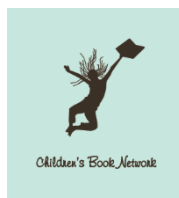
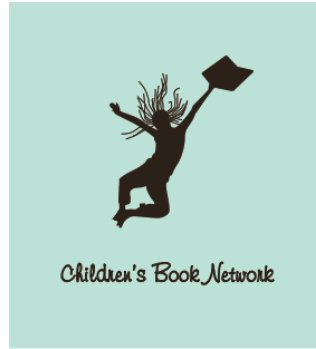




# Children's Book Network

Annual Report for 2015





Children's Book Network

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# INTRODUCTION

Children’s Book Network (CBN) is about exactly what it says – children, books and networking.

Persuading children and books to be friends is a challenge worldwide. Motivation to read is decreasing in the face of competition from a dozen different media types. But a child – or a person – has to be able to read before any screen, however interactive, is useful. Reading, in this information age, has become a critical skill. More important even than that, books are a place of imagination and freedom, where anything can happen and everything is possible. Reading is amazing. But only by enjoying reading will our children learn to read well – and enjoy reading more.

Founded late in 2011 by writers Gcina Mhlophe, Lesley Beake and Sindiwe Magona, CBN continues to work passionately to bring the excitement of books and reading to children, to make reading cool.



## WHAT WE DO



Why do we do what we do? (And what makes CBN different?)

When people hear the word ‘books’ in conjunction with ‘children’ they often think early literacy. Children’s Book Network works instead with an age group that tends to slip through the net of organizations concentrating on learning to read, the right to read, or dealing with the problems of teenagers who won’t read. We work (mostly) with children between ten and twelve, children who can read, but don’t. We often work in rural areas and places where there is not already a strong existing network of support for children.

It’s a challenge. But there can be few more wonderful results than watching a child look up from a book with wonder in their eyes. Books are amazing, life-changing events. We know that and we see it as a privilege to share that concept with young people who often see books only as a school activity, a chore, a bore.

Passion is the key. We assemble a cast (the only possible word) of people who believe so strongly in what they are doing that they convince even the most jaded pre-teen. We bring violinists, slam-poets, drummers, storytellers, puppeteers, writers, archaeologists, poets, cartographers, cellists – we have even been known to bring along most of the choir of the University of Cape Town. Whatever it takes.

We begin with books and stories, end with them and slip them in between when the children aren't looking. They write songs – we read to them. They make shadow puppets – we read to them. They work on iPads – we read to them. In between activities we hand out books so fascinating and delicious – that they read themselves. By the end of a workshop, be it a one-day event or a four-day one, they get the message.

Reading is cool.



## THE CHILDREN

- Our target age-group is 10-12 years-old
- They come from under-resourced communities
- They often have little exposure to cultural activities
- They can read – almost always – but they don't read
- They understand English better than they can speak or read it
- They are taught some subjects in English at school
- English is their second, third – or even fourth language



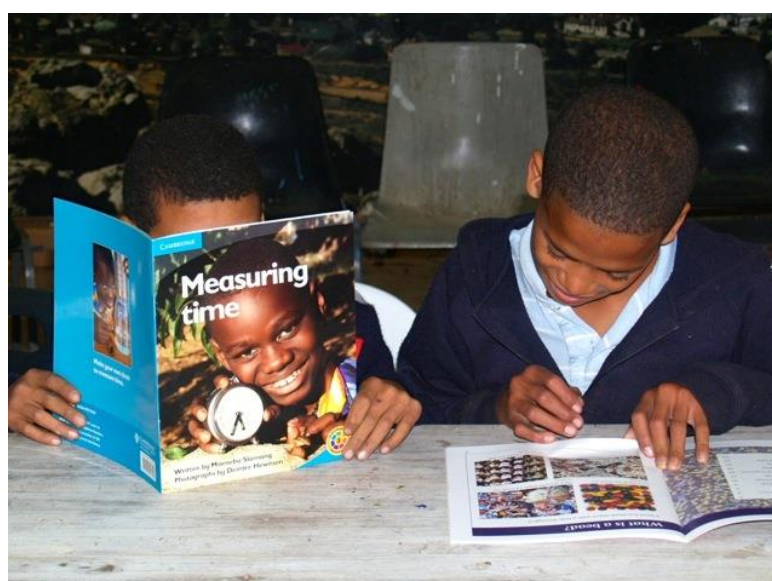
## THE BOOKS

We use a wide range of books some recommended by Jay Heale, our wonderful Book Editor, books from private collections, public libraries and kindly publishers. They include every kind of text from manuscripts to coffee table books. We have been astonished by the strong interest in non-fiction, as well as stories. Motivating children to read by illuminating the topic of the workshop creates a deep interest – a desire – to read that is unstoppable.

