the upcoming LITASA conference and over the course of the next five months before the end of 2023. The pre-conference training will introduce the Shine Literacy Hour approach and share various learning resources and tools. We also plan to present at the LITASA conference to further provide tools, skills, and learnings with the literacy sector. After the conference, we will also provide training that will cover Shine's approach, ethos, and curriculum as well as a train-the-trainer approach for supporting others to implement our family literacy workshops.

The Way Forward

We will continue working toward these objectives and plan to capture this process and share our learnings in a series of publications at the end of the year. We are working with a team of professionals, our partners, stakeholders, and funders to fulfill our existing commitments and to leave a lasting legacy in the literacy sector.





www.shineliteracy.org.za