

# The Phenduka Literacy Project

Annual Report for the year  
July 2018 to June 2019

## The Phenduka Literacy Project Mission Statement

The Phenduka Literacy Project is committed to improving the learning and teaching of literacy and mathematics at Middle School level in four of the primary schools in the township of Alexandra, in Johannesburg. It does this through the **diagnostic testing and remedial teaching** of Grade 7 students at the schools served, and through the **running of workshops to improve the proficiency and effectiveness of teachers** in developing literacy skills. The choice of Middle School level for intervention is to ensure that learners do not enter High School with literacy and mathematics levels inadequate for learning.

We are also committed to developing a **viable curriculum** for the effective remediation of reading and writing, with texts, strategies and programmes that can be used and shared by other organisations wanting to improve literacy learning and teaching. Our programme uses a multimodal approach that is particularly effective with children who have failed to make progress with mainstream methods.

In the light of the current crisis in South Africa, with very poor literacy and maths skills at all levels, and high dropout rates in High School, we feel that the contribution we make is worthwhile.

# Highlights of the 2018 – 2019 year

The last year has presented Phenduka with several challenges, which we will discuss in detail. But it has also has its successes and high points which we describe below.

1. Our successful Readathon at Ekukhanyisweni
2. Moving into our new venue
3. Tamara Meili our volunteer from Switzerland joins us for two months.

We will discuss each of these briefly.

## **1. Readathon at Ekukhanyisweni**

We have had Readathon events in the past but they are complicated to arrange so this has not been a yearly event. We have found them useful and worthwhile on several counts, including the following benefits:

- Getting children to practice for the Readathon, to show how fluently they can now read, helps them move forward and develop even greater fluency.
- The event is usually held at the school in front of the senior pupils and the teachers. So this gives the children on our programme a chance to “shine” before their peers and this undoes some of the negative feelings they have built up over the years as “literacy failures”.
- The Readathon also helps to dispel questions some teachers still have about our efficacy and whether it is worthwhile to send children on the programme. Bear in mind that some teachers see children go off to Phenduka for two hours and think (erroneously) that they are missing valuable work. But if they cannot read or write at the appropriate level, they are not really learning anything much in the classroom anyway. So the time is better spent on “catching up”, so that they are on a level with the other children in the class.
- The event celebrates reading as a skill and endorses its importance as a basic literacy activity that must be put in place at primary school. Children proceeding to High School with inappropriate literacy levels will get no remedial help at all, and they will probably “fall out” of school within a year or two.
- The event also demonstrates to the school community as a whole how important reading is, and we hope that this “highlighting of literacy” makes an impact on how teachers think about their role as teachers.



Alison handing out certificates to children



Children who attended Phenduka programme showing off to the learners at school

## 2. Our new Venue.

Due to Financial restrictions, we had to look for a venue that will fit our budget. During the Board meeting that was held earlier in the year, Alison, explained why a new venue was needed and how the choice was made and here are the reasons for this move:

- a) Financial restrictions that had to be met by bringing down the cost of rental.
- b) The old landlord, Peter, had been willing to let out the garage alone at R5,000 but we would lose toilet and hand-washing facilities ~ this would be unacceptable with classes of 18 children at a time. We would also lose office and storage space
- c) The new venue, a cottage attached to a house in the same suburb as before, would give us a classroom, an office, suitable toilet and washing facilities at only R500 more than Peter's offer, i.e. R5,500 p m.
- d) The teachers and Ali described the disadvantages of the cottage and how we intend to counter these:
  - The large intrusive column in the middle of the classroom is awkward and cuts down on pupil space ~ with possible future funding we can make structural changes to remove this column or part of it
  - The lack of natural light in the room ~ with possible incoming funding, we can extend the entrance into a much bigger sliding glass door to let in more light

**Here are the pictures of our venue.**







Nomi swimming with the children on their last day

**The new venue boasts of swimming pool, which occasionally comes as a treat for our children on very hot days**

### **3. An Amazing Volunteer from Switzerland Tamara Meili.**

Phenduka, was visited by a student in Business Communications from Zurich. Tamara is 27 years and Carla thought she could observe the project in process and give advice on improving communications. Tamara was here for 8 weeks and made a difference in the following ways:

- She has been effective in her efforts to improve our communications and outreach.
- She updated and amended the indemnity forms so that they can be recognized by common statutes law.
- She compiled profiles on the children to post on Instagram so that potential funders can see the background of children they want to donate for.
- She established the first monthly newsletter for our organization to update funders.
- She showed her willingness and devotion by reaching out to people and involving them with our organization through crowdfify.net crowd funding, which was a Great success for us, we received an of **6115 CHF ( appr. R86000).**

We particularly appreciate Tamara's willingness to take an initiative to help, serve and continually support the beneficiaries of this project, namely children of the township of Alexandra.



Phenduka team( left to Right) David, Alison, Nomi and Tamara



Tamara helping children with mathematics

Note: see Annexe B about the Newsletter.

# Progress Graphs: July to December 2018

## Ithute Primary School PRE-TEST 2018

Note: The first graph shows where children from Ithute were at, after diagnostic tests. The second shows the position after the programme. We are very proud of the progress shown in the second graph, with only 2 children making no progress, 2 children making some progress and most of the class making substantial progress.