We are invariably impressed with the selection of South African and African books held by Biblionef at their offices in Pinelands. Books that we buy from this source enrich and enhance our own growing collection of books. They also kindly donate books were they can.

We have warm relations with Cambridge University Press, who have been most generous in donating books for specific topics. Their lovely Rainbow Reader series of boxed sets of graded readers (non-fiction as well as fiction) are just the right length for a child to read themselves at a workshop, are meticulously researched and edited and are interesting.

Rotary Newland's project Books for the World always welcome us to receive donated books and Bumble Books have recently donated books to us, with bundles of encouragement and approval of what we do too.



We are also fortunate to have input from the world of American publishing by school librarian, teacher (and judge of the prestigious Ann Izzard Award), Melissa Heckler. She brings to our attention books that would sadly never be found in local bookshops.





# THE NETWORK: WHO ARE WE?

## The Board

We have a strong board of Rotary Newlands Rotarians Roy Zazeraj (Chair), Kenny van Aardt and Mike Walwyn, also Director Lesley Beake and creative facilitator Anele Mhlahlo.

## Governance

Our Trust Secretary and Administration Manager, Rosemary Bangham has steered us safely through the governance responsibilities that are so time consuming – requiring patience and firmness in equal quantities.

We are now registered as an NPO with the Department of Social Development RSA and have our own bank account.

## The Team

We have a steady team of creative people on call when a workshop is planned. Names that particularly deserve mentioning in this context are Rosemary Bangham, Emily Hallinan, croc E moses, Anele Mhlahlo, Janine Van Rooy-Overmeyer (Blaq Pearl), Nadia Woodward, Buyiswa Ponti and Denzil Jehoma.

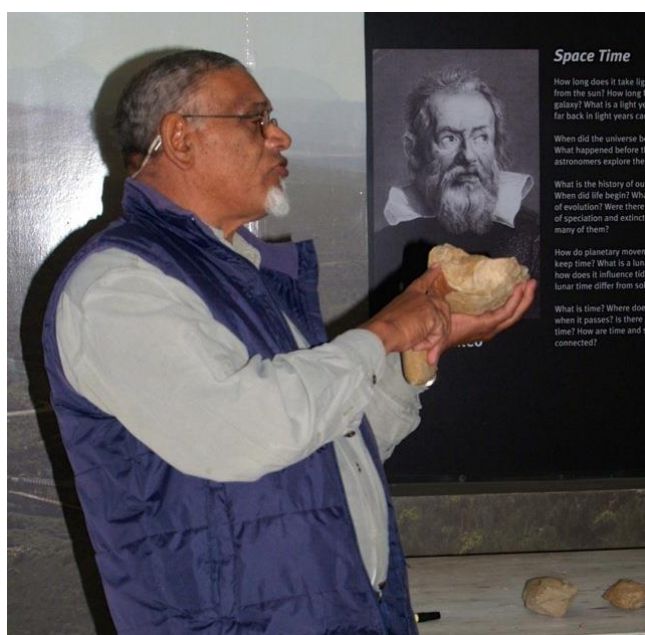
We work with an extensive team consisting of volunteers – often top people in their chosen fields - and professionals working for a reduced fee. Experts of all kinds come to share their knowledge of subjects that excite children, and lead them towards the books - non-fiction, as well as fiction - that we have available at our workshops, to be read in quiet times.

In Clanwilliam the team firmly included the three librarians of Clanwilliam Library; Emilene Jacobs, Liezel Koopman and Asanda Lobse, who attended every workshop and were an integral part of liaison with community and recruiting readers. We also worked closely with the management and staff of PGS Heritage who were an absolute pleasure to work with and who were the interface with The Big Project of



the year 2015 as part of the Clanwilliam Dam Community Project (more of that below). Staff of the Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project were firm supporters, as was Professor John Parkington of the Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town.

