


# Annual Report 2016



**We see a world where young children are supported to develop early language and literacy so that their lives are enriched and they grow to their full potential.**



Wordworks focuses on early language and literacy development in the first eight years of children's lives. We share knowledge and collaborate with those who care for, work with and advocate for young children so that they recognise the importance of early language and literacy and support its development in homes, schools and community settings.

To find out more about our work, visit our website at [www.wordworks.org.za](http://www.wordworks.org.za) or follow us on 

## A message from Shelley O'Carroll, Director of Wordworks

As a non-profit organisation, part of our role must be to innovate and develop and test programmes and resources that can bring about change in local contexts. The challenge to us and to other non-profits is how to grow and scale this work in sustainable ways. The needs of young children in South Africa and the need to build the capacity of those that care for and work with them are just too great for us not to be thinking bigger.

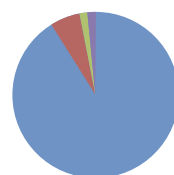
As an organisation, we have been working to extend our reach beyond direct programme beneficiaries through a network of schools and partner organisations that have attended our training and are using one or more of our programmes in their work with young children. We support this network (WordNetworks) through an annual visit, access to resources at cost, opportunities to connect with others using our programmes, and to share new learning and resources. Beyond this network, public access to our learning about early language and literacy is made possible through free downloads on our website, and we are encouraged to see the growth in the number of people accessing these resources.

In 2016, we were challenged to take our work to scale through two new avenues. The first was the scaling of our in-service Grade R teacher training programme, Stellar, through a partnership with the Western Cape provincial government. Training for all Grade R teachers across the province in one year was unprecedented and we believe a good example of how donors, government and NPO's can each bring their expertise and capacity to achieve greater impact. Partnerships of this nature tend to stretch us all – and challenge us to think carefully about what compromises and adjustments we are prepared to make while still holding on to the essence of what we know works.

A second opportunity in 2016 enabled us to leverage technology to grow the potential reach of our birth to five materials through repurposing the content for an app. We know that direct work in communities will always be important to us, and will be where we continue to learn and grow. However, early research findings relating to the use of the app are very positive and demonstrate the potential for our materials to be accessed much more widely and cost effectively through use of technology.

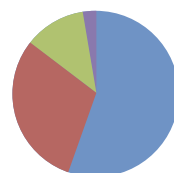
Our confidence to scale rests on years of developing and using our programmes, and on ensuring that our training programme and materials are as good as they will be until we learn more. How do we ensure that we are ready for transitions to scale? Perhaps only by taking up these opportunities.

In addition to new ventures that bring great potential for scale, our two most established programmes continue to grow through new partnerships. Perhaps even more importantly, they grow each year that existing partners and schools continue to run the programmes, reaching new children and parents. We are incredibly proud to be associated with schools and organisations that year-on-year are investing in and benefiting from the involvement of families and community members in young children's learning. This work continues to be largely volunteer driven and by continuing to show that it is sustainable and can influence literacy outcomes, we hope that there will be more official recognition and resourcing for these programmes and acknowledgement of these literacy champions.



### Income 2016

- Grants & donations 91%
- Sales of resources & services rendered 5%
- Bursary fund 2%
- Interest 2%



### Expenditure 2016

- Training & Capacity Building 55%
- Materials & Resources 30%
- Office costs 12%
- Bursary Fund 3%

# Here we share just a few of the many Wordworks highlights of 2016.

## Every Word Counts: Supporting the learning of babies and young children



59 ECD trainers from the Western and Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal attended EWC training in 2016. They gained deeper insight into how babies and very young children's language develops, and learned how to lay the foundations for reading and writing.



More than 200 ECD practitioners and home visitors, and the children in their care, benefited from EWC training and mentoring.

## Home-School Partnerships: Supporting learning at home in the early years



An inspirational and educational event! 69 teachers from 33 schools from as far afield as Montagu, Belhar, Mitchells Plain and Hout Bay, shared the highlights of their work with parents in 2016, and secured further support from Wordworks for their ongoing programmes.



More than 600 parents and grandparents graduated in 2016 after attending eight vibrant sessions run by dedicated teachers at their children's schools.

## Ready Steady Read Write: Supporting children learning to read and write



In September, 200 Site Co-ordinators and Tutors working at schools across Cape Town and in Darling and Morreesberg gathered at the Ready Steady Read Write Indaba to share, learn and be inspired.



3000 Grade R and Grade One children enjoyed fun-filled weekly sessions with trained Ready Steady Read Write tutors to support their reading and writing skills.

## Stellar: Supporting early language and literacy teaching



2300 Grade R Teachers, 80 WCED Advisors, 6 Wordworks Support-Advisors, and 250 Emergent Literacy Lead Teachers participated in 5 days of Stellar and Emergent Literacy Training across the Western Cape in July.



In addition to attending block training, teachers attended monthly clusters where they shared their experiences of using the Stellar story-based approach.

# Wordworks AT A GLANCE - 2016

### WE OFFERED COURSES TO

59 EWC Trainers

160 RSRW Tutors

45 RSRW Site Co-ordinators

34 HSPP Course Facilitators

WE PARTNERED WITH AND SUPPORTED  
**140**  
WordNetworks members

### WE SHARED EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

4 500 people received R878 868 sponsored materials

91 people bought materials to the value of R194 190

15 203 page views of materials on our website

### WE CONNECTED WITH PEOPLE

People who received our quarterly newsletter 812

Unique website visitors (70% new this year) 8 848

Facebook page likes 1 143

Facebook reactions, comments & shares 4 224

## WordNetworks



80 schools and 60 organisations used Wordworks programmes in their work and were active members of WordNetworks.

121 HSPP Course Facilitators worked with  
**529 PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS**

158 STELLAR Lead Teachers and  
77 STELLAR Trainers worked with  
**3 151 GRADE R TEACHERS**

27 EWC Trainers worked with over  
**200 ECD PRACTITIONERS AND HOME VISITORS**

115 RSRW Site Co-ordinators worked with  
**671 RSRW TUTORS**



Thanks to the hard work of the network  
**1 348 FAMILIES AND 99 800 YOUNG CHILDREN**  
benefitted from Wordworks' early language and literacy programmes.



Thank you to the donors who make our work possible.