No of learners	Column 1: No Literacy	Column2: Can read some familiar words	Column 3: Reads slowly but surely	Column 4: Fluency improving	Column 5: Reads quite fluently	Column 6: Reading very fluently
13						
12						
11						
10						
9						
8						
7						
6						
5						
4						
3						
2						
1						

## Ithute Primary School POST-TEST 2018

No of learners	Column 1: No Literacy	Column2: Can read some familiar words	Column 3: Reads slowly but surely	Column 4: Fluency improving	Column 5: Reads quite fluently	Column 6: Reading very fluently
19						
18						
17						
16						
15						
14						
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12						
11						
10						
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8						
7						
6						
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4						
3						
2						
1						

# A Sample of our School Reports

ITHUTE PRIMARY SCHOOL: Final Progress Report November 2018

## GROUP A

NO.	NAME & SURNAME	Diagnostic	Progress in Literacy skills	Final diagnostic
1.	Bhengu Sonele	1.5	Sonele's reading has improved, but could have made more progress if it wasn't for being lazy and sleepy in class. He needs more practice in order to excel in reading and to be accurate. Spelling and comprehension answers were good.	4
2.	Lubambo Mfuneko	1	At the beginning Mfuneko lacked concentration and was lazy as well, but towards the end of the programme he tried really hard to improve. He made some progress in reading although he needs to practice more to enhance it. Improvement is still needed in spelling and handwriting	3
3.	Mapanjwa Usiphe	3	A very determined young man, who reads very well and accurately. He can read unfamiliar text without problems and in phrases. Improvement in spelling and gave good sensible answers in comprehension.	5.5
4.	Masumpa Athi-Ayanda	1	At first Athi-Ayanda was rather shy but later on she developed more confidence and, willingness to participate. Her reading has improved, she needs to be accurate with words and be confident.	3
5.	Mdudi Ndilisa	2	Ndilisa is such lovely girl, worked very hard and participated well in all activities given in class. Therefore her reading improved, but her reading can still improve for the better if she practices more.	4.5
6.	Miya Nandipha	1	Nandipha's biggest problem is immaturity. She doesn't take anything serious, other than to play in class. Nandipha was taken for one-on-one remediation, but she made very little progress.	2
7.	Mzimane Ndikho	2	Ndikho started off on a bad note because he always depended on other children, but with encouragement and motivation he developed more confidence and made wonderful progress in reading and writing. We are very pleased with his work!	4
8.	Ndlwana Sibulelo	3	Her reading is improving but at a very slow pace. Sibulelo struggles with confidence and with expressing herself in oral work. She needs nurturing and encouragement to improve more!	4
9.	Nkosiaphantsi	1	Samkelo started off with low-self-esteem, but over	3



	Samkelo		time, he developed confidence and started to participate more. There was some progress in reading fluency but more practice and support is needed. Spelling and comprehension improved.	
10.	Ntshofu Owami	3	Owami was a sweet and co-operative child who really took responsibility of his learning. He made absolute great improvement in reading. Good spelling and comprehension answers.	4.5
11.	Nyanda Bukho	2	Bukho is very immature and doesn't take responsibility of his work. We spent so much time disciplining him in class but never made an effort to change his behaviour and attitude, therefore he made little progress compared to his capability.	3.8
12.	Phike Owethu	3	This learner is not only very intelligent but is also very enthusiastic. He worked very hard in class and achieved excellent results. Owethu managed unfamiliar text very well and reads with expression. Such a wonderful boy!	6
13.	Piyose Inga	2	Inga worked with enthusiasm, took his work seriously and made wonderful progress. He can read in phrases. He produced good written work in spelling as well as in comprehension test.	5
14	Renene Athenkosi	3	Athenkosi's lack in confidence has held him back a bit in progressing. He tries very hard when given attention. He needs encouragement and support. Good comprehension answers and spelling.	4
15.	Tanga Sibusiso	3	Sibusiso was very lazy when they started, but eventually he worked hard. He made good progress but needs lots of practice to develop further. His spelling is good, but handwriting needs improvement.	4.5
16.	Tyhomfa Lindani	1	Lindani has come a long way, from level 1 to 4. He's got such a good fighting spirit and was very determined to improve his reading, which did improve but more practice is needed to enhance it.	4
17.	Velaphi Aviwe	2	A disciplined, pleasant child who worked hard and was so motivated. As a result his reading fluency was really good! His written work has improved. Delightful boy to teach.	4.5

