



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.

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Message from the Director

As we look back on 2020, it can be overwhelming to think of the many ways in which our lives changed in our homes, schools, communities and workspaces. The pandemic took its toll on everyone, but those in under-resourced communities were most vulnerable to the effects of lockdown, and we watched in despair as weeks of learning losses turned into months. We cannot overstate the impact of these lost learning opportunities on young children, their families and the future of our country.

Despite the sense of loss and disruption, 2020 was also characterised by resilience and creative and bold responses to the crisis. We needed to be resourceful and to collaborate more than ever – all while innovating and managing our own new realities at home and at work. In time, I think we will look back and reflect on how much was achieved in such a short space of time, and how we were challenged to take on new ways of working; transformation that would have taken years under more ‘normal’ circumstances. We have developed new approaches and ways of engaging that will extend way beyond the pandemic, and that enable wider access to training, materials and messaging than we ever thought possible. Although we have always worked with partners, 2020 saw these partnerships deepening and new partnerships developing to maximise our collective contributions. There is huge value in working together and building on each other’s strengths.

As NGOs, the need for our work was greater than ever. Across the education and early childhood sectors, we saw how progress that had been made over years was undone, particularly with regard to early learning opportunities for young children. We watched as schools and ECD centres closed, deeply concerned that children were losing the protection, nutrition and stimulation that preschool and school offered them. We were aware that despite our best efforts, we were only making small inroads in the crisis and ended the year with a deep sense that the way forward would not be easy. I think our challenge is to be able to sustain these extraordinary efforts, and to keep reminding ourselves that collectively we can make a difference where it counts – in homes, in ECD centres and in classrooms. This is where hope for a better future starts, and where we begin to build again.

This annual report tells a story of hope under extraordinary circumstances that tested us all in ways that we would never have anticipated. We appreciate our donors who continue to support our work despite the challenging financial times and our partners whose impact in communities inspires and motivates us. And mostly, we acknowledge our incredible Wordworks team and all those who keep sacrificing so much and working so hard for a better future for our young children.



Dr Shelley O'Carroll
Wordworks Director

We were challenged to take on new ways of working



Creating 'how to' videos for our website and online programmes



Packing HSP training packs for partners for online training



Recording a message about the importance of early learning



One of many online team meetings



Sharing our home learning materials in the media



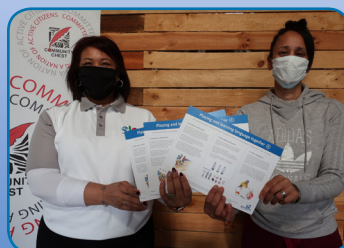
Masks and sanitisers everywhere!



Training videos in three languages for our website, YouTube and online training



Training from home



Sharing our materials with communities through partnerships

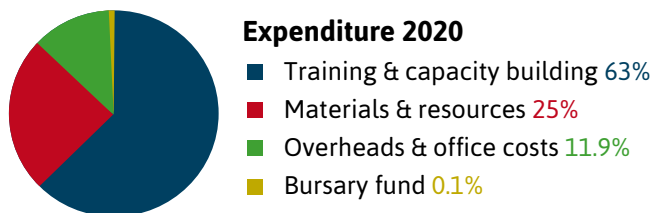
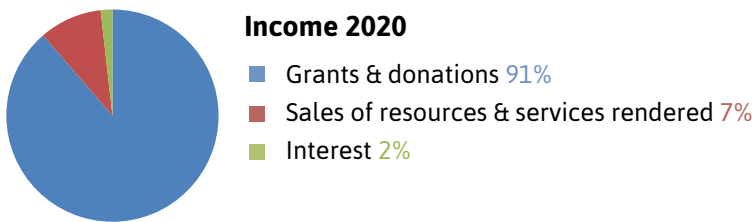


A new website sharing at-home learning resources

Financial Report – Year ending December 2020

	2020	2019
INCOME		
Grants & donations	12 354 374,00	7 505 047,00
Sale of resources & services rendered	962 171,00	809 139,00
Interest	239 966,00	151 638,00
	R 13 556 511,00	R 8 465 824,00
EXPENDITURE		
Training & capacity building	7 959 807,00	6 154 817,00
Materials & resources	3 188 096,00	1 107 301,00
Overheads & office costs	1 535 811,00	1 191 239,00
Bursary fund	53 325,00	71 168,00
	R 12 737 039,00	R 8 524 525,00

* R2 544 858 of income received in advance deferred to 2021 expenses



We thank our donors for their confidence in our work throughout the challenges and changes of 2020.



Solon Foundation • Davies Foundation • Fynbos Foundation
 Sullivan and Mary-Anne O'Carroll • Hout Bay and Llandudno Education Trust
 Thank you to the individuals who contributed to the Wordworks Storybook Fund.

We thank these organisations for materials donated to our network.



Programmes in action before lockdown

We held a refresher training for **10** NGO partners on our revised Every Word Counts programme and trained **30** ECD centres.



Every Word Counts

Supporting the learning of babies and young children



Practitioner training for ELRU and the Langa ECD Forum.



Practitioner training for the Grassy Park ECD Forum.



Training with Stellenbosch University speech therapy students.



Training of principals – Grassy Park ECD Forum.



Training of NACCW youth and childcare workers in Loeriesfontein.



Training of Trainers in KwaZulu-Natal.

Our Little Stars pre-Grade R classroom programme was completed. This programme is a full-year classroom resource, with **6** theme packs each containing **3** two-week story cycles. The classroom resources are available in **4** languages and the teacher guides are offered in three bilingual editions: Afrikaans/English; isiXhosa/English and isiZulu/English.

