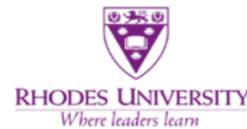
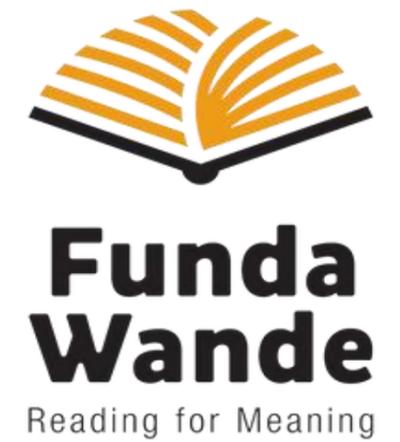


Funda Wande: Strengthening Foundational Learning focusing on system-wide equity priorities

Innovative Approaches to Foundational Literacy



Presented by
Tabisa Boo!



2025



About Funda Wande

- Mission: Ensure children can read for meaning and calculate with confidence by age 10.
- We design, test and scale evidence-based LTSM, training, professional development and coaching, embedded in systems-level interventions.
- Focus on the use of African languages in low-resourced contexts with delivery at scale through partnerships with national and provincial government .



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Challenges in Foundational Learning in the South African context

- Literacy and numeracy achievement is generally low and stratified according to socio-economic class, race, language, gender and location
- Wide disparities between:
 - Performance in wealthy schools (Quintile 5) compared with under-resourced schools (Quintiles 1 – 3)
 - Learners tested in English/Afrikaans compared with those tested in African languages
 - Learners tested in urban schools compared with those tested in rural schools
 - Achievement of girls and boys (girls do much better than boys in early literacy)
 - The strongest and weakest learners in a class, especially in Quintile 1 to 3 schools. There is a policy (SIAS), but it doesn't work in practice.
- These factors intersect: Learners in under-resourced often rural schools are learning in African languages; learners in wealthy, urban schools are primarily learning in English.



Our system-wide equity priorities: social and language inclusion

- Focus on Quintile 1 to 3 schools where African languages are the medium of instruction in the following provinces:
- Eastern Cape – primarily isiXhosa; many rural schools
- Limpopo – primarily Sepedi, Xitsonga, Tshivenda; many rural schools
- Western Cape – isiXhosa, Afrikaans



Funda Wande's system-wide equity priorities spectrum

- Funda Wande:
- Designs language-appropriate LTSM (mother-tongue workbooks, teacher guides & anthologies, as well as resources for mathematics) — reduces linguistic exclusion. Workbooks conscious of gender disparities e.g. inclusion of non-fiction and other boy-friendly texts
- Implements targeted training, coaching and teacher-assistant models to reach under-served schools.
- Develops videos filmed in Quintile 1 to 3 schools for training and pre-service teacher education. Videos model inclusive pedagogy.

Researches, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to establish what works at scale



Multilingual contexts

- Many children are living and learning in multilingual contexts; they speak different languages and varieties of languages
- In order to be inclusive, schools need to take account of this
- Funda Wande's Maths workbooks (Bala Wande) are bilingual
- Funda Wande is currently researching the use of languages in early grade mathematics



University-based professional development

- In collaboration with Rhodes University, Funda Wandu has developed an Advanced Certificate in Foundation Phase Literacy Teaching and a Short Course in Instructional Coaching
- Targets subject advisors, HoDs, lead teachers and coaches. Strengths capacity within the system.
- Conscious of equity priorities and includes a module on Inclusive Education.
- Multilingual instruction; makes extensive use of Funda Wandu videos



What works at scale = evidence

- High-quality, language-aligned materials + focused in-person training drive learning gains.
- Using teacher assistants (BEEI model) supports scale and reaches hard-to-reach schools.
- Programmes that combine materials + coaching show larger and more equitable effects across distribution.



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References & Further Reading

- ▶ Funda Wande Limpopo Workbooks Evaluation Endline Report (April 2024).
- ▶ Funda Wande strategy and evaluation briefs (fundawande.org).
- ▶ DBE Policy Brief: Learning Gaps (2025) — gender and differential impacts.
- ▶ Our system-wide equity priorities toolkits and guidance (DFAT, UN Women, TEA).



INISOKWE



Thank You!

Dankie!



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Amaqela akufunda



Umhobe
Umundara othe
Wongera entsim
Waqakatha wa
Wanlangana ne
Nazitub kwase
Wanuphula
Nab...

