



Shine
LITERACY

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

DIRECTOR'S REPORT MAURITA WEISSENBERG



Left to right: Katie Huston, Carol-Ann Foulis, Maurita Weissenberg, Julie Fischer, Kristen Thompson

IN MARCH LAST YEAR, EXACTLY A YEAR AGO, the board, finance manager and I found ourselves in a perfect storm of events, both internally and externally that forced us to take a long hard look at the future and what it may have in store for Shine.

After some research we chose to sunset the organisation and it has felt groundbreaking - to take about a year to strategically and mindfully prepare to close our doors. We also made a promise to leave behind, shining brightly, the work we set out to do 23 years ago. We were fortunate enough to have strong reserves that allowed us to do precisely what we felt was needed and to distribute remaining funds in line with our trust deed.

I am incredibly proud to have been part of the Sunset Team who consisted of Kristen Thompson, Katie Huston, Carol-Ann Foulis and our Finance Manager, Julie Fischer. I have learnt so much from them. The most strategic of thinkers and next level planners. Not only did they help us make the best decisions, but they were sensitive to the needs of all our stakeholders. The **Shining On Learning Briefs** form part of this report and are a testament to what they have done.





Left to right: Lolo Mini, Di Turpin, Kehiloe Ntsekhe, Graeme Auret, Maurita Weissenberg, Julie Fischer



My deepest gratitude to our Board of Trustees who met with us, monthly and, often, bi-monthly, providing our backbone and our compass.

Importantly, we also set about delivering our final year of programmatic support to 46 schools and I'd like to thank our programmatic team who took the opportunities that our sunsetting strategy gave and delivered a whole lot more than initially planned. They also chose to stay on for the whole of last year and work so hard to deliver much more than we originally planned because they were so invested in what we were doing.

This year has brought us closer to our partners and the wonderful thing about this sector is that it does attract the most incredible people. I think the literacy sector is truly a dynamic and warm community and I have felt honored to be part of it. 23 years ago, there were just a few of us operating in early literacy because the interventions all focused on improving the matric pass rate and not looking hard enough at some of the systemic issues that were causing the early drop out in high school. But thankfully that has changed, and I am hopeful that South Africa has started to really gear up some strategic solutions to providing a sound education system for our youth.



23 YEARS OF THANK YOU

Thank you to 2847 volunteers who supported Shine Literacy over the years.

While preparing to create our legacy site I spent a weekend going through all our photographs dating back to 2000. What a process that was for me. To look at literally thousands of photos of Shine volunteers busy creating what we liked to call 'golden moments' with their young Learning Partners. This work earned us an award from the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation because it is and was nation building. Thank you to the volunteers who shared our vision and without a doubt, changed futures. And the many who still do!

Thank you to all our donors. Without funding we could not have reached as many children and youth as we did and could not have created a sustainable way of sunsetting Shine. Our funders kept us accountable while sharing our vision and I will be forever grateful in particular for their steady support during the pandemic and being prepared to be flexible as we pivoted from @school to @home activities. I hope our sunsetting brief will show you how important it was for us to ensure that all reserves built up from you donations have been used in sustaining this important work.

May you all Shine On. Shine Bright. Shine Light,

Maurita Weissenberg

FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHINE LITERACY





CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER KEHILOE NTSEKHE

REFLECTING ON SHINE'S SUNSETTING JOURNEY, and its final year of programming fills me with both pride and gratitude. Shine was blessed with a remarkable team who navigated us through its sunset, including Shine's Trustees, leadership, its sunsetting consulting team, and the dedicated staff who served our beneficiaries alongside us as we intentionally closed. What started as a daunting endeavour a year ago has culminated in a profound legacy that will endure for years to come.

It has been one of the great honours in my life to work alongside Shine's trustees whose unwavering support and guidance have made this a successful journey and a joy. Thank you to Lolo Mini, Di Turpin, Graeme Auret, and Kathryn Torres for accompanying me on this journey and teaching me so much.