# ITHUTE PRIMARY SCHOOL: Final Progress Report November 2018

## GROUP B

NO.	NAME & SURNAME	Diagnostic	Progress in Literacy skills	Final diagnostic
1.	Castro Ellio	1	He was weak and had concentration problem during the first part of the programme. With remedial help Ellio was learning to focus better in class, therefore his reading slightly improved. More remedial help is needed!	2.5
2.	Dlamini Siphesihle	1	Sphesihle's reading has improved, he moved from level 1 to 3. He still has a long way to go to improve in reading, therefore more practice is needed.	3
3.	Khunou Maphuthi	1	Maphuthi's reading is extremely weak and tends to parrot a lot. She was taken for individual remedial lessons but didn't make any progress. She struggled with grasping the sounds of the alphabets, but eventually she was coming out right. She needs more remedial help in order to improve her reading.	1
4.	Malema Elias	1	Elias has severe learning problems and seems to retain nothing, even though he was repeatedly given one-on-one remedial support. He does not even know the alphabets and he was offered assistance with regards to this, but unfortunately he can't identify and sequence them! We feel he desperately needs to be in a special school.	1
5.	Mapheule Thapelo	3	Thapelo is intelligent, but very ill-mannered child. He could have made more progress, if he had been more disciplined and attended the programme every day. However, his reading has improved and his written work is quite good . He also needs to practice more in order to be accurate with words.	4.5
6.	Mashashe Baleseng	3	Baleseng was shy and lacked confidence, but was so committed to learning. As a result she made wonderful progress in reading and she reads in phrases. She needs nurturing/support to build self-esteem.	4.5
7.	Matjeketjeke Retshidisitswe	2	A well-mannered and disciplined boy, who worked hard in class. Due to his effort he managed to make progress, but can do more with a bit of practice. Good spelling and neat work.	4
8.	Maohlodi Kabelo	1	Kabelo made progress in reading, but he needs lot of practice to enhance it. Absenteeism was also a contributing factor in his lack of progress. His written work improved.	3
9.	Mokoena Mapaseka	3	Mapaseka is a sweet and quiet girl, who is steady but sure on her reading and is accurate with words.	4.5

			She just needs to work on her pace and build confidence. Spelling and comprehension work were both good.	
10.	Mokone Kamogelo	2	At the beginning of the programme Kamogelo lacked confidence, but that didn't stop him from making progress. He worked hard and made good progress in reading. His reading can still improve for the better if he practices more.	4
11.	Ncube Miracle	2	Miracle worked really hard to improve in reading and he now reads better and tries to be accurate with words. More practice is needed in order to build solid progress in reading.	4
12.	Ngcani Sizwe	2	Sizwe was a bit lazy and shy at the beginning, but was so committed to learning. As a result he made wonderful progress in reading and he reads in phrases.	4.5
13.	Ntshingila Ntombifuthi	2.5	Ntombifuthi struggled with confidence, which made her reading poor. Her reading was getting better and starting to take shape, but unfortunately her mother wrote a letter requesting that her daughter to be removed from the programme.	3
14.	Sello Khahliso	3	An attentive, disciplined young man with great potential, who grabbed the opportunity given to him and capitalized on it. His reading improved and he excelled in written work and comprehension. He's such a lovely boy to teach!	4.5
15.	Tsheola Kgantso	1.5	Kgantso started off at such a low level and with a lot of anxiety about reading aloud. However, she was very motivated to improve and worked very hard. We are very pleased with the solid progress she made in reading. Her comprehension work and spelling were fairly good.	3.5

# Programme roster: July 2018 to June 2019

Year	Term	School	Months	Programme
<b>2018</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Term</b>			
		Ekukhanyisweni (literacy & Maths)	17 <sup>th</sup> July to 8 <sup>th</sup> August	Booster
		Ekukhanyisweni (Maths only)	13 <sup>th</sup> August to 24 <sup>th</sup> August	Maths remediation
		Iphuteng (Maths only)	27 <sup>th</sup> August to 31 <sup>th</sup> August	Maths remediation
		Ituthe(Literacy & Maths)	3 <sup>rd</sup> September to 21 <sup>st</sup> September	Booster
	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Term</b>			
		Ithute (Literacy & Maths continues)	10 <sup>th</sup> October to 26 <sup>th</sup> October	Booster
		Ekukhanyisweni (Maths only)	29 <sup>th</sup> October to 9 <sup>th</sup> November	Maths remedial
		Preparing Board-meeting	12 <sup>th</sup> November to 13 <sup>th</sup> November	
		Board meeting	14 <sup>th</sup> November	
		Readathon	20 <sup>th</sup> November	
		Moving to the new venue	26 <sup>th</sup> November to 4 <sup>th</sup> December	
<b>2019</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Term</b>			
		All 3 schools	17 <sup>th</sup> January to 21 <sup>st</sup> January	Diagnostic Tests
		Ekhukanyisweni	28 <sup>th</sup> January to 22 <sup>nd</sup> February	Grade 7's Main programme
		Iphutheng (literacy & Maths)	26 <sup>th</sup> February to 11 <sup>th</sup> March	
	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Term</b>			
		Board meeting	30 <sup>th</sup> March	
		Phenduka Admin	02 <sup>nd</sup> April to 12 <sup>th</sup> April	Applying for funds & Social development
		Iphutheng (Literacy & Maths)	15 <sup>th</sup> April to 26 <sup>th</sup> April	
		Ekukhanyisweni (Maths only)	30 <sup>th</sup> April to 10 <sup>th</sup> May	Maths remedial
		Diagnostics (Iphuteng maths)	13 <sup>th</sup> May to 17 <sup>th</sup> May	Grade 6 maths
		Phenduka Admin	20 <sup>th</sup> May to 14 <sup>th</sup> June	SARS, Annual report, Social development



# NPO Administration

## 1. Daily running of the project

**2018 and 2019:** Since Nomi and David are now co-directors and teachers at the same time, this means that they now have more responsibilities in running Phenduka in terms of all Administration and then teaching as well. They were both put in the bank as Signatories, so that it will be easier to do the daily running costs, such as

- Taxi fees
- Catering for staff lunches
- Payments to our domestic
- Stationery
- Purchasing Cleaning products

They both collect the slips after the purchases are made and attach these to the spread sheet for that month. Nomi and David liaise with Ntuthuko and hand over the spread sheets for him to use in the book-keeping, prior to the yearly audit.