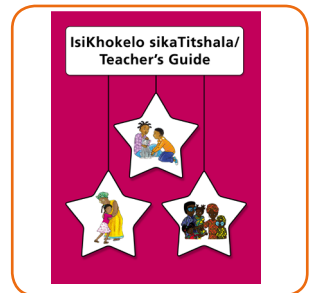


Little Stars

Supporting early language and literacy teaching in pre-Grade R



Programme materials



Teacher's Guide



Big Books



Puppets



Sequence pictures

Thanks to Book Dash, Nal'ibali and African Story Book for contributing stories and illustrations.



Ready Steady Read Write

Supporting children learning to read and write



Newly trained Coordinators in February.



Tutors receiving training on how to use sequence stories in their lessons.



A tutor demonstrates a lesson for newly trained Coordinators.



Excited newly trained tutors ready to start lessons with their children.



The second cohort of new tutors trained before COVID-19.



Tutors enjoy role playing during tutor training.

We trained **39** new site Coordinators and **81** new tutors to support children on our Ready Steady Read Write tutor programme.

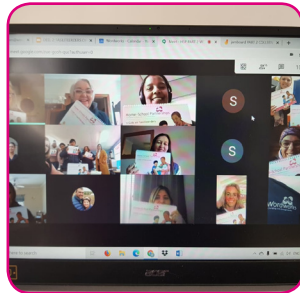


Home-School Partnerships

Supporting informal learning at home in the early years



Training of new Teacher-facilitators to run the programme at their schools.



Online-training after the COVID-19 pandemic changed our normal way of working.



Newly trained Teacher-facilitators. One of two groups of trainees.



One of eight parent workshops run by trained Teacher-facilitators.



Eager parents engaging with Teacher-facilitators during a workshop.



One of many parent groups celebrating the completion of their workshops.

We trained a total of **221** teachers and district officials to facilitate our HSP parent programme at schools and distributed materials for **5 849** parents.

152 teachers and officials attended our three-part contact training.

47 teachers and **22** district officials attended our online training for schools in the Cape Winelands Education District.

New home learning materials for lockdown and beyond

We helped meet the needs of parents of young children, and the urgent public need for alternative and accessible resources, by rapidly producing two sets of multimedia materials to support literacy learning at home.

These materials were made available on our new data-light, reverse-billing website. This became data-free for users, and attracted great interest from the public with **406 606** visits during 2020 – see <https://wwhomeliteracy.org.za>.

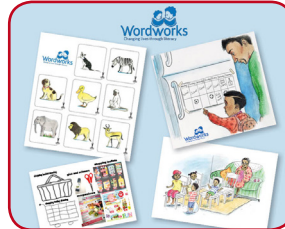
We shared **65** activities through a total of **45 000** WhatsApp messages that were shared daily to **340** centres, schools and organisations.

Play and Learn

We developed informal learning activities, encouraging parents and caregivers to enjoy one a day with their children.

Each activity is offered with multilingual text and voice and accompanied by an attractive illustration.

We received many delightful photographs from happy families!



We printed home learning packs for **39 514** Grade R and Grade 1 children and their families as well as **3 705** teachers and district officials who supported the take up of the programme in homes.

Read and Write with Me

We developed a simple guide for parents consisting of resource packs with activities for three months. These were available in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa.

NOTE: This programme has been replaced by the TIME language, mathematics and life skills home learning programme in 2021.



Feedback on home learning programmes

Recipients reported on the usefulness of the materials within their own networks and communities:

- "A big **THANK YOU** to all who were involved in this brilliant work! So very much needed. We will use it for sure with the thousands of children and parents we service." Sandra Oosthuizen – NACCW (National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers)
- "Wordworks does it again! Well done on an outstanding initiative. It is always such a delight to have access to your amazing resources. Thank you so much for your generosity in sharing..." Rene King – Khululeka Community Education Development Centre
- "Thank you for a fantastic resource which is going to be so helpful in the current situation. We will extend it for Grade 2s as well. Look forward to the next instalments!" Cathy Gush – Lebone Centre
- "Most parents, especially in our rural communities lack literature (reading books, magazines and the like) so this material adds value to the lives of those little ones; and the materials are child-parent user friendly." Bulelani Tsitsa – Amathole East District Foundation Phase coordinator
- "Congratulations on providing such valuable resources for continuing our reach into the communities. I think the leaflet on your website may be particularly useful. The children are just longing for structured input again from people they know and trust." Jill Frow – Family Literacy Project
- "You guys are **AMAZING!** Thank you for all the hard work you have put into making your awesome content accessible to so many." Julie Hay – Singakwenza Early Childhood Education

Our Reach in 2020



40 584 CHILDREN BENEFITED from Wordworks **EARLY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY PROGRAMMES** and **MATERIALS** shared by partners in WordNetworks.



To support our partners to implement quality programmes, Wordworks:

- ✓ Sponsored **MATERIALS** to the value of **R867 322**
- ✓ Collected, analysed and shared programme data
- ✓ Reviewed programmes and materials in response to **PARTNER FEEDBACK**

More people connected with us

	4 100	people received our quarterly newsletter
	3 989	Facebook page followers
	115 794	unique website visitors
	203 637	page views of materials on our website
	6 448	people used apps with Wordworks content

We are proud to have partnered with **56** organisations that used Wordworks materials and programmes, and who, together with our team, supported programmes in communities, ECD centres and schools.



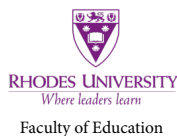
CHANGING LIVES IS LIFE CHANGING



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and Hearing Therapy



Hout Bay Project



The Reading Room