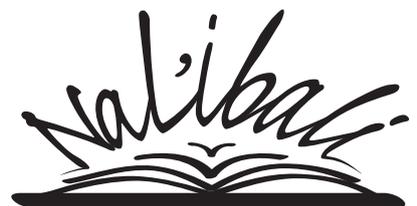


Nal'ibali Annual Report 2017



January 2017 to December 2017



It starts with a story...



Nal'ibali
(isiXhosa for
"here's the story")
is a national
reading-for-enjoyment
campaign to spark
children's potential
through storytelling
and reading.

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Message from our Managing Director

I'd like to start off with an expression of deep gratitude to all of the individuals in our universe who helped make 2017 the year we soared! Thanks to an ever-expanding community of FUNda Leaders, funders, colleagues, partners, trustees and advisory committee members, who believe that every child deserves a future that they can author, we substantially expanded the campaign's footprint, building more partnerships, recruiting more activists, distributing more stories and reaching more children.



Our team members were ankle-deep in mud as we kicked off site-level implementation of our newest and largest part of the campaign. Supported by USAID Southern Africa and in partnership with the Department of Basic Education's Read to Lead campaign, Story Powered Schools: a South African Reading Revolution (SPS) is a three-year project based in rural districts in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. When we started training at the first cohort of 240 schools, the rains started too!

This first year of implementation of SPS is full of incredible stories. Stories of team members and supplement deliverymen who trekked across muddy hills when it wasn't clear vehicles would make it. Of teachers who ventured through community protests to collect valuable reading resources for their students. Stories of boys actually returning to school after taking cattle out to graze because they knew that Nal'ibali's Story Sparker would be visiting. Of children in deep rural villages reading *Refiloe*, Zukiswa Wanner's retold tale of *Rapunzel*, in their home language and pointing excitedly to the very mountains that the book said she lived in.

This year our campaign team more than tripled in size.

We developed inhouse competencies through two new departments to help us keep a steady eye and a firm grasp on our integrity, quality of duty, as well as our cost effectiveness. We learnt important lessons about supporting large and remote teams, and how to nurture team spirit both in our staff component and our larger network of FUNda Leaders. We were reminded of the significance of strong partnerships and the mileage such collaboration gives to the cause.

And then the news came. The results from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) were released in late 2017, telling us that 78% of South Africa's Grade 4s are unable to read for meaning in any language and that no significant progress has been made in the last few years. Children who are unable to read for meaning by that age are sentenced to a frustrating future of forever playing catch up. It is a national shame.

Though the year was exceptional through the efforts of so many the PIRLS results have galvanised our desire once more to do more. We're bigger than ever yet we only reach small fraction of the nation's children. The ability to read is an essential foundation for all future learning, and it starts with a story – something simple, warm and nurturing that each one of us has within us. We invite you to join and support this committed army of changemakers, and to invite others to do the same. Let's rewrite the way our national story ends.

Jade Jacobsohn
Managing Director

The ability to read is an essential foundation for all future learning, and it starts with a story – something simple, warm and nurturing that each one of us has within us.



2017 highlights

Our journey in 2017 reminded us again and again that South Africans are innovative and resourceful when they are inspired to make a difference. In Rustenberg in the North West Province, we visited a school that downloaded Nal'ibali stories from our website and printed them inside its school planner.

In Bizana in the Eastern Cape, we met community members who built their own hanging libraries from cardboard, newspaper inserts and plastic. In Port Elizabeth, we met librarians who run

a "books for babies" donation programme in partnership with the local clinic. When high-quality reading materials in children's mother tongues land in the hands of motivated, passionate adults, there's no limit to what is possible!

Our work in 2017 also reiterated that people are hungry for feedback, input and connection to one another – bolstering these areas of our work is a high priority for 2018. We are proud of the following highlights:

CHILDREN REACHED

We reached **63,004 children** through reading clubs and **98,899 children** through our **Story Powered Schools** Project.

FUNda LEADER

3 251 new FUNda Leaders joined the network in 2017, exceeding our target by

125%

See page 15 for full story

READING CLUBS

2 434

new reading clubs were established.

We trained **5 852** teachers, volunteers, NGO practitioners, librarians and DBE officials.

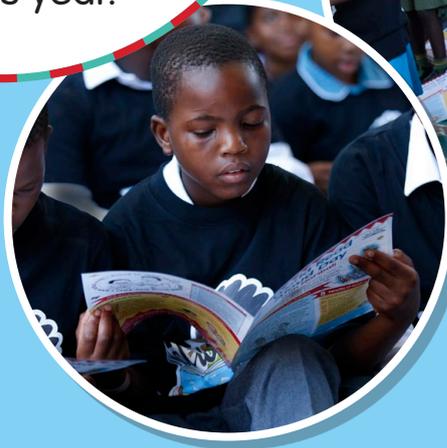
TRAINING

In **2017**
we reached

719,627

children with the same
story in our **11 national
languages** – nearly twice
as many as the
previous year.

WORLD READ ALOUD DAY



See
page
17 for
more...