To our dedicated sunset team, I thank you for your strategic prowess, innovative ideas, and dedication to supporting our sunset and leaving our legacy.

To the Shine team, my deepest gratitude for your energy, commitment and tireless efforts to create a nation of readers. In our final year, we remained committed to fulfilling our programmatic commitments and more because of you. Your dedication exemplifies the spirit of Shine and made sure that our impact will continue for years to come.

Lastly, thank you to Maurita for your visionary leadership, big heart, and vulnerability. Your leadership has ensured that this sunset and 23 years of programming at Shine leave a lasting contribution to the literacy sector in South Africa. You have led both with grace and compassion that are examples for others and have made this journey a success.

The past year has been an exercise in courage, embracing the unknown, and boldly stepping forward with the intention to sustain our work without the hindrances of sustaining our organisation. We hope that Shine's example and its lessons learned will inspire others to dream big, be bold, and to innovate. As Shine closes, I am honoured to have been part of Shine's story – a story of resilience, innovation, and enduring commitment to building a nation of readers. As we close our doors, our legacy will shine on and illuminate the path to literacy for generations to come.

Kehiloe Ntsekhe
BOARD CHAIR

2023 SHINE LITERACY PROGRAMMES REPORT

WE ARE PLEASED TO REPORT THAT alongside our sunsetting process, we also completed the following in our programmes:

- We ran **Family Literacy Workshops** in eight schools for 483 caregivers and handed out 6,000 Bookdash story-books in their home language.
- We provided **Teacher Assistant training** for 310 youth at 25 schools. In addition, we provided **follow up training support** to 173 youth at 14 of our Youth4Literacy schools.
- We provided three **workshops** and **resources** for 102 people nationally who are interested in using our open source programme resources.
- We handed out quarterly **Bookdash storybooks**, stationary and **Little Issue magazines** to 9,461 children in 40 schools as part of Creating a Culture of Reading At Home.
- We handed out **Wordworks Time Packs** to 2,961 Grade R children and to 4,580 Grade One children in 17 Chapter schools.
- We ran a **final farewell meeting** with our ex Shine schools in the WC and donated **Jolly Phonic Resource Packs** and much needed **readers** to each Foundation Phase classroom to the value of one million rand.
- We provided two day **Chapter Training** for 40 people running Shine Chapters in the EC, WC, KZN and Gauteng and provided each Chapter with **literacy resources** to the value of R800 000.
- We gifted a 3 day **Master Training Workshop** by Vanessa Lowndes for five organisations namely Wordworks, The Learning Trust, Small Projects Foundation, The LifeMatters Foundation, Masinyusane and SHINE.

For more information about our 2023 programmes and partners, please read our **2023 End of Year Report**.





SHINE'S SUNSET

After 23 years of operation, **Shine Literacy made the bold decision to close, or “sunset,” in March 2024.** The decision was a strategic end to Shine’s long-term vision, mission, and years of programmatic work.

When we embarked on our sunseting journey, we asked: What is the “essence” of Shine? And what should we leave behind?

Shine’s goal has always been to help children learn to read with meaning and confidence. The Shine team identified the “magic of Shine” as quality relationships, a safe learning space, solid partnerships, high-quality learning resources, and practical training. These were the key elements that we wanted to see shine on beyond its sunset.

Once this was clear, our team had to figure out how to best support our partners and others to take this magic into the future.

- **How could Shine best equip its franchise partners to continue?**
- **How could Shine’s learning resources continue helping children indefinitely?**
- **How could Shine’s thought leadership and learnings continue to impact the literacy sector?**

These questions guided us as we developed a sunseting strategy to ensure this magic would shine on after our sunset.