In Red Hill we are ably supported by the librarian, Lucia Marais, and her team, who allow us to use their large and well-resourced hall and put on book displays for the children to browse. Special mention should be made (again) of Buyiswa Ponti, who has reading activities of her own in Red Hill and who acts as community liaison and collector of children.





## Organisations We Work With

### Rotary Clubs

- Rotary Newlands
- Rotary Cape of Good Hope
- Rotary Stanford
- Rotary Skellefteå (comprised of four separate clubs)

### Reading & Related Organizations

- Assitej SA (International Theatre Organization)
- Biblionef
- Bookchat
- Book Dash
- Books for the World, a project of Rotary Newlands
- Bumble Books
- Cambridge University Press
- Centre for the Book (National Libraries)
- Children's Radio Foundation
- Enlighten Education Trust (Hermanus)
- FunDza Literacy Trust
- IBBY SA
- Jungle Theatre
- PRAESA and Nal'ibali
- Shikaya
- St George's Cathedral Singers
- Sustainability Institute (Stellenbosch)
- Up2Us

To quote Jean Williams, of Biblionef, we should: 'Do what we do best and *collaborate!*'



## Our Friends

Added to these more official connections are our friends. Some of these are donors – listed and thanked at the end of this report. More are just plain interested in what we are doing, lending support through kindnesses beyond counting and through their interest in what we do. We thank them.





## WHAT IS A WORKSHOP?

What is a workshop? ... How do we do it? Why do we do it?

If the word workshops makes you think of people sitting glumly in rows while somebody talks ... and talks, and talks, think again. A CBN workshop is not like that. Let's imagine you are between the ages of nine and twelve or (for older people) thirteen and seventeen and you are coming to one ...

It lasts for anything between an afternoon to four whole days and it happens at weekends or in school holidays. It is voluntary, but always full. Mostly there are 24 other children there. It is very busy and active and you never know quite what might happen. It is also, by the way, always free!

When you arrive, there is hot chocolate (juice in summer) and a snack. Midday there is a hot meal, so nobody has to worry about being hungry. There are activities to get everybody introduced and then the fun begins.



There might be a musician with a cello, and he might play Bach, which you have never heard before, but you like. Then he might jam a bit on the instrument and you might be the drummer with a stone and a rock gong. You might sing as well. There are guitars. Most people will dance.

There might be shadow puppets and a play that you help to write and perform with puppets that you made yourself. It might be a story about San people and you might also learn something about their lives and their stories while you are busy with your play.

Sometimes there are archaeologists telling stories of the past and a different time, or people who make maps of the mountains or who write books for teenagers. There might be people who make stories you can read on your cell phone and people who tell stories from the old days in Africa.





There might be song writing – and you are the songwriter! You might work with a famous slam poet and a brilliant violinist who listen to everything you say and let you write your own words to your own song. You paint and draw and make models and print with potatoes cut to look like animal tracks. You laugh a lot.

Once, part of the University of Cape Town Choir came to sing, and then teach, the Rainstorm song and you sang it with them. Once drummers from Senegal drummed up a storm of their own. Almost always there is the quiet voice of poet croc E mozes reminding us of the power of words.

Words are what CBN is really about. Reading them. Before and after, in between, under and above all the things we do, are stories and books, books and reading.

We read stories from all over the world, picture books and chapter books and read-on-your-own-when-you-are-grown-up books. We tell stories. We show you books you would never dream of and give you the key to whole worlds you have never heard of. We read.

And when you go home, we hope you read too.





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## WHAT'S ON OUR WEBSITE?

Our website needs a little time – and maybe a cup of coffee – and a few clicks to get started. Everything we are, and everything we have ever done is on our website. As with all our activities, it focuses on the children. The best link to click is:

- <http://www.childrensbook.co.za/workshops/reports>

Then browse around the site to find out who our friends are, see some examples of children's writing, read some great book recommendations and catch up with news.

Our Facebook page can be accessed on:

- <https://www.facebook.com/ChildrensBook/>

Nearly 700 people have liked us on Facebook so far – and our reach is always growing. We average about 45 visits a day to the website.



## LAST YEAR (2015)

We built on the work of the preceding two years to make our work focused and clearer. Workshops are what we do best and in 2015 we held a total of fifteen workshops in addition to three theatre visits sponsored by Assitej SA and Jungle Theatre. Our major project of the year gave us the chance to work on a project that stretched and challenged every aspect of CBN and which involved twelve workshops, some of them up to four days long, that included children in the Oliphants River Valley from pre-school to high school.