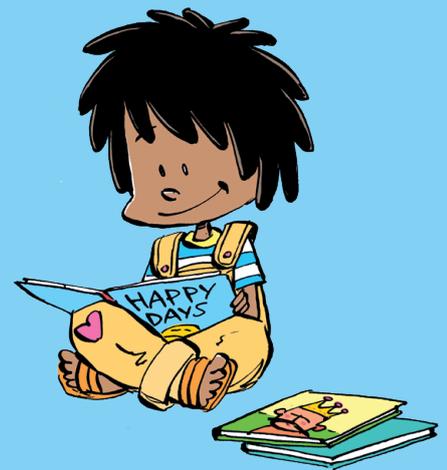


STORY BOSSO

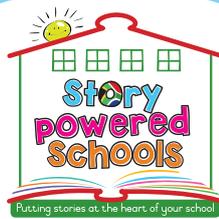
6 345 story entries,

were entered into our annual
multilingual storytelling contest
– almost three times as many
entries as 2016. With over R1.5m
worth of media coverage, the
contest got plenty
of attention!

See
page 16
for full
story



2017 highlights



EVALUATIONS

We kicked off two external evaluations this year: a randomised controlled trial of our **Story Powered Schools** programme conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago and an external evaluation of our bilingual reading-for-enjoyment supplement by JET Education Services.

CONTENT

Over **R1.1m** was spent on developing and distributing **595,125 multilingual story magazines** in areas where Nal'ibali has a limited presence.

FUNDING RECEIVED

In addition to the 2017 funding secured from the **DG Murray Trust** (DGMT) and **USAID Southern Africa** at the end of 2016, we secured further support from the **First Rand Empowerment Foundation** and the **Lesedi and Letsatsi Solar Parks** for 2018 and 2019.

See page 14 for full story

THEORY OF CHANGE

Our theory of change was reviewed and strengthened through a collaborative process involving team members, partners and members in an advisory committee.

In line with our founding documents, our two founders stepped off the board and were replaced by three new board members, bringing a wider range of expertise to the organisation.

GOVERNANCE

RESEARCH & INNOVATION & FINANCE

Two new departments were established to help us manage our resources, understand our impact, and keep ourselves fresh, relevant and **ten steps ahead** as the campaign continues to grow.



In 2017
we read aloud to
719,627
children

Review of 2017 strategic goals

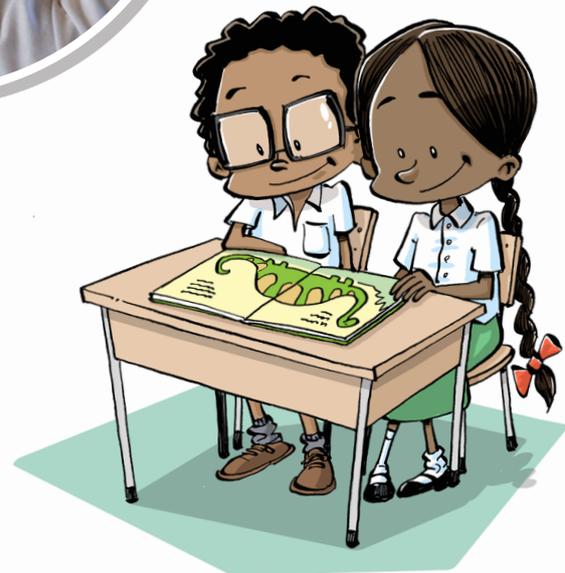
Expanding through government partnerships

Working with communities has powerful on-the-ground impacts, but it's our government partnerships that really help us to scale up in terms of national impact. One of our major partners in 2017 was the Department of Basic Education. **It enabled us to train 111 officials as trainers and 777 teachers in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, the Free State and Western Cape.**

Thanks to other partnerships with organisations working within schools, **787 school reading clubs are confirmed active:** a tremendous base for us to build a reading culture across the country. The establishment of library partnerships at the provincial level in different provinces was a success, **enabling us to reach 346 librarians and library assistants** through training and to co-create **70 in-house active reading clubs.**

We had hoped to expand through Community Work Programmes (CWP) to reach participants nationally but, due to tender and section processes within the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, we only received a clear way forward in August 2017 for implementation in 2018. Nevertheless, the Zoe-Nal'ibali Community Work Programme partnership with the SBA in the Western Cape has continued to run extremely well, helping us to **train 448 participants** who will implement our programme.

This partnership is particularly valuable, since it makes Nal'ibali visible in far-out areas of the Western Cape where we otherwise lack a presence. We're looking forward to working with CWP in other provinces to help bring meaningful employment opportunities to thousands of people across the country.



Growing and strengthening networks of literacy activists

2017 was a year of capitalising on our project gains and growing Nal'ibali's influence across all parts of the country. We built on the momentum from our active FUNda Leader campaign, launched back in June 2016. In addition to hitting our goal for training sessions, we managed to exceed our target for the **number of signed-up FUNda Leaders by 25 percent** and had numerous requests from partner organisations for training sessions – the sign of a healthy network going from strength to strength.

