

# **READ EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

## **CAPABILITY STATEMENT**



### **READ Educational Trust**

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## OVERVIEW

READ Educational Trust is a South African-based NGO that operates in the education and literacy sectors, working in teacher development and providing resources to schools.

Read was established in 1979, and is funded by foreign donors and the private sector. READ works alongside the provincial and national Departments of Education to implement teacher training and literacy projects in schools.

### **Mission**

To develop the reading, writing, learning, information and communication skills of learners in Southern Africa, so that they may become independent, life-long learners.

### **Expertise**

- More than 34 years' experience in education and training;
- Teacher training from Grade R through Grade 12;
- Specialization in the learning areas of language, literacy and communication
- Application of the Balanced Language programme, an internationally endorsed and respected methodology;
- School management training and
- Experience in both rural and urban school project delivery.

### **Capacity**

- An accredited service provider to the Department of Education in nine provinces;
- Sound and transparent financial systems;
- Efficient evaluation systems and
- Our recent projects serviced more than 1500 schools, 15 000 teachers, and 1 million learners

### **Support**

- All programmes developed in consultation with Education departments and teachers;
- Funded by private sector and foreign donors and
- Aligned with the National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

### **Commitment**

READ is committed to helping develop the skills of South African teachers, in the field of literacy and language education. READ will always be part of the solution, working in cooperation with the education departments of South Africa. Research has provided Read with strategies to apply to solve the education crisis, working in cooperation with the public and private sector, unions and the community at large. As a learning organisation, Read works with external evaluators to assess the Read offering, and to improve our capacity where necessary.

## **The Three Principles of Read**

### **Books and Training Always Go Together**

One is not effective without the other. Most South African teachers grew up in an environment where books were a luxury, or not readily available, so they have little experience of books being used in the classroom. It is not enough to provide books to teachers, and then hope they will work out how to use them as tools in the classroom. Neither is it enough to train them in the use of books in literacy teaching, and then hope that the books they need will be provided somehow. Book provision must be accompanied by training to ensure that materials are effectively used. Training alone is not enough as most classrooms in the country are under-resourced.

### **The Right Book, at The Right Level, at The Right Time**

It is important to give the learners and teachers books that have relevance to their circumstances. It is also a good idea to provide books which are entertaining. Rigorous and careful book selection from local and international publishers is essential. Children can only be motivated to read if the books they have access to are relevant to their environment and appropriate to their reading level.

### **Variety Encourages Reading**

We experience many different text types in our reading lives, from the bold letters on a stop sign, to the fine print in a contract. It is important to expose the learners to different text types and styles, so that they can read for study purposes, safe lives, and for pleasure.

## **HISTORY: THE ROOTS OF READ EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

### **Educational Reform in South Africa**

READ helps to secure real change in South Africa's schools. Read has gone from providing libraries to the 50 high schools in Soweto in 1979, to working in 7.5 percent of South African schools in 2004. READ has made a significant impact on redressing the desperately under-resourced classrooms of our schools, and created a market demand for quality books and teacher training.

READ has sound relationships with the Department of Education and several leading South African corporate donors, and continues to assist in the task of redressing Apartheid's Bantu Education System. Today, evaluations demonstrate that READ programmes accelerate learner achievement by two grade levels in reading, and four grade levels in writing.

### **Rising to the Challenge**

The 1976 Soweto school uprising highlighted the structural unfairness and lack of quality education in the Bantu Education system. The striving of the youth for a better South Africa was a call that could not be ignored. Read Educational Trust was formed in 1979 in response to student demands for better library and reading facilities. The vision was clear: access to books and improved education were a route to social justice. READ stood for Read, Educate, and Develop – a simple action plan.

The organisation was registered as an NGO in 1979. In 1979, only one of the 50 high schools in Soweto had any books in their library. Many did not even have a library room. This situation mirrored the rest of South Africa. Primary and high schools in the Bantu Education system simply did not have books in their classrooms. Teachers, inexperienced in using books, used rote learning methods, dimming the cognitive abilities of learners.

From these beginnings, with the support of donors committed to making a difference, READ has had a far-reaching impact. There is now a consciousness that resources and books are needed for learning.

Today READ works closely with the Department of Education in all nine provinces to support the implementation of the national curriculum.

### **READ Outputs**

READ is a teacher-development agency in the field of language, literacy and communication. READ also delivers community education training and life-skills training, assisting youth entering the job market. Read has expertise in the field of assessment and develops curriculum targeted materials , for resource provisioning in the schools.

READ provides

- Training to teachers and school managers
- School-based workshops and demonstrations
- Classroom assistance and progressive goal-setting are key implementation strategies.
- Resources selected by experienced professionals from South African and international publishers.

### **READ PROJECTS**

READ has been involved with numerous projects since its inception in 1979.

#### **A past project**

The Business Trust *Learning for Living* project was an important step in Reads development, operating in 897 schools and reaching 382 837 learners and 11 341 teachers.

The aim of the project was to:

- make a significant impact on the learner repeater rate
- develop the language, literacy and cognitive skills of the learners through a systematic in-service training programme of their teachers and through the supply of adequate and relevant books to their classrooms
- build the capacity of Education Department Officials, School Managers and School Management Teams to manage and sustain the programme in their schools.

