



It starts with a story...

# Nal'ibali

## Annual Report



March 2016 to December 2016



Nal'ibali (isiXhosa for "here's the story") is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark children's potential through storytelling and reading. The key elements of the campaign are:

- ★ A high-visibility media campaign – spread across traditional and community print media, television and digital platforms – to inform, inspire and equip adults to engage with children using stories and reading
- ★ A national network of face-to-face mentoring, training and support to drive reading clubs and other reading-for-enjoyment activities in communities across the country
- ★ A library of multilingual stories and resources for parents, caregivers and volunteers to share with their children and reading clubs.

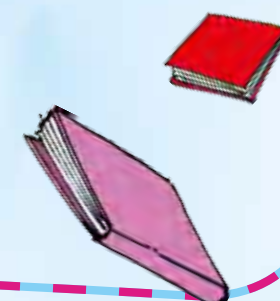