There were many examples of innovation within the network, several of which influenced our own strategy. A group of families in Gauteng, for example, requested Nal'ibali FUNda Leader training, forming Nal'ibali-focused 'Book Picnic Days' to share stories with their children. It's a fine balance between sparking action and ensuring we're not too prescriptive on



the form that action takes, but we're continually inspired by seeing the range of creative ideas everyday 'story power' can create!

Our partnerships were a huge asset: community individuals as well as national organisations really boosted opportunities to bring quality, mother tongue reading, writing and storytelling sessions to children in spaces ranging from creches and Early Childhood Development centres right through to homes and churches. Thanks to organisations like the South African ECD Forum, AmaJingqi Royal Development Forum, Ponaholo/Catholic Institute of Education, Community Action Partnership, Mpumalanga Preschool Association, PenReach and the South African Congress for Early Childhood Development, **we reached 17,495 children this past year** who otherwise may not have had exposure to books and the excitement of stories.

Capturing public imagination and growing visibility

So much of our most transformational work happens in schools or small communities, often in deep rural areas. It's really important for us to make sure that the stories we enable don't get lost. One of our strategic goals in 2017 was giving as big a platform to our work as possible: we want everyone to be as excited about our work as we are!

Thanks to our internal communications team and media partners Tiso Blackstar, our media coverage at Nal'ibali really got a boost in both its quantity and quality in 2017. In fact, our mainstream media presence generated a value add of **R23,855,297 through Tiso Blackstar placements (R13,972,572 up 9% from 2016) and Nal'ibali's own internal communications team (R9,882,725 up 41% from 2016).**

Social media continues to be a powerful tool in reaching people and, by the end of 2017, we exceeded our target of **25,000 Facebook followers** and had **6 345 Twitter followers** – both platform engagements growing nearly a third from the previous year. Nal'ibali's national profile was further raised through the newly developed **90 second promotional video** with versions in English, isiZulu and isiXhosa, which was then aired at taxi ranks across the country through **Rank TV**.





We
secured
R30 million
FirstRand
Empowerment
Foundation (FREF)
funding over
2 years.



Testing and consolidating new distribution strategies

In order to reach and inspire new audiences, 2017 saw us exploring new distribution avenues by distributing 595,125 reformatted versions of our multilingual supplements. Some of the ideas we came up with included inserting story booklets into selected Pick n Pay “**Fresh Living**” and “**Kook en Kuier**” magazines, into selected “**Free4All**” newspaper supplements distributed to schools and using our partner **NAPTOSA** to distribute them directly to selected schools in

Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West and Free State.

We also ended 2017 on a high note, after successfully applying for a Google Ad Grant of up to \$10 000 per month. This donation programme distributes free AdWords advertising to non-profits and ensures that Nal’ibali’s messages will appear first when targeted keywords such as ‘reading’ and ‘literacy’ are searched for online.

Growing and strengthening the Nal’ibali Trust

We can’t do the work we love without support and, in 2017, Nal’ibali was fortunate to secure commitments from several large funders. These included **R30m from the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation**, to be released over two years. In addition, on behalf of the **Lesedi and Letsatsi Solar Parks**, the DG Murray Trust awarded us **R7.2m** to expand the campaign’s footprint and help grow a reading culture in these two communities.

The ongoing support from USAID Southern Africa resulted in the largest growth in Nal’ibali’s footprint that has been seen to date. Thanks to this partnership, Nal’ibali was able to expand into 240 schools in the rural Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Here, through a team of young, dynamic and committed local Story Sparkers, Nal’ibali has been able to work with teachers and community volunteers to help schools become *Story Powered!* **Over 2018 and 2019 the project will continue to reach out to an additional 480 schools** to help them grow, nurture and continue to inspire a culture of reading.

This growth in the campaign warranted the establishment of an inhouse finance team. Working with Personal Trust, this new team successfully transferred our financial functions in to the structure of the Nal’ibali Trust. Various policies

and procedures were improved and formally adopted by the board, such as travel and procurement. During the course of the year Nal’ibali **passed a two-part external audit carried out by Tshikululu**

Social Investments of behalf of the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation.

As per Nal’ibali’s founding documents, two of our trustees, Dr Carole Bloch of the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) and Dr David Harrison of the DG Murray Trust (DGMT) stepped off the board in 2017. Both individuals are founders of the campaign: Bloch as the Executive Director from 2012 – 2016 (when Nal’ibali became an independent Trust) and Harrison as the CEO of the campaign’s anchor funder over the years. PRAESA continues to work closely with the campaign as a content and advisory partner. In 2017, Thabiso Madiba, Cathy Gush and Benjamin Trisk took up their places on the board.

Nal’ibali has been invited to form an exciting partnership with Exclusive Books and the Gauteng Department of Education. The partnership, which is currently in the design phase, involves the provision of 1 800 books each to 100 schools in the Gauteng area, together with Nal’ibali training and monthly visits.