Other administration responsibilities for our co-directors are to look for new funding for the project, write the Phenduka's yearly report and the Social Development annual report, developing teaching materials and liaising with the schools.

## 2. New Accountant

When Sally, our accountant, resigned at the end of last year, we were suddenly confronted with the need for an accountant to take over her duties immediately. Ntuthuko Julia is a qualified Tax practitioner with a BCompt degree in Financial Accounting, and he is also registered with the accounting board of **South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA)**. He has taken over Sally's duties and she co-ordinated with him and handed over the books.

## 3. New Directors

This year we have embarked on a new initiative, suggested by our two teachers after our Board Meeting in November 2018. Nomi and David proposed that they be given the opportunity to continue running Phenduka as co-directors. With these two teachers, this would give Phenduka **a second chance**, as both Nomi And David are deeply committed to 'saving' Phenduka and having black co-directors would enable them to **apply for the BEE status** for the NPO, which in turn is likely to make funding more successful. The age of the new directors also places them in a better position for consideration (as preference is being given to young entrepreneurs, leaders etc.)

Nomi and David have taken on their new duties with enthusiasm and professionalism and the previous director, Alison, is satisfied with how they taken on their new roles in the running of Phenduka. She has expressed to our auditors at ECOVIS that she is very impressed with their initiative and integrity.

## 4. Challenges

Unfortunately we had to let go of two valuable teachers, Ziphora Khumalo and Jan Venter, because of our dire financial situation. Zippora understood this because she joined us on a part-time basis to help with the maths remediation programme. She made a great contribution to our maths programme as we were able to help the biggest number of maths learners we have ever had.

Jan Venter also made his mark on Phenduka, by modeling for us a broad range of multi-modal skills, which is what Phenduka is about. These skills, partly honed in his years as an actor / dancer included storytelling with movement and gesture, providing sound effects for story-telling, acting out meaning for vocabulary development and drawing. We miss his vitality and imagination in the classroom.

## 5. The Board Meeting

Phenduka held two Board Meeting this current financial year end, one in November 2018 at our old venue and the other one in March 2019 at our new venue. The main focus on the first meeting was on Phenduka's future i.e. (the possibility of closing down, the current financial situation and the budget showing the cutbacks and reductions). The second meeting we welcomed Yolisa Mdunyiswa, our new Board Member who replaces Sally Hirsch. Sally resigned last year in December and so we were forced to look for a new Board Member with haste. We decided on Yolisa Mdunyiswa, who is the principal of Ekukhanyisweni Primary school, which is one of the schools we serve. It gives us pleasure that we would now have someone representing the needs of the schools on our Board.

Our Board Meeting went very well, the SKYPE connection with Alberto in Switzerland was very good this time.

**Note: The minutes of these two meetings are available as Annexe C at the end of this report.**

## 6. Running costs and budget

The current Budget with running costs for the year appears below. The Budget is broken down into segments and we send out a slightly more complex version of this with applications for funding, so that potential donors can select a level from small to large, and know what their donations will cover. This seems to work better than global amounts with applications for funding so that potential donors can select from small to larger amounts.

## Phenduka Budget

Category	Cost per month	Cost per year
Telephone (R750) + running cost e.g. catering/cleaning (R500)	R1,250	R15,000
Cost of stationery and printing	R500 (approx.)	R6,000
Cost of taxi to transport children from school to venue	R7,000 (approx.) this falls away during holidays, so x 10 for annual	R70,000
Cost of rental of venue	R5,500	R66,000
Electricity and Water	Approx. / on average R1,000	R12,000
Salaries of two teachers	R33,500	R402,000
Book-keeping costs	R3,500	R42,000
Auditing costs p.a.		R23,000 (approx.)
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>R52,250</b>	<b>R650,000</b>

### 7. Incoming funds

#### a) Swiss Donors:

We continue to receive ongoing financial support from various donors in Switzerland. We are extremely grateful to them all for keeping us going.

Staub Kaiser Foundation

The Gabriele Foundation

Andy and Marlene Schwarz; Gianni Poncini; Patrizia Galimberti; Mrs Luigia Minori

Mrs Mariolina Spiess; Jennifer Pozzi; Crowd-funding ([www.crowdify.net](http://www.crowdify.net))

#### b) Our local donors

**Siba Mlungwana**, came to our open day in 2014 to represent Lindsay Saker, and liked what he saw ~ since then he has very generously donated between R500 and R1,000 every month in his personal capacity, for which we are very grateful.