SHINE'S SUNSETTING STRATEGY

We built our sunsetting strategy by starting with the end in mind, and working backwards to realise the vision. The strategy had six main goals, to achieve by March 2024:

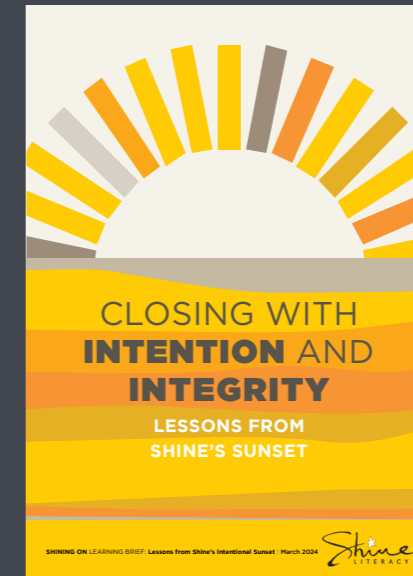
- 1. Strengthen our Chapters** to continue, strengthen, and grow their work in the schools and communities they support.
- 2. Open source our materials** for wider use so that they could continue helping children indefinitely.
- 3. Build awareness, skills, and knowledge** about key reading support skills in volunteers, paraprofessionals, and the people who support them.
- 4. Fulfil all of our existing programme, funder, and partner commitments** alongside the sunset process.
- 5. Sunset with integrity** to our values and ethos, and accountability to our team, partners, and funders and to all financial and government requirements.
- 6. Share our learnings** from this process with the sector, with honesty, integrity and courage, to share best practice and inspire others.

SHINE ON LEARNING BRIEF SERIES

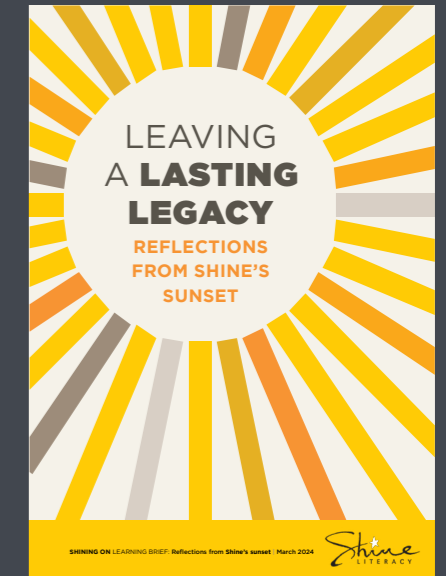
Shine's leadership and trustees wanted to present sunsetting as a legitimate strategic option, and to share the thinking and learning that emerged as it navigated uncharted waters. To this end, we developed the "Shining On Learning Brief Series" to capture lessons from our sunset.



From ours to everyone's: lessons from Shine's open-sourcing journey



Closing with intention and integrity: lessons from Shine's sunset



Leaving a lasting legacy: reflections from Shine's sunset

These briefs will live on Shine's legacy website, www.shineliteracy.org.za. This legacy site will be maintained indefinitely so that Shine's learnings can continue to shine on into the future.

SHINE PARTNERS 2023

WESTERN CAPE | 12 CENTRES

- The LifeMatters Foundation (7 Centres)
- Won Life
- Enlighten Trust
- Heart 2 Heart
- Good Hope Literacy
- Common Ground South Peninsula

