



EDUCATION



Overview of USAID/South Africa

More than two decades after the end of apartheid, the Government of South Africa continues to uphold the rights of all citizens and to invest heavily in the wellbeing of its people. South Africa plays a key economic and political role in Africa, but faces many challenges, including unemployment, HIV/AIDS, crime and corruption. USAID/South Africa programs seek to strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises, create employment, improve learning and job skills, improve the quality of basic education, combat gender-based violence, and promote HIV/AIDS care, prevention and treatment.

Education

South Africa has succeeded in providing nearly universal access to education; however, the country still faces enormous challenges in improving the quality of education. Despite a significant investment in education, approximately 50% of learners drop out before finishing secondary school and barely one in ten South African students obtain a university degree. Learners exiting the school system are not equipped with basic skills and core competencies necessary to succeed in the workplace, much less in a highly competitive global market.

The overall aim of the USAID/South Africa basic education program is to improve primary grade reading outcomes, with a focus on long-term impact and sustainability. USAID/South Africa works with the Department of Basic Education to design strategic reading interventions that are in line with the USAID Education Strategy and South African national policy and priorities. Interventions are firmly rooted in current research findings, both from Africa and internationally. USAID/South Africa supports activities that can be piloted, rigorously evaluated, and - if successful - scaled up by the Government of South Africa.

USAID/South Africa supports local South African organizations to implement innovative projects that work with district officials, principals, and teachers to improve the quality of language and literacy instruction. Projects also include engaging parents and community members to support the development of early grade reading skills through reading clubs, competitions, and other events. In addition, USAID/South Africa provides learning and teaching support materials in home languages and in English to thousands of schools across the country.

The USAID/South Africa education portfolio also includes a higher education project supporting improved pre-service teacher training, with a focus on strengthening foundation phase teaching and language resources in three African languages.

In addition to collaborating with the Government of South Africa, USAID/South Africa's resource partners include the ELMA Foundation, J.P. Morgan Foundation and DG Murray Trust.

PORTFOLIO 2015-2020

- Objective to improve primary grade reading outcomes in home languages and English First Additional Language
- Projects support innovative, scalable South African solutions to education challenges
- Focus on rigorous evaluation and research
- Public-private partnerships worth a total of \$10 million

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ACTIVITY NAME	ORGANIZATION	TIMEFRAME	TOTAL EST. COST	SUMMARY
Strengthening Teaching of Early Language and Literacy	Wordworks	2014-2016	\$1.1 million	This project improves the language and literacy skills of Grade R children by training and supporting all 3000 Grade R teachers in the Western Cape.
Partnership for Accelerated Progress in Early Grade Learning	Save the Children South Africa	2014-2019	\$2.6 million	The program aims to improve literacy outcomes in Grade 2 and 3 in the Free State by engaging district officials, principals, teachers and community members in supporting reading activities.
Strengthening Foundation Phase Teacher Education Program	University of Johannesburg	2014-2017	\$2.4 million	This project seeks to strengthen teacher education at the University of Johannesburg Soweto Campus and the University of Mpumalanga Siyabuswa Campus by increasing the quality of the teaching schools associated with each campus, providing academic support to undergraduates and establishing a Center for African Language Teaching.
Early Grade Reading Study II	University of the Witwatersrand	2015-2019	\$1.6 million	This project works in partnership with the Department of Basic Education to evaluate the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of interventions focused on improving the performance of Grade 1 and 2 learners in English First Additional Language. The study is conducted in Mpumalanga Province.
Teacher Assessment Resources for Monitoring and Improving Instruction for Foundation Phase	Human Science Research Council	2012-2019	\$6.4 million	This project provides teachers with an online assessment tool to help them more effectively address individual student learning needs in literacy. The tool is being integrated with the government's assessment training for teachers that is being rolled out in North West and Gauteng.
Story Powered Schools	Nal'ibali	2016-2019	\$8 million	This project will support reading clubs at schools, provide home language reading materials to classrooms, train teachers, parents and community members how to support reading, and organize school and community events celebrating reading.
Reading Support Project	Foundation for Professional Development	2016-2020	\$10.9 million	This project will improve the reading skills of primary grade learners by increasing the capacity of curriculum advisors and school management teams to support teachers. The project will also develop a comprehensive package of learning and teaching support materials to support high-quality language and literacy instruction.