**Benji Shulman** continues to make very generous donations EVERY month. He has been doing this since our 10th anniversary. Thank You, Benji, for being such a caring big brother to Phenduka!

**Anglo Gold Ashanti:** Our major local donor, Anglo Ashanti Gold has come to the table again last year in September with another very substantial amount of **R310,800**. We are currently providing them with information on running costs etc. in order to make an informed request for funds for this financial year to come. We thank the management of Anglo Gold Ashanti for continuing to support us!

**Dischem Foundation** has been very generous through their random act of kindness by paying the three month rent (October, November and December) for Phenduka. We thank The Dischem Foundation for this generous donation.

## **8. The yearly audit by ARB, now ECOVIS**

Our yearly audit will be completed and signed off by the end of July and Board Members will each be given a copy of these financials at the next Board Meeting. The books are prepared for the yearly audit by Ntuthuko, our new accountant, who handles our Payroll, pay-slips and SARS payments on an ongoing basis. Anyone wishing to peruse the audit is welcome ~ we need your request and email address.

Note that ARB has been incorporated into an international auditing firm called **Ecovis**, so if you see this new name on the auditing documents, it is the new name of the auditor. Their connection with an international auditing firm of such renown gives added status.

## **9. Links to our videos on YouTube**

For those wishing to see our project in action, please visit our programme on YouTube. The links are in Annexe A, which follows. The Annexe also includes links to our website and the Impact Study done on our project several years ago. FaceBook page, Twitter and Instagram for us, which now adds to the information available to the public. You can access it by searching for Phenduka Literacy Project.

A heartfelt Thank you to all the people who make the Phenduka story grow richer and stronger each year :

To our directors and teachers:

Nomi and David

Our accountant: Ntuthuko

Our Board Members: Carla, Alberto, Denise, Siba, Nozipho, Alison and now Yolisa

Our Swiss Benefactors: The Staub-Kaiser Foundation, The Gabriele Foundation and various private donors.

Our local donors: Benji Shulman, Siba Mlungwana, Dischem Foundation and Anglo Gold Ashanti.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You



## Annexe A: More info on Phenduka

### Visual material re Phenduka

1. Our website which has a range of photos

[www.phendukaliteracy.com](http://www.phendukaliteracy.com)

2. The independent impact study/report:

<http://phen dukaliteracy.com/image/Phenduka%20Report.pdf>

3. Two videos on our programme, one short one to give an overview, and one 30 minute video explaining our methodology in detail.

10 minute:

<https://youtu.be/D9kYf8ne-HA>

30 minute:

<https://youtu.be/oQVHQiC2DKw>

4. A FaceBook and twitter pages giving added information on recent news about Phenduka.



Phenduka-Literacy-Trust



Phenduka Literacy Trust@PhendukaT

5. A basic introduction to our programme is available on request. It features several photographs as well as explanations of the pedagogy we have developed.

## Annexe B: Phenduka's First Newsletter

# PHENDUKA NEWS MAY 2019

## NEWS

- Successful board meeting with the new board member added who is one of the principals of the school phenduka helps
- Resignation Alison Beynon as the director and handing over to the new co-directors Nommy Julia and David Ngwana
- Late start on the second term due to the community protest in Alexandra Township, that lasted for one week

## VOLUNTEER FROM ZURICH, SWITZERLAND



Currently, we are being visited by a student in Business Communications from Zurich: Tamara Meili, 27. She is here to observe the project in process and give advice on improving communications. She will be here for a few weeks and is looking forward to seeing the children in the programme.

## SOME PICTURES



## DONATION OF STATIONERY

We appreciate the generosity that we received from Jenny in Switzerland, who donated stationery to Phenduka.

The children showed their appreciation by making a thank-you-poster for her.



## STUDENT'S PROFILE

### THIS MONTH WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE BULELANI



Bulelani stays with his mother, twin brother who is in grade 8 and his sisters who are twins they are in grade 10. His father passed away in 2015, his mother is does not work she sells different things for a living. He wants to go to Bhakilanga high school when he is finished with grade 7, and when he is finished with school he wants to be a teacher. He said he use to struggle with Mathematics especially with exponents, cube roots and square roots and did not understand what was being done in class. In literacy reading was his biggest challenge since being here at Phenduka he has seen an improvement. He feels more confident when reading and he is no longer ashamed. He still feels with mathematics he still needs to improve more, he wished he had more time at Phenduka. If he had a chance to meet the people who give money to Phenduka to help him, he would say "thank you so much for bringing a programme like Phenduka to help us, it has helped me a lot and I thank you dearly.