Other workshops were held with the children of Red Hill, as well as a surprise visit to the United Arab Emirates by invitation of the Sharjah Department of Culture, who had tracked us through our website. This one-off opportunity meant meeting and working with children from a very different culture and sharing stories, ideas and books. Six workshops were held, officially for 15 children on each occasion – but we were three-to-a-chair at most of them.

- <http://www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2015/05/05/cbn-invited-united-arab-emirates>

## Clanwilliam Dam Community Project

This has been fully documented on our website, with many articles and hundreds of photographs. The link to all of these is at:

- <http://www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2015/11/09/final-report-clanwilliam-dam-community-project-cbn>

We would like to thank the contract archaeologists of PGS Heritage who could not have been kinder and more helpful in facilitating the youth component of this Social Upliftment project. Professor John Parkington facilitated the process and Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project (CLLP) and Clanwilliam Library were integral to the success of the whole year's work.



## Red Hill Workshops – and flying!

We will always work with these children. They are part of the heart of CBN. This year they were included in a very special event. Rotary Clubs in Skellefteå, in northern Sweden, teamed with Johan Wikland, an intrepid pilot who flew his Moth biplane from North Cape in Norway to Cape Point in South Africa. A workshop preceded the plane landing at Stellenbosch Flying Club and one of our first workshop participants (from 2012) reached his dream to fly when he went up with Johan the following day. The Cape to Cape project and the Skellefteå Rotary Clubs together raised the sum of R235, 000.00 for CBN this year. We will be forever grateful.

- <http://www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2015/11/02/what-dreams-look>
- <http://www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2015/10/25/dreams-do-come-true-%E2%80%A6>

We also held a workshop for the Red Hill children at Simons Town library around the book 'The Possibilitree' documented on our website as follows:

- <http://www.childrensbook.co.za/news/2016/02/19/possibilitrees-red-hill-children>





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## Workshop & Event Register for 2015

Number of Children	Children Source and Location	Number of Days	Children x Days	Dates	Theme
23	Clanwilliam	2	46	Mar-15	Water (Rivers)
10	Red Hill/ Muizenberg	1	10	Mar-15	Warrior on Wheels
10	Red Hill/ Cape Town	1	10	Mar-15	Lion Boy
6	Clanwilliam	1	6	Apr-15	Rock Art
23	Clanwilliam	3	69	Apr-15	Land, Time People
20	Clanwilliam	1	20	Apr-15	FUNDZA essay writing
20	Clanwilliam	1	20	Apr-15	FUNDZA stories on mobile phones
22	Clanwilliam	1	22	May-15	School Visit - Stories of Yesterday
26	Clanwilliam	2	52	May-15	Tracks and Traces
21	Clanwilliam	1	21	Jun-15	Promo for teenagers
15	Sharjah	6	90	April-15	Friends
17	Clanwilliam	4	68	Jun-15	Time in the Valley
6	Clanwilliam	1	6	Jul-15	Impromptu visit!
24	Clanwilliam	4	96	Jul-15	Time in the Valley
17	Clanwilliam	1	17	Oct-15	Finale - Heritage Symposium
17	Red Hill/ Stellenbosch	1	17	Oct-15	Plane Landing
11	Red Hill/ Muizenberg	1	11	Dec-15	Butterfly Dreams
24	Red Hill	1	24	Feb-16	Possibilitree
<b>Total Number of Events</b>		<b>Total Number of Days of Event</b>	<b>Total Number of Children Reached</b>		
<b>18</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>605</b>		

## Governance Achievements

After a monumental effort, with thanks to Janey Ball of Rotary Newlands, we achieved our NPO status and amended our Letters of Authority to reflect our new Board of Trustees. This also meant that we could open our own bank account. Our very sincere thanks are due to Peter Ennis, treasurer of Newlands Rotary Club, who most kindly accepted and distributed funds into and from the Rotary account on our behalf during 2015.





## NEXT YEAR (2016)

We need to grow. While our focus is always on the quality of interaction each child receives, we need to reach more children and bring them books. Just as importantly, we need to reach the people who work with children every day – teachers and librarians – and inspire them to spread more words, read more books, excite more children. We can only do this cautiously, one step at a time, and we need to concentrate our fund-raising efforts to make doing this a reality. There are two ways we want to develop during 2016 using our workshops and website, as always, as a base from which to begin.