A partner update

A partnership with Nal'ibali typically runs for six months. That's enough time for us to provide training, mentoring, assistance in setting up Reading Clubs and partnering in events. The idea is that when that time is up, we have set in place such strong structures that our partners are able to really own and continue the campaign. It's hard to exit – partners get really attached to us, and us them! But it's exciting that the campaign keeps growing and we're able to keep reaching new people.

Once we stop driving these projects, people naturally become less active. It's always a challenge. We check in with our partners to make sure they're still able to run their Reading Clubs and identify if we need to support them further. Sometimes that means re-inspiring the leaders, sometimes it means restocking their materials. We also make sure that partners are drawn into

our social media platforms so that they can feel part of a broader story community.

People really love the support we give. One of the things that really stands out was feedback from one of our partners, Community Action Partnership in the Overberg. They had a chronically shy child – she couldn't read out loud or engage in groups. Our programme completely transformed her! She's now happily reading – out loud and by herself – and CAP can't believe the difference. That's the kind of difference that is happening all over the country. It's why we do what we do.



Our revised Theory of Change

This year, Nal'ibali revised its Theory of Change – our “road map” of what are trying to achieve, how we believe we'll get there, and how we'll know whether we are reaching our goals.

We conducted a literature review, visioned our “desired future” in interactive team workshops, and gathered feedback from experts on literacy, education and behaviour change.

Ultimately, we identified four key building blocks that help children become readers: frequent and enjoyable **opportunities to read**; **role models** who share books and stories with children; access to quality **reading material**, in all the languages children speak; and broader **knowledge and awareness** in society – that reading for enjoyment is powerful, fun and easy to encourage! We also mapped these to clear impact metrics so it's easy to know what progress we're making towards achieving our goals.



Partnership focus

Red Cross Children's Hospital

One of our most heart-warming partnerships of last year was with the **Red Cross Children's Hospital in Cape Town**. Just because a child's body needs care doesn't mean their mind should be forgotten and we made it our mission to bring as much story magic into these children's lives as possible.

Thanks to our Reading Club Leaders there are now ten reading clubs operating in the hospital – every ward has its own club. They meet weekdays with a morning and afternoon session, so there's always a good time for children to join a session. We even have individual reading sessions set up for children in high care wards – nobody should miss out just because they can't get to a meeting.

We've set the Red Cross up with **two mobile hanging libraries** – one for the children and one for their parents. The libraries are stocked with great stories in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa, so everybody can find something that's relatable.

We trained a dedicated group of Friends of the Children's Hospital Association (FOCHA) volunteers who work with the children every day, ensuring that the fantastic story and reading culture we sparked is sustained long term.

We are particularly thrilled to have our stories featured on the in-hospital radio station, RX – one of the first hospital radio stations that is run for, and led by, children. It features live magazine-format shows anchored by children in the hospital about their interests as well as pre-recorded stories and music. RX has been a truly great vehicle for storytelling – not only do children get to share things they've read with the hospital, but in the process they get to own their own stories, too.

Nal'ibali attended their station launch on 6 October 2017 and, throughout the past year, the radio station has reinforced reading culture in the hospital by broadcasting stories in isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English. Two of our managers – Katie Huston and Kamohelo Ramaipato – were lucky enough to be interviewed on air and they covered our **World Read Aloud Day** and **Kids @ the Centre** events.



With **37 child reporters** in enthusiastic action across the hospital and plans to provide basic broadcasting skills to **80 chronically ill children** over the next two years, storytelling is in safe hands at Red Cross!

Story Powered Schools project update

Story Powered Schools is one of our most exciting new initiatives to grow a culture of reading in South Africa, made possible by a generous three-year partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Story Powered Schools programme works on the premise that books open a world of personal and academic possibilities – children who are readers can become achievers.

To test this, we are working to bring a culture of reading to life in 720 rural schools in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces over three years. We provide training, high-quality mother-tongue reading materials, and regular support from Story Sparkers – local programme ambassadors who visit schools every week to ensure teachers and reading clubs are using and enjoying our materials.

We kicked off the programme in 2017 with a first cohort of 240 schools, selected with the help of the Department of Basic Education from four rural districts – Ugu and Uthukela in KwaZulu-Natal, and Maluti and Bizana in the Eastern Cape.



After the Story Powered Schools programme turned one in September 2017, independent data analysts from UCT submitted a report on our progress. This is how our first year looked:

Story Power Snapshot

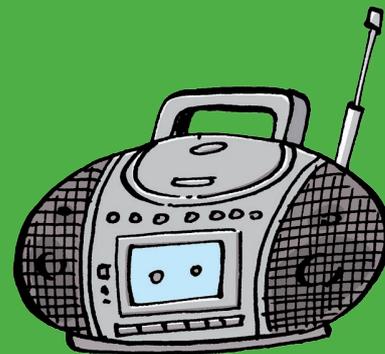
- **240 schools** enrolled (100% of our target)
- **799 reading clubs** registered (111% of our target)
- **19,569** children enrolled in reading clubs (181% of our target), and nearly **100,000** children participating in school-wide activities
- **1,200 multilingual hanging libraries** distributed (5 per school, with 30 books in each)
- **36,575 books** distributed (150 per school)
- **632,260 bilingual supplements** distributed (13 issues)
- **2,870 teachers** and community members trained
- **R3,108,656** worth of PR coverage
- More than half (57.1%) of schools reported doing Drop Everything and Read (DEAR).