## BULELANI'S PROGRESS IN 4 WEEKS



## UPCOMING

- Due to National General Elections on 8 May 2019, schools will be closed for this day
- Exams starting on 13 May 2019



## Annex C: Board Meeting Minutes

### The Phenduka Literacy Trust Minutes for Board Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at Phenduka venue

**Present:**

Carla and Alberto Ferrari, Sally Hirsch, Denise Newfield, Alison Beynon (Chair)

**Absent:** Nozipho and Siba

1. Welcome to all, particularly Carla and Alberto, who took time to visit us in Joburg on their way to their home in Shelley Beach
2. **Current balance:** Phenduka's current balance was discussed. The various amounts below suggested that Phenduka should be able to carry on for at least 6 months, and possibly a year:
  - R360,000 currently in the account, a fairly fulsome amount thanks to the donation of R310,000 from AngloGoldAshanti
  - + or – R500,000 available in the future from the Swiss foundation
  - R100,000 donated by Dischem in the form of rental to be paid straight into our landlord's account every month
3. **A new challenge in funding:**

Carla explained the change in Switzerland with regard to the availability of funding. They can no longer guarantee funding as in the past. Also, an amount is needed to be set aside for retrenchment packages. She also emphasized the importance of Phenduka leaving a legacy when and if it is closed down. This legacy could be in the form of

  - Online courses passing on the pedagogy which has been developed over the years
  - The materials being passed on to other literacy organizations
4. **Possible cuts in running costs were discussed:**
  - Reduction in monthly salary cost by retrenching 1 member of staff (Jan)
  - The cancellation of the telephone service and substituting this with a Phenduka-dedicated cell-phone, or using a tablet with a sim-card.
  - Reduction in rental by bringing our renting of the Lomax house to an end when the lease finishes in December, and possibly renting

Nommi's cottage at her house nearby / alternately just renting the Lomax garage (Peter Lomax was amenable to this) See par 10.

## **5. Teacher employment:**

- Jan to be told in a private meeting with the Board that Phenduka can no longer afford him ~ his inability to teach Maths which is now a crucial part of our programme made him the logical choice
- His value to Phenduka (especially in the early development of the programme) to be acknowledged ~ especially in giving embodiment to the multi-literacies / multimodality aspect of the programme
- The retrenchment package was discussed. The Ferraris suggested R20,000 but Denise felt this was too little for the length of time he had worked (approx. 18 years). Possibly R30,000 or more.
- Ali offered to top up the package if Phenduka could not afford the full package, as decided. The cessation of the job would be the end of December
- The issue of retrenchment packages needed to be fully explored. We need to know what the labour laws are around this, and Denise offered to supply the name and contact of a labour lawyer known to her. This needed to be explored and decided on before the end of November, so that Jan could be given a month's notice.

## **6. Our achievement:**

Attention was drawn to the length of time Phenduka has survived, nearly 20 years, having started in 2001. It was agreed that this was a great achievement and something to be proud of. With this in mind, Denise suggested nominating Ali and Phenduka for the new IMAGINE award (Surve Philanthropies). Denise volunteered to handle the nomination.

## **7. The possibility of closing down**

Attention was drawn to the need to look ahead to the possibility of closing, if further funding is not successful. If there is still money in the account at such a time, would this be distributed among staff? Also, how do we give staff due warning that closure might happen in June?

Do we put something in writing for this eventuality? In fact, if it was possible to keep going till September, it would complete the main thrust of our educational project for the year, with the BASIC programme usually achieved by June and the BOOSTER programme conducted in the 3<sup>rd</sup> term and into the 4<sup>th</sup> term

## **8. Phenduka's legacy**

- Ali mentioned contacts she had recently had in the Western Cape with two outreach programmes handling literacy improvement. One was a project being facilitated by Tessa Fairbairn in Kayelitsha, coaching Foundation Phase teachers to be more effective. The other was under the aegis of the D G Murray Trust and also involves using stories to develop language fluency and literacy.

The contact person was Pam Hicks. Ali shared skills, expertise and stories with both of them and hopes the dialogue continues.

#### **9. Funding Applications**

Ali provided a list of 20+ organisations she had applied to for funding, with dates of application, contact numbers and feedback. Disappointingly, only 2 of these had materialized: namely AGA and Dischem. She will continue to send out proposals and would be grateful for ideas.

#### **10. Further discussion about rental**

Peter was willing to rent us the garage alone at R4,000 per month. The venue was a bit uncertain. A problem would be

- No space for a separate office
- Inadequate toilet facilities for pupils and teachers ~ the back toilet is very rudimentary with no handwashing facility
- There would be no separate facility for making tea / lunch etc,
- We could perhaps buy a bar fridge for milk etc.

#### **11. A raise for David**

It was felt that David carries a lot of teaching weight, responsible for maths and literacy, as well as a lot of liaison and pettycash payments. He has really proved himself this last year in hard work, loyalty and responsibility. He has also now earned a BSc in Astrophysics. He is currently doing a correspondence course in management under his own steam. We feel he deserves a raise in salary and recommend R15,500 as his salary per month, from 2019. This was agreed on by all.

#### **12. The Future**

We are very grateful to Nozipho for her efforts to secure funding for us from AngloGoldAshanti. But it seems clear that generally speaking, South African organisations will not provide us with enough sustainability in the future without the Swiss input. We request that Nozipho remains involved on our behalf.

#### **13. Summing Up**

In summing up the meeting, Carla emphasized that if we do close down the project sometime in 2019, we should:

- Close it down properly and correctly
- Leave a lasting legacy so that our work does not go to waste

**Addendum :** Although we had planned a Readathon at one of the schools as a final event to showcase children's reading progress, it was felt that there was no time to hold this on the day of the Board Meeting. It was held a week later and was a great success, with certificates of progress being handed out to children on the programme. The host school was Ekshukanyisweni. If you would like David to forward you a short video of the proceedings, please let me know.