### Train the Champions

Working with librarians and teachers to increase their classroom skills in interacting with books and children – and bringing books to their attention that they may otherwise not see. We will begin work on that gradually, developing connections and resources as we go.

### Tool Boxes

We have been working on the toolbox concept for over a year and now have some real boxes to put ideas into. The aim of the project is to expand the reach of CBN by making our workshop programmes available to parents, teachers, librarians ... anybody who wants to encourage young people to read.

Each box will contain ideas, suggestions and activities as well as some practical advice about connecting children with books. Most importantly, it will contain books on a theme covering all our cultural activities – stories, books, music, drama, art, puppets...

### Who we will be working with ... and where

The CBN office has physically relocated to the Overberg and we have already established contacts with organizations we will be working with during 2016, including Enlighten Education in Hermanus, Stanford Rotary, the Butterfly Foundation ... the list grows every day. We are also discussing connections with the Sustainability Institute in Stellenbosch. It is going to be another roller coaster of a year!



# MONEY MATTERS

## Incoming

PGS Heritage*   R80,704.22
The American Story Tellers   R20,238.73
Book Chat   R13,600.00
Rotary Skellefteå   R234, 573.36
Emily Hallinan   R5,600.00
Individual Donations   R1650
<b>Total   R356,366.31</b>

\*PGS Heritage also covered a further amount of R48,031.53 to cover transport and accommodation costs.

March 23, 2015	Income - From PGSH Claim 1	R 4,818.01
April 24, 2015	Income - From PGSH Claim 2	R 15,787.00
May 4, 2015	Income - From PGSH Claim 1	R 220.00
May 28, 2015	Income - From PGSH Claim 3	R 4,063.01
June 22, 2015	Income - Donation from Melissa Heckler et Al, America	R 20,238.73
June 29, 2015	Income - Donation from Book Chat via Jay Heale	R 13,600.00
July 9, 2015	Income - PGSH Claim 4	R 24,096.78
July 23, 2015	Income - PGSH Claim 5	R 22,475.28
Oct. 29, 2015	Income - PGS Claim 6	R 9,244.14
Dec. 3, 2015	Income - Donation - Rotary Skelleftea	R 141,528.76
Jan. 19, 2016	Income - Rotary Skeleftea (Cape-to-Cape)	R 93,044.60
May 9, 2015	Income - Donation from Emily for Harddrive	R 1,600.00
May 21, 2015	Income - Country Hotels Donation - Andre Thirion	R 1,000.00
June 26, 2015	Income - Donation in cash from Margaret van Rooyen	R 200.00
June 29, 2015	Income - Donaton from Don and Heather Macallister	R 350.00
Sept. 2, 2015	Income - Emily Hallinan Donation	R 4,000.00
Oct. 24, 2015	Income – Dieter Reck cash donation @ Stellenbosch flight workshop	R 100.00



## Outgoing

Books | R5, 734.64  
 Operations | R106, 380.22  
 Workshops | R99,252.49  
**Total | R211,367.35**

Books - for CBN	R 2,946.47
Books - to give away	R 2,788.17
<b>total on books</b>	<b>R 5,734.64</b>
Operational - Office Supplies	R 3,994.55
Operational - Postage & Delivery	R 478.29
Operational - Communications	R 727.00
Operational - Website costs	R 1,892.00
Operational - Printing & Copies	R 1,236.08
Operational - Service Provider - Administration	R 93,377.34
Operational - Accounting Fees	R 3,314.96
Operational - Petty Cash	R 500.00
Operational - Transport	R 860.00
<b>total on operations</b>	<b>R 106,380.22</b>
Workshop - Facilitators	R 62,900.00
Workshop - Art Materials	R 4,900.22
Workshop - Catering	R 26,190.76
Workshop - Printing & Copies	R 681.51
Workshop - Transport	R 4,500.00
Workshop - Communications	R 80.00
<b>total on workshops</b>	<b>R 99,252.49</b>



# THANKS TO FRIENDS AND DONORS

## Our Thanks

We could do nothing without our friends and donors, the people who cheer us on from the sidelines, the ones who see the importance of reading in the educational, emotional and intellectual development of young people.