The following project descriptions provide examples of the work that READ does on all levels of school education:

#### **Early Childhood Development**

Grade R programmes train practitioners to provide a solid grounding for pre-school learners.

### **The JIM JOEL project**

READ worked in 10 home-based, pre-primary schools in the Cofimvaba District of the Eastern Cape. The goal was to develop the practitioners in these schools by training 9 courses over 3 years and supplying the schools with books and educational equipment.

### **The Free State ECD programme**

In conjunction with the Free State Department of Social Development Read is providing resources and training to 25 ECD centres, to ensure the service providers are properly qualified ECD practitioners, who can stimulate the educational development of the children in their care with a combination of physical and cognitive development tools.

## **Formal School System**

Primary school and high school programmes focus on literacy, language and communication skills; research, information processing and study skills, as well as life skills.

### **Primary School**

#### **The Free State Literacy Programme**

READ was awarded the contract to implement and roll out the literacy strategy in the Free State at the Foundation Phase, working with department officials at every level.

The strategy targets all levels of the Free State DOE personnel – from Head Office to the teacher in the classroom – to ensure systemic implementation and sustainability. The model proposed for the programme is integrated into the system of education in the Free State.

### **APLLC**

The Accelerated Programme for Language, Literacy and Communication aims to embed best practice in literacy teaching in the system of education in Gauteng through training the Literacy Facilitators, Institution Development Support officers (IDSO's) and teachers

#### **The Gauteng Primary Literacy Strategy**

This is a programme which provides ongoing training to Foundation phase teachers in the use of language specific resources to teach reading and writing. Training in Sesotho, IsiZulu, English and Afrikaans if provided. Trainers from READ provide training on the use of the resources at central venues, and then travel to each school in the project to provide coaching to the teachers. Resources provided by Reading Matters are used.

## **High school**

### **Cofimvaba High Schools**

The aim of this 3-year project is to upgrade teachers' skills and learners' literacy and language levels and to improve school management practices in 32 schools in the Cofimvaba and Lady Frere districts of the Eastern Cape. 23 400 learners are affected.

### **Sugar Association of South Africa**

The programme will aim to promote effective language, literacy and communication, provide a link between language learning and science and improve school management in 10 High Schools in the catchment area of the Sugar Association in year one (2007).

## **Rural Education**

### **The Rally to READ project,**

Currently operating in 310 schools in eight provinces, and funded by Bidvest, the aim of the project is to supply resources to otherwise inaccessible and often neglected schools and to supply their teachers with in-service training to make effective use of these resources in line with the curriculum. Teachers are then monitored, to ensure that they have understood the training they have received. Here necessary, teachers are given refresher workshops to assist their understanding. A team of regionally based, dedicated READ trainers provide this year round service.

### **Sasol Science programme**

SASOL provided funding to resource schools participating in the Rally to Read Project with science kits to empower teachers and learners and enhance the teaching of science in these rural schools and to ensure that the learners are truly scientifically literate when they leave these rural schools. The project was completed in September 2010.

### **School Management**

School managers are trained in the skills needed to effectively manage schools, such as financial management, conflict resolution, planning and fundraising skills

### **Standard Bank School Management programme**

This project was completed by the end of 2009 and involved the training of school managers in the Rally to Read Project.

## **Departmental projects**

### **IEP**

Integrated Education Programme (IEP was a basic education programme of USAID-South Africa and is a follow-on to the District Development Support Programme (DDSP). The DDSP provided support to basic education programmes in teacher education, curriculum development as well as school management and governance in selected districts in four provinces during the past five years. It aimed to achieve improved quality of primary education. This goal remains unchanged under the IEP and hence in its design and structure the emphasis on learner achievement and systemic improvement. The goal of the programme is improved student performance in numeracy, literacy, mathematics and science in participating schools. READ is involved with the literacy aspects in the Eastern Cape.

### **Ithuba**

The purpose of this three-year programme was to develop and distribute 600 000 copies of 120 titles written in each of the 10 indigenous official languages as well as English to all nine provinces in South Africa.

## **Materials development projects**

The organisation develops materials and books for learners in a variety of African languages, in line with the NCS. Booklist selections are also made, drawn from national and international publishers. READ distributes this material to schools, in tandem with training.

### **Zenex Home Language**

This project involved the translation of the New Heights series of books into Zulu and Xhosa and tested the implementation of their use with 134 Grade 1 teachers in 106 schools in the Eastern Cape and KZN.

## **EVALUATION OF READ'S WORK**

Several academic evaluations have found that learners in READ project schools were scoring, on average, as much as two grades higher in reading and writing than their peers in schools that were not part of the project. Similar results have shown up in evaluations of other READ projects in rural areas.

## **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

READ Educational Trust is a Section 18A trust and is governed by a Board of Trustees. Provincial and regional elected committees advise and guide professional staff on a daily basis.

The governance regulations are developed in line with the King II Report. Legal and financial structures are set up and checked by board members who are experts in the field.

## **THE READ MODEL**

The READ model is:

- Research-based, incorporating the findings of literacy studies worldwide
- Field-tested in South Africa over 30 years
- Custom-designed and flexible
- Curriculum-related
- Learner-centred
- Cost-effective when measured against the cost of the supply of textbooks to every learner