**Alison**

**03 / 12 / 2018**

## Minutes of Phenduka Board Meeting

30<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Venue: New Phenduka Classroom

Present: Alison Beynon, Denise Newfield, Siba Mlungwane, Yoliswa Mdunyiswa, Alberto Ferrari (by SKYPE)

Apologies: Nozipho Bardill, Carla Ferrari

Invitees: Prospective new directors ~ Nomi Julia and David Ngwana ~ to meet the Board.

Volunteer from Zurich ~ Tamara

1. We **welcomed all Board Members**, in particular our new member, Yoliswa Mdunyiswa, principal of Ekukhanyisweni School. We expressed pleasure that we would now have someone representing the needs of the school on our Board. We showed members around our new venue and began with tea and eats as some board members had come straight from work.
2. We discussed the **process of handing over directorship** and management of Phenduka to Nomi Julia and David Ngwana as co-directors after Alison's resignation as Director (in the appendix, we enclose her resignation letter from the end of last year). We felt this was necessary for these reasons:
  - a) To **replace Alison** who has resigned but continued to administer Phenduka for the last few months, and now urgently needs to retire
  - b) With these two teachers as co-directors, this would give Phenduka **a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance**, as both Nomi and David are deeply committed to 'saving' Phenduka ~ and have taken it upon themselves to take it into the future, notwithstanding the financial struggle.
  - c) David's research has indicated that having Black co-directors would enable them to **apply for BEE status** for the NPO, which in turn is likely to make funding more successful. The **age of the new directors** also places them in a better position for consideration (as preference is being given to young entrepreneurs, leaders etc.) David is 28 and Nomi is 31.
  - d) We also need to follow '**correct procedure**' for management to ensure compliance with The Dept. of Social Development (to whom we must submit the signed letter of transition of management)
3. The current Director backed up her belief in the two members of staff as our **new potential leaders** with the following observations:
  - a) They have both shown **huge commitment** to looking for new funding for the project, researching factors that would aid funding (e.g. getting BEE compliance as well as getting tax clearance, and Section 18A status).  
They have also sent out **a number of proposals**.
  - b) They have both shown **great initiative** in looking at new ways in which to energize the project, e.g. creating a new website that

will update with ease and can handle online donations. David pointed out that whereas we look to business for large donations, small online donations on a regular basis soon add up. David has already signed up for a domain at R59 per month and is planning and designing a plug-in which will cost R600 to R700. Board members unanimously felt that this was worth the benefit to Phenduka, not only for publicizing what we do but also for collecting funds. Alberto will inform the current administrator of the Zurich-based website of the new development.

4. **Discussion re the new venue:** Alison explained why a new venue was needed and how the choice was made:
  - a) Financial restrictions that had to be met by bringing down the cost of rental
  - b) The old landlord, Peter, had been willing to let out the garage alone at R5,000 but we would lose toilet and hand-washing facilities ~ this would be unacceptable with classes of 18 children at a time. We would also lose office and storage space
  - c) The new venue, a cottage attached to a house in the same suburb as before, would give us a classroom, an office, suitable toilet and washing facilities at only R500 more than Peter's offer, i.e. R5,500 p m.
  - d) The teachers and Ali described the disadvantages and how we intend to counter these:
    - The large intrusive column in the middle of the classroom is awkward and cuts down on pupil space ~ with possible future funding we can make structural changes to remove this column or part of it
    - The lack of natural light in the room ~ with possible incoming funding, we can extend the entrance into a much bigger sliding glass door to let in more light
  - e) We also discussed the status of the Dischem connection ~ they had agreed to pay our rent for a year but need to first make a site visit before honouring this.
  - f) There was useful and complex discussion around the possible accusation of "conflict of interest" (possibly by SARS or donors) for 2 reasons:
    - The cottage belongs to the Julas, and Nomi Julia is therefore not only a future co-director of Phenduka but her husband is also Phenduka's landlord. Alison's argument was that Phenduka was desperate and the arrangement allowed us to continue functioning. Other possible rentals were looked at and none were both suitable and affordable. Siba agreed that functionality was important and the arrangement meant little disruption in the functioning of the project going forward.
    - When Sally, our accountant, resigned at the end of last year, we were suddenly confronted with the need for an accountant to take over her work immediately. Tuthuka Julia, who is a certified accountant and a Tax Practitioner, offered to do so and Sally has

co-ordinated with him and handed over the books. Board members agreed that as landlord and husband of a future director of Phenduka, he was not independent enough as an accountant but the immediate issue of accounting needed to be addressed. Siba suggested that he continue until the yearly audit in July and we then find an independent auditor to take over. Everyone agreed this was a good idea. Siba's suggestion that the Board oversees the financial 4 times per year as a safeguard was deemed an excellent way forward and the accountant will thus work more closely with the board than in the past, delivering reports and even being invited to the board meeting.

**NOTE:** Nozipho on reading the minutes, entered the discussion on Monday and added that all Board members could sign a form which is specifically to declare the "absence of conflict of interest". She will send these forms and the Board will sign them at the next meeting. She also pointed out that our yearly audit by a respected international auditor ensures that no malfeasance takes place.