KWAZULU-NATAL | 3 CENTRES

- Anchor of Hope (2 Centres)
- Liv Village

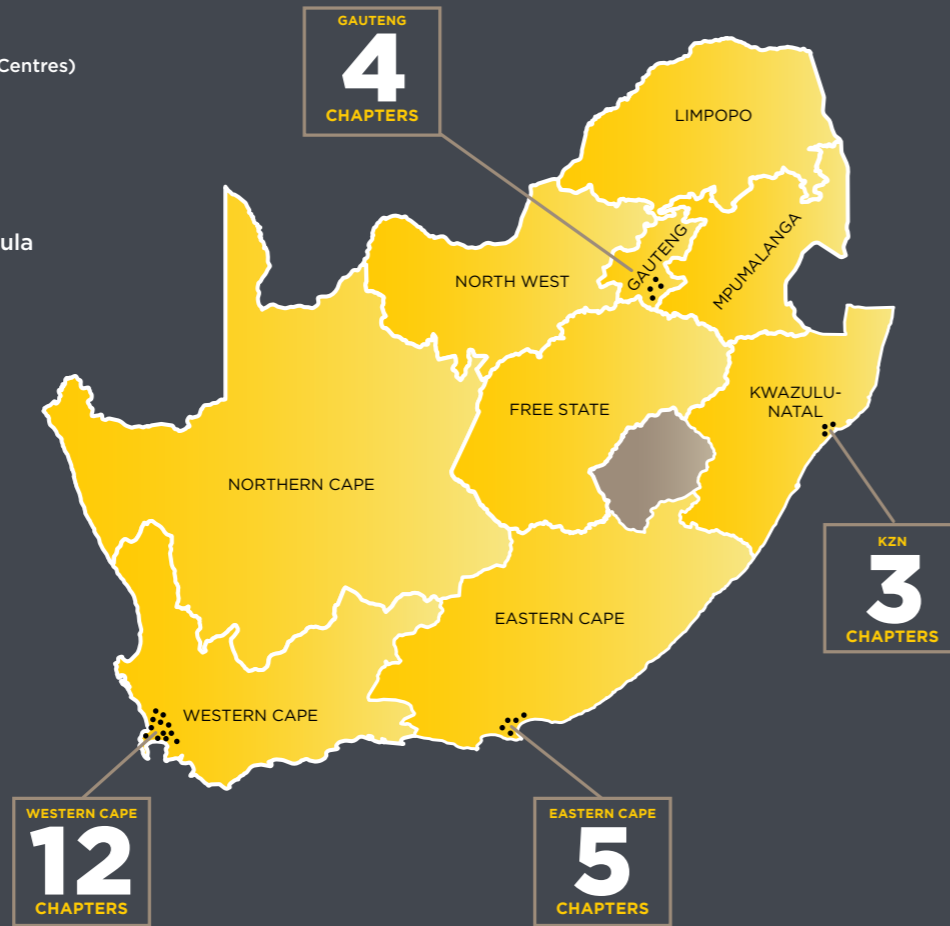
EASTERN CAPE | 5 CENTRES

- Masinyusane (4 Centres)
- Walmer Angels

GAUTENG | 4 CENTRES

- SHINE (2 Centres)
- Dare 2 Care
- WH Coetzer Primary

In addition to this we have Shine inspired programmes in the Western Cape. Namely St John's Primary, St Pauls Primary, Claremont Primary, and Prestwich Primary.



A NEW SUNRISE SHINE'S CHAPTERS SHINING ON

In addition to fulfilling our programmatic commitments in our final year of operation, we invested deeply in strengthening our franchise partners, the Shine Chapters that were implementing our Shine Literacy Hour model. This work began with detailed research to understand partners' specific and common needs. Based on the findings, we created a structured development programme, including an indaba where leaders and key staff from our 13 franchise partners came together to collectively plan for the future, an online fundraising training series, and financial and material donations.

Shine also ran three master trainings for 71 people who were interested in using its model and resources.

“ We are incredibly inspired by our Chapter partners who are modelling what I call 'active citizenship'. At-scale interventions are vital but just as importantly, our schools need the support of a positive community that surrounds it. We need children to feel connected, supported and encouraged. I believe our Shine Chapters are accomplishing this very important task - of actively engaging, supporting, encouraging, and connecting directly with children and schools. **”**

MAURITA WEISSENBERG
SHINE FOUNDER-DIRECTOR



2023 saw Shine preparing our 13 partners to run their 24 centres independently. We look forward to seeing them shine on into the future.

Please read more about our partners in our **2023 End of Year Report**.





SHINE LITERACY

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