Story Power Out and About

- **JANUARY:** Our media launch gave us great press coverage: **13 radio interviews, 11 newspaper articles and 5 online pieces.**
- **MARCH:** Community radio stations Inkonjane FM, Radio Sunny South, Radio Khwezi; and Link FM agreed to make Nal'ibali's pre-recorded and bilingual children's stories part of their regular programming.
- **APRIL:** We held **49 children's rights workshops reaching 8,558 children,** and held **9 community dialogues reaching 421 adults.** As part of this, we distributed **62,500 poster copies** of the children's literacy rights charter and **1,200 children's literacy rights booklets.**
- **JUNE – JULY:** **55 Story Sparkers** ran holiday reading programmes, reaching **3,312 children.**
- **AUGUST – SEPTEMBER:** **215 schools** entered the inaugural reading club showcase competition.



Challenges and Responses

- Distances between schools were farther and more difficult to travel than we had anticipated, and a number of Story Sparkers and Literacy Mentors struggled to visit their assigned schools. To respond, we purchased four new vehicles, and hired Story Sparkers who live closer to target schools.
- Due to community service delivery protest disruptions, rains and bad roads, we only managed to train 77% of our target number of teachers. We scheduled additional trainings to help make up this shortfall, and some teachers attended the shorter, one-day community training.
- Some volunteers withdrew after training when they realised Na'ibali would not be paying them. We're having an ongoing conversation with Department of Basic Education to consider linking our initiative to existing programmes that stipend school volunteers.
- Some schools have inactive reading clubs. We've created a school dashboard tool to better keep track of our clubs, and we conducted qualitative research at 10 schools to identify how we can most effectively support them going forward.
- Incomplete monitoring data made our evaluation difficult. We've revised our monitoring tools to collect more accurate and useful information; created stronger feedback

and accountability loops; and empowered our Story Sparkers and Literacy Mentors to use monitoring data to reflect, troubleshoot and plan on a weekly basis.

Evaluation

A randomised controlled trial (RCT) of the project also launched this year, in partnership with USAID and NORC at the University of Chicago. The rigorous study will compare participating schools to treatment schools over a two-year period to see whether children at Story Powered Schools are more eager, habitual and skilled readers. The evaluation will also examine access to reading material and teacher attitudes and practices.

Internally, we also undertook our own Year 1 evaluation. Our research team visited 10 schools and interviewed 54 stakeholders to understand how schools are implementing the programme, what kinds of changes are taking place, and where we can improve. We saw teachers and community volunteers using Na'ibali reading materials in creative and effective ways, and schools reported notable improvements in children's reading and writing skills, as well as their storytelling, public speaking and confidence.

Children are more excited and motivated to read, absenteeism has decreased and stronger links are forming between schools and communities. We are excited for these positive trends to continue!



A day in the life of a Story Sparker

Cokisa Sicwebu is a Nal'ibali literacy mentor in charge of seven story sparkers and oversees thirty-five schools in the remote rural Ugu district near Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal.



When I was told I would be working with disadvantaged people in rural KwaZulu-Natal, I was very keen to get involved because the focus on the rural child touched my heart. I am also a rural child. I come from Maclear in the Eastern Cape and we were not exposed to books written in our home language. Now we are exposing mother-tongue storytelling and reading to children!

So does it take a village to raise a reader?

Some literacy programmes just deliver books to schools, but we recruit volunteers from communities to really be involved in our schools. Our Story Sparkers visit different schools every day of the week and volunteers from the community follow up that activity.

What does a typical day look like for you?

I need to make sure all my 35 schools are on a par and that all my story sparkers are at their schools. I have to go to each of the schools to make sure activities are taking place and that the Nal'ibali story telling program is running smoothly. I also regularly train and check up on community members on reading for pleasure.

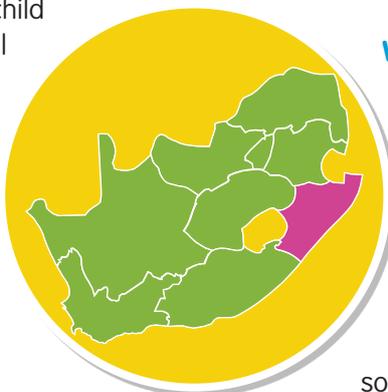
What does this mean, practically speaking?

Well, the terrain at some schools is the worst. I drive on rough gravel roads, over mountains. I'm often really scared when

driving through sugar cane farms – you never know what will jump out at you! Some places have no network or cellphone coverage; there are areas where you have to go over three rivers to get to school. Of course, when it rains, the rivers flood and the teachers have to wait three weeks until the water subsides. People never think of those kinds of things back in the cities!

What is the response?