We thank, most sincerely:

Members of our board and our advisors

Rotary Newlands

Rotary Cape of Good Hope

## Financial Donors

Andre Thieron

Book Chat and the Brian Mitchell Trust who donated the funds remaining when, sadly, Bookchat ceased to publish.

Dieter Reck (of the Crankhandle Club)

Department of Water Affairs & Sanitation

Don and Heather Macallister

Cape-2-Cape

Emily Hallinan

Margaret van Rooyen

PGS Heritage

Rotary Skellefteå (consists of four Rotary clubs in the area)

The American Story Tellers



## Donations in Kind

Assitej – enabled us to take our children for two further theatre visits this year, Warrior on Wheels and Lion Boy. For both they provided the tickets and covered transport costs for which we are sincerely grateful.

Cambridge University Press – Books

Biblioneef – Books

Book Dash – Books

Books for the World – Books

Bumble Books – copies of the Possibilitree

Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project – use of classroom and facilities

Cuan Hahndiek – donation of paint, ceramic and materials for ochre painting activity

Ivan & Charlotte Webb – copies of the Possibilitree

Jay Heale – Books

Jungle Theatre – invited us and covered tickets and transport to their production of Butterfly Dreams, again, we were very grateful to be able to get children from Red Hill to this event.

Peter Ennis – handling our accounts through Rotary Newlands

Rotary Newlands

The late Richard Parsons – donation of International Rotary Project Usborne Illustrated Dictionaries

Spar, Clanwilliam – discount on food for children and facilitators



## Board of Trustees

Lesley Beake  
Anele Mhlahlo  
Roy Zazeraj (Chair)  
Mike Walwyn (Deputy Chair)  
Kenny van Aardt

## Contact Details

Telephone 082 6464 420 | PO Box 121, Stanford, 7210

Email [info@childrensbook.co.za](mailto:info@childrensbook.co.za) | Website [www.childrensbook.co.za](http://www.childrensbook.co.za)

## Banking Details

Account name | The Children's Book Network Trust  
Account number | 62570830458  
Branch name | FNB Tokai  
Branch code | 200409  
SWIFT code | FIRNZAJJXXX

**Registered Trust Name** | The Children's Book Network Trust

**NPO Number** | 163-927NPO



## LAST WORD

We watch with growing joy as children unfold in our workshops. They arrive, arms folded, eyes guarded, defensive. We give them a place to be safe in their imagination, to hope and to dream. As they create and listen, absorb and enjoy, they begin to relax. They begin to play with their own imagination.

When they leave, we hope they have changed – just a little. At any rate we know that the door to books and reading has been opened - just a little. The rest is up to them.

After the last workshop in our long series in Clanwilliam, one of the regular participants had a question.

‘Why did you bring CBN to Clanwilliam?’

‘Why do you think?’ we asked.

‘To make the children happy,’ was the immediate reply.

That should not only be a stated aim of what we do, but also something we strive for always.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR 2015

Children's Book Network's goal is to promote a love of reading to children who can read, but don't. We are not a basic literacy project, but one that develops a love of books and reading – one that excites children into reading through participation in workshops.

Our workshops last anything between one and four days, and offer children a safe space to play with words – to listen, discuss, debate, write and tell their own stories, draw, create, act and read themselves as well as hearing many stories and extracts from books (including non-fiction).

We have a high proportion of facilitators to children, working closely with local librarians and providing a strong base for individual and close supervision and sharing ensuring quality interactions with each child.

We display and publish as much of the children's work as possible on our website – see [www.childrensbook.co.za](http://www.childrensbook.co.za) where we also publish reports of all workshops and projects.

In 2015 we held a total of fifteen workshops in Clanwilliam, Red Hill and Sharjah. We also took children from Red Hill on three theatre trips. These events served a total of 605 children over 33 days of workshop and events.

We raised R356, 366.31 in direct financial donations and spent R211,367.35 on books, running workshops and operations.

In 2016 we intend to grow our reach through training champions and Tool Boxes but will also strive to maintain our quality interactions with children through our programme of workshops. We will also be consolidating our relationships with other organisations who would love our assistance with their own programmes. We will be concentrated mainly in the Overberg region of South Africa.

There are many people and organisations we are sincerely grateful to in helping us achieve our aims this year.

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