

# Yizani Sifunde

This project has been made possible through the **Liberty Community Trust**



## What is Yizani Sifunde?

Yizani Sifunde (isiXhosa for “Come, let’s read”) is a collaborative 5-year project funded by Liberty Community Trust in the Eastern Cape. It’s a 3-way partnership between Book Dash, Nal’ibali and Wordworks, with local Eastern Cape partners ITEC and Khululeka. Although the project started in 2020, 2021 was the first year of on-the-ground implementation.



## What is the project’s vision?

Yizani Sifunde aims to infuse underserved communities in the Eastern Cape with high-quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) training, an abundance of books for the children and their families, and sustained literacy practices in the community and in the family.

## Who is behind this project?



**Nal’ibali** is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark children’s potential through storytelling and reading. In Yizani Sifunde Nal’ibali mobilises local young people to activate reading and storytelling in communities.



**Book Dash** is a project gathering creative professionals who volunteer to create new, open-source, and affordable African storybooks. The books provided by Book Dash are used across the Yizani Sifunde project.



**Wordworks** is a South African non-profit organisation that focuses on early language and literacy development in the first eight years of children’s lives. Its training programme, Little Stars, is used to equip ECD practitioners and parents to enhance the children’s learning.



**ITEC and Khululeka** are two non-governmental organisations based in the Eastern Cape, which train and support practitioners of Early Childhood Development centres.



The **Liberty Community Trust**’s aim is to improve the learning outcomes of young people in South Africa. It initiated the Yizani Sifunde project and provides funding, active engagement and support.

## What did we achieve in 2021?

During this year, the Yizani Sifunde project was rolled out in **40 ECD sites and their communities** around East London, Elliot and Queenstown.



## Key programme numbers

### INPUT **BOOKDASH** OUTPUT

- **10** new books published
- **80** new books translated and available on [bookdash.org](http://bookdash.org)
- **128 500** books printed and delivered to sites for distribution over the next two years
- More than **36 000** books distributed through ECD centres, to more than **1100** children, to take home and own
- Over **35 000** books distributed to **1350** children via **60** reading clubs
- At least **2 600** books distributed to other projects in the area

### INPUT **NAL'IBALI** OUTPUT

- **18** training sessions held for community members
- **356** adults trained to run or supporting reading clubs
- **11 585** reading supplements distributed
- **88** reading clubs registered and receiving reading club starter kits
- **1 402** children enrolled at reading clubs
- **1 991** people reached via events and activations

### INPUT **WORDWORKS** OUTPUT

- **80** hours of training and support given to trainers (by Wordworks)
- More than **60** hours of training given to teachers (by implementing partners)
- **700** parent packs made available to support informal learning at home
- **13** trainers trained in Yizani Sifunde
- **35** teachers attending training sessions
- **1 190** children that are taught using the Little Stars program

## Some outcomes



Local trainers are better equipped to support the teaching of early literacy in ECD centres.



Young professionals have been given meaningful training and experience.



ECD centres and homes now have lots of beautiful, relevant South African picture books.



ECD teachers share stories in a more engaging and interactive way.



Children enjoy storytime more; this builds their confidence and strong language foundations.



Parents value owning books, and use them regularly at home.



Communities are excited about books and storytelling.

## What did we learn this year?



2021 was experienced as a positive year of learnings for the collaborative project and by and large, the programme was implemented as intended.



Covid affected the ECD centers' enrolment and child attendance patterns, which required much flexibility in implementation.



With lower child enrolment, we could not distribute all the books through centres. To achieve the project's vision, we also distributed books to families via activations at clinics and post offices.



The Little Stars training was very well received by ECD teachers, and has strengthened their relationships with caregivers. Once they saw that families were using the books and looking after them, teachers felt more comfortable to send books home.



Story Sparkers were deployed to the communities from June to December, to promote reading and story-telling and support reading clubs. In 2022, this process started in February to allow for deeper impact.

## Voices from the ground

“I am satisfied and happy about the project – it is going very well. Children are getting home support and we practitioners feel empowered. We know what to do to drive learning.”

(ECD practitioner, East London)

“Parents have embraced the project, and now they are spreading it in the community. Due to rotational school attendance [due to Covid19], one of the parents is combining all the kids that roam around in the township in one place and reading to them or telling them stories. Kids love this very much.”

(ECD practitioner, East London)

“When working with children, it is exciting to get more resources. The books help us to support learning and teaching. I am happy that the materials are in the children's home language because language is a foundation of culture.”

(ECD practitioner, Queenstown)

“By now, whenever I read stories to children, they can retell a story willingly. They have more confidence.”

(Story sparker, East London)

“You can see the children come up to ask for more books and supplements. They have finished the previous stories and want new ones.”

(Story Sparker, Queenstown)

“Undincedile ngondifaka kuleprogram ndiyafunda kakhulu.” (“You have done me a great favour by inviting me to join this programme, I am learning a lot”)

(parent at a Day Care centre in Queenstown)

## What to expect for 2022?

The Yizani Sifunde project will be moving to new sites around Molteno, Burgersdorp, Sterkstroom, as well as Mdantsane and Berlin. However, the work that has been started in the first cohort of ECD sites, in East London, Queenstown and Elliot, should continue.

### Reading club leaders

You are encouraged to re-register your reading clubs with Nal'ibali so you can continue to receive resources and support.

#### For questions please contact:

luleka.b@nalibali.org

👉 <https://nalibali.org/reading-club/register-your-reading-club>

### ECD practitioners trained in Little Stars

You will have access to refresher courses and more parent packs so that you can sustain the Little Stars practices and continue to support caregivers.

For questions or support please contact your trainer:

☆ Rene Botha (ITEC)

073 410 8434

rene@itec.org.za

☆ Busisiwe Nyikila (Khululeka)

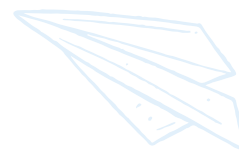
072 698 9172

busi@khululeka.org.za

For any questions about the Yizani Sifunde project please contact the Project Manager:

☆ Pume Keswa

066 016 8998



**Thank you**  
to all our participants, partners  
and supporters in 2021!

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