Although a lot of the children are scared of nearly everything, when we come to school they start singing in excitement. The greatest impact we can have is simply to let a child be a child, let them express themselves through reading and writing for fun... somehow to tell them it's OK to think, it's OK to write left-handed, it's OK to be yourself. But by working with broader communities, we are also helping parents grow confidence in their own abilities. Families need to know that they are their children's first teachers – that, even if they have not finished school themselves, they can still teach their children by telling them stories.



I love what I do and go to bed with a happy heart.

FUNda Leader network

In June 2017, our FUNda Leader Network turned one. We thought it was a good time to review its progress, so we worked with social anthropologist Dr Andrew Hartnack to run a representative phone survey of 5% our 3,400 network members. We wanted to find out who

our typical leaders are, what actions they're taking and how best we can support them.

While a more detailed breakdown is available in our full report, here's a snapshot of some highlights:

FUNda LEADER



Who are FUNda Leaders?

In mid-2017, the FUNda Leaders we spoke to were:

- Overwhelmingly **female** – 79% of the sample
- **Young**. Almost 60% of people are under 35
- **Urban**. 66% live in urban areas, and nearly half (49%) are in informal settlements
- **Multilingual**. Just 4% of FUNda Leaders can only speak one language: our talented network is multi-lingual, with three or four languages typically spoken
- **Educated**. Nearly 80% of the sample had at least a Matric, and 55% had some kind of post-school qualification
- **Readers**. 44% read daily for pleasure, and another 44% make time to read at least weekly



Almost 60% of
FUNda Leaders
are under 35
years old

What impact do they have?

- After joining the network, people became more active: while 39% of **FUNda Leaders** were already reading regularly to children before joining Nal'ibali, 83% reported they were doing so now.
- Only 0.6% of the **FUNda Leaders** we spoke to had not yet taken part in any activities to promote reading. Many were active with multiple activities.
- The most common activity was reading to children outside of the home (45%). Just over a third (35%) run reading clubs.
- The average number of children reached per **FUNda Leader** is 24. (Scale that number up for the 4 600 **FUNda Leaders** who had signed up by the end of 2017, and they could be reaching more than 92 000 South African children!)



How connected are we?

- A large number of our **FUNda Leaders** (46%) had never received support material from us. The most popular Nal'ibali materials were overwhelmingly our bilingual supplements.
- The overwhelming majority (82%) of **FUNda Leaders** had not participated in any official Nal'ibali events
- More than half of our **FUNda Leaders** (51%) had never visited our website or accessed our online resources. For the 37% of people who used our online material, the stories were most popular.
- A quarter of **FUNda Leaders** did not currently receive communication from Nal'ibali. Text notifications were the most popular, with 46% receiving these. Overwhelmingly, people wanted to hear from Nal'ibali once a week.
- The three main areas where **FUNda Leaders** thought Nal'ibali could improve were increasing the frequency of communication and training, and providing more support resources.

Thanks to this study, we've taken action to strengthen our support to this network in 2018 and beyond. We are working hard to:

- Clarify our call to action
- Make our website more user-friendly
- Send out regular, targeted SMS communication in people's home language
- Build local connections between **FUNda Leaders** who were previously working in isolation
- Ensure more literacy resources get to **FUNda Leaders**

The only way to scale up our impact across the nation is through our **volunteers**, so their skills and commitment mean the world to us!



The DG Murray Trust

Nal'ibali's great vision of moving children's relationships with books from duty to delight is both vital and unique in the South African landscape. Through Nal'ibali's Story Sparkers, children are coming alive to more than the deep wells of knowledge that books represent: they are awakening to an invaluable belief in themselves. Children in Nal'ibali reading clubs receive support and motivation from FUNda Leaders to learn from stories, cultivate their imagination, and lead lives full of meaning. Through the sharing of stories, children inevitably develop confidence to read out loud, to act out stories and, ultimately, they learn to find their place in the worlds they access in stories.

Story supplements in hand, reading club members develop essential life skills such as resilience alongside improving their ability and desire to read. Beyond an essential self-belief in the contexts of deprivation that so many of our children in South Africa grow up in, Nal'ibali children learn to be innovative and empathic. Author of the Harry Potter series, J.K. Rowling, wisely stated that, "Imagination is not only the uniquely human capacity to envision that which is not, and therefore the foundation of all invention and innovation. It is arguably the most transformative and revelatory capacity, it is the power that enables us to empathise with humans whose experiences we have never shared."

Nal'ibali provides our children with the capacity to not only imagine different futures from the realities they currently inhabit, it also provides them with numerous opportunities to put themselves in others' shoes. Through the exploratory conversations FUNda leaders and Story Sparkers have with children after reading, each child has an opportunity to reflect on the stories and to articulate their perspective on it. The seeds of critical thinking are planted and watered in each encounter.

Through the sharing of stories, children inevitably develop confidence to read out loud, to act out stories and, ultimately, they learn to find their place in the worlds they access in stories.

Steeped in a love for stories, children who are confident, creative and compassionate will not only thrive academically, but will become the kinds of citizens who contribute to the social, political and economic development of our country and world.