#### **5. Status of the funding drive ~**

- a) We registered disappointment at the delay and eventual expiry of our application for 18A status. We applied in June 2018 but this application has now expired due to endless delays by SARS. David knows someone who can help us reapply and be more effective in demanding speedy attention to our case.
- b) There is a need for PBO and tax clearance ~ to reassure future funders. Tuthuko, our new accountant will investigate this and if there are penalties to pay, Alison has offered to pay these as a loan so that Phenduka can move forward. As funds then come in, this loan can be repaid to her. Nomi thought that the non-submission of returns to SARS might be the reason for the delay /refusal of 18A status.
- c) Siba requested more info on our current tax status, and Ntuthuko will investigate and give feedback on this, before the next Board meeting.
- d) A possible source of funding is The Bank of China, which has shown an interest. But we first need to get the PBO status and hopefully we can get this before the Bank's application deadline.
- e) Our current financial status is R49,327.00. This will carry us through to the end of April. Carla and Alberto still have some funds for us in the Foundation, 40,000 dollars, roughly R520,000 and a deposit from this will be needed soon after April. They reminded us of the warning they made at the last Board meeting: that due to the reputation of corruption by the previous government, i.e. Zuma and appendages, there is now little enthusiasm in Switzerland for donating to South Africa and they are not likely to be as successful in the future as in the past.

#### **6. Other transition matters:**

- a) **Sally's resignation:** We all regretted Sally's resignation as accountant and Board Member, and wanted to express our gratitude to her for her support and hard work for Phenduka in the past.
  - b) **The role of the accountant , possibly on the Board?** As mentioned earlier, Ntuthuko Julia (a qualified tax practitioner and accountant) has taken over the accounting from Sally, at least for the time being. Would it be an advantage to have the accountant on our Board, as was so with Sally? Siba felt that this would constitute a "conflict of interest", and donors would not like it. Denise felt that one needed diversity on the Board in terms of roles as well as ethnicity and gender, not a situation where members had multiple functions. . "You can't have the same person commenting on funds as well as receiving and handling the funds." It was agreed that the situation would be reviewed at the next Board meeting.
  - c) **Signing power:** Alberto asked who, during the transition, would have signing powers for withdrawing money ~ this was previously shared by Sally and Alison, i.e. the accountant and director. It was agreed that perhaps now this should be shared by the new accountant (Ntuthuko), a director (David) and a Board member (Alison or Siba). David pointed out that in any case, in attempting to apply to The Lotto for funds, he was required to supply 3 signatories. We eventually decided to have four signatories, who will be David, Ali, Nomi and Siba. Two will always be needed to withdraw money. Ali and David will set up this new process with the bank. Siba said that this could be set up in different ways with the managers having easy access to withdraw as they need money for the daily running of the project, e.g. stationery, catering, cleaning, taxi fees etc.
  - d) **Annual audit:** We will continue to use of the same auditor, ECOVIS, in July 2019 as last year, so that there is continuity. The directors should remember to "book" our week in July so that the audit is done on time to satisfy the audit of the foundation in Zurich.
  - e) **Transparency:** We will deal transparently with donors, Dischem, SARS etc about paying rent to our accountant who is also our landlord and why this was deemed both necessary for survival and acceptable in that 'conflict of interest' clearly does not apply in the current crisis.
7. Currently, we are being visited by a student in Business Communications from Zurich. She is Tamara Meili and she is 27, and Carla thought she could observe the project in process and give advice on improving communications. She will be here for a few weeks and is looking forward to seeing the children in the programme. She was included in this particular Board Meeting as she is a student of Business Communications, and might be able to give us advice on improving communication skills.
  8. **A little bit of legacy:** Alison described her experience of being interviewed for a Matric History project on past pupils of Rustenburg Girls' School in the Cape, who had made a contribution to the community. (Alison attended Rustenburg Girl's School in the late 50's and matriculated there in 1961.) This



project was then displayed at the School 125<sup>th</sup> Centenary to which Alison was invited. She has printed out the textual component of the project and made it available for members to read. There was also a photograph of the project poster on Phenduka, which appeared on the display. Meghan Petty, the matric pupil who did the project, was drawn to the Phenduka programme because of her own history of struggling with school academically and she is now convinced that she would like to study Educational Psychology. It is rather gratifying to us to know that Phenduka and its methodology is an inspiration to young people like Meghan.

9. The meeting closed with three heartfelt statements:
  - a) Alison made a statement of thanks to the Board for ongoing support and assured members that though she was handing over directorship to Nomi and David, in whom she had every faith, she would continue to sit on the Board and would remain committed to the survival and welfare of Phenduka. She will also continue to follow up her links with academics in the Cape who are associated with literacy development, e.g. working with the D G Murray Trust
  - b) Alberto, via SKYPE, made a statement from him and Carla jointly, expressing their gratitude to everyone who had worked with “incredible dedication” to support the project and also commended Alison on her “creativity around the transition to something new”.
  - c) Denise on behalf of the Board thanked Carla and Alberto for their ongoing hard work, support and dedication to Phenduka over two decades of growth and increasing success in the business of literacy remediation for the disadvantaged.