Nal'ibali has filled the country with stories – from the reading supplements in the weekly newspapers and magazines, to the audio stories on national radio stations, and billboards that encourage parents to nurture a love for reading in their little ones. Nal'ibali's extraordinary achievements in the past five years have given the DGMT great pride as a founder and funder, and have strengthened our faith in the power of reading as an important key to unlocking a brighter future for our children and country.

Sebatso Manoeli
Innovation Director: DG Murray Trust

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

The latest PIRLS results paint a sad picture of a country that is working to harness the potential of its most precious resources – its children. Contrary to the criticisms that are often levelled against it, the government of South Africa works hard to rectify mistakes, improve quality of education and bring innovation to the education sector. There are, however, budget constraints and numerous competing interests that limit what can be done, because recurring costs use up most of the allocation. NGOs, business entities, other civil society groups and funders contribute significantly to rectifying this national crisis. The partnerships they forge provide real hope that there is bound to be success down the road.

Reading and literacy remain at the heart of USAID Global Education Strategy. In South Africa, primary programming has focused on activities that will eventually improve education outcomes. USAID also recognizes that reading forms the cornerstone of academic success, especially in earlier years of learning.

Nal'ibali's approach brings a number of exciting options beyond traditional teacher development and material provision. They promote reading as a communal responsibility and show that anyone who is interested can make a significant difference in sparking and maintaining children's love for the written word, irrespective of their own levels of education. Through the USAID, DG Murray Trust and Department of Basic Education's

jointly funded Reading Support Project in mostly rural KwaZulu Natal and Eastern Cape Education Districts, Nal'ibali carry out reading campaigns, provides strategies that spark the love for reading and provide reading materials in schools and communities. The reach and influence of Nal'ibali is enriched by the partnerships they have cultivated, relations they have built and the goodwill they have generated. During this year's World Read Aloud Day, for instance, Nal'ibali managed to coordinate more than 1 million kids having a story read to them at the same time – a remarkable achievement. This is all done through the hard work and passion of the staff and management.

During a site visit at Dukuza Primary school in Uthukela earlier this year, a principal from a village beyond was patiently waiting at the school. He said to me that he came because he learnt that Nal'ibali is coming to the village and he wanted to find out how he, his school and community can get involved. He said that the Reading Support Project provides "a basic human right" and brings smiles back to the faces of children and grandparents equally. These moments really go to show that impact is more than institutional, it's personal. The impact Nal'ibali delivers makes real differences in lives, just as much as it makes a difference to our nation. It's an impact we're proud of helping to amplify.

Morgan Mthembu
Project Development Specialist – Education



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Some words from our funders

The FirstRand Empowerment Fund (FREF)

Nal'ibali is rewriting South Africa's story. They have an incredible, high energy approach to early learning and Tshikululu believes that this is one of the most exciting new contributions to the early literacy space. Nal'ibali's goals are bold and daring. They are not just distributing beautiful multilingual supplements across the country, they want to change peoples' behaviour: to seed a love of reading in all South Africans. They believe we can have a country with story-powered homes, story-powered schools and story-powered communities. This a hard task and what makes Nal'ibali so special.

How do we know if a campaign to change behaviour is succeeding? This is why Tshikululu is particularly interested in Nal'ibali's strengthened monitoring and evaluation team, systems and processes. We hope to see even more meaningful insights and learnings coming from their data about the impact of the campaign and about behaviour change.

The evidence base about what does and doesn't work in the early literacy space is getting stronger and stronger, as is the consensus on

the importance of home language learning and we have never before had such a detailed understanding of the literacy gaps in Foundation Phase. Nal'ibali is an important ingredient in the larger picture of how we make South Africa a reading nation. Those working in the early literacy space must be well-resourced, well-supported and given the time to meaningfully implement. That includes time for problem-solving, time to make mistakes and time to reflect. One of our clients, the FirstRand Empowerment Foundation is supporting Nal'ibali in this way.

2017 was a milestone year for Nal'ibali – having to deal with fast growth, more than doubling in size, while still ensuring quality resources and activities. Although they are growing fast, we need them to grow and grow and grow. We simply can't afford for them not to.

Forward to a reading nation. Forward!

Tess Nolzwe Peacock
Tshikululu / FirstRand Empowerment Foundation (FREF)



Message from the board of the Nal'ibali Trust

It is a privilege to be a trustee of Nal'ibali. The organisation is, without question a change agent for the advancement of a better and kinder South Africa.

life are improved immeasurably. Literacy provides entry into the world of imagination and ideas. It is a lifelong bulwark against the ravages of poverty.

I am well aware that this is a sweeping statement. The promotion of literacy and the effectiveness of Nal'ibali and its office management and field workers across the country, is creating deep, lasting and sustainable changes in the lives of our children. Children who are literate grow up to be literate adults. The job opportunities, indeed the life opportunities of literate people are significantly different to those who are not literate.

Literacy bestows a gift of welcome into the life of the satisfied: job opportunities are better and the chances for success in one's personal and public

Literacy bestows a gift of welcome into the life of the satisfied.

Nal'ibali is gaining traction world-wide as a significant organisation in the field of literacy and reading development. Its efforts should be lauded not only by the public and by corporate South Africa and aid agencies, but also by government. The work that Nal'ibali does in the field supports any government's attempt to create a better life for its citizens. It is time government recognised these efforts and did everything it can to facilitate better funding for an organisation that makes a difference.

**Benjamin Trisk
Board Member**



Partners

We would not be able to do what we do without our partners, some of which are listed below:

Our initiating and funding partners

- The DG Murray Trust
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- FirstRand Empowerment Foundation
- The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA)
- HCI
- Volkswagen Community Trust



Some of our media partners



Some of our programme partners



Number talk

Idowu Koyenikan once said that “when money realises it is in good hands, it wants to stay and multiply in those hands”, which is a good lesson for all organisations striving towards long term sustainability. When USAID joined the DG Murray Trust as a key supporter of the Nal’ibali campaign, the rapid growth of the team and its’ activities necessitated the in-housing and strengthening of the organisation’s financial management systems.

At the start of the year Nal’ibali ended its long-standing relationship with Personal Trust in order to build internal capacity and achieve greater oversight of investments made towards

our mandate. To ensure that our new house was clean and well set up we underwent a full systems audit, as required by the First Rand Empowerment Foundation, which assisted further in strengthening our administrative position and fiduciary compliance.

As depicted in our annual financial statement, independently prepared by Grant Thornton, the Nal’ibali Trust has managed its financial resources excellently in the period under review. In the long term, strengthening the campaign’s financial management and reducing dependence on external funding are key focal areas for improving campaign sustainability.



Financial statements

The Nal'ibali Trust

(Registration number IT547/2016)

Annual Financial Statements for the 12 months ended 31 December 2017

Statement of Financial Position

| Figures in Rand | Notes | 2017 | 2016 Restated |
|--|-------|-------------------|------------------|
| Assets | | | |
| Non-Current Assets | | | |
| Property, plant and equipment | 2 | 2 042 653 | 396 688 |
| Current Assets | | | |
| Trade and other receivables | 3 | 1 184 830 | 28 933 |
| Prepayments | | 850 372 | - |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 4 | 23 880 502 | 4 201 819 |
| | | 25 915 704 | 4 230 752 |
| Non-Current Assets | | 2 042 653 | 396 688 |
| Current Assets | | 25 915 704 | 4 230 752 |
| Non-current assets held for sale (and) (assets of disposal groups) | | - | - |
| Total Assets | | 27 958 357 | 4 627 440 |
| Equity and Liabilities | | | |
| Equity | | | |
| Trust capital | 5 | 1 000 | 1 000 |
| Accumulated surplus | | 1 104 079 | 705 768 |
| | | 1 105 079 | 706 768 |
| Liabilities | | | |
| Current Liabilities | | | |
| Other financial liabilities | 6 | 302 462 | 302 462 |
| Trade and other payables | 7 | 7 594 864 | 1 158 526 |
| Deferred income | 8 | 18 955 952 | 2 459 684 |
| | | 26 853 278 | 3 920 672 |
| Non-Current Liabilities | | - | - |
| Current Liabilities | | 26 853 278 | 3 920 672 |
| Liabilities of disposal groups | | - | - |
| Equities | | 1 105 079 | 706 768 |
| Liabilities | | 26 853 278 | 3 920 672 |
| Total Equity and Liabilities | | 27 958 357 | 4 627 440 |

Financial statements

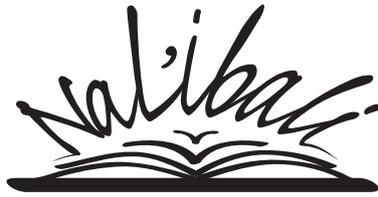
The Nal'ibali Trust

(Registration number IT547/2016)

Annual Financial Statements for the 12 months ended 31 December 2017

Statement of Comprehensive Income

| Figures in Rand | Notes | 12 months | 10 months |
|---|-----------|------------------|------------------|
| | | 31 December | 31 December |
| | | 2017 | 2016 Restated |
| Revenue | 9 | 54 202 996 | 18 279 059 |
| Revenue | | 54 202 996 | 18 279 059 |
| Cost of sales | | - | - |
| Other income | | 18 349 | - |
| Operating expenses | | (54 562 191) | (17 635 394) |
| | | 54 202 996 | 18 279 059 |
| | | (54 543 842) | (17 635 394) |
| Operating (deficit) surplus | 10 | (340 846) | 643 665 |
| Investment revenue | 11 | 739 157 | 62 103 |
| Profit (loss) for the 12 months from continuing operations | | 398 311 | 705 768 |
| Profit (loss) for the 12 months from discontinued operations | | - | - |
| Surplus for the 12 months / 10 months | | 398 311 | 705 768 |
| Other comprehensive income | | - | - |
| Total comprehensive income for the 12 months / 10 months | | 398 311 | 705 768 |



It starts with a story...

Get in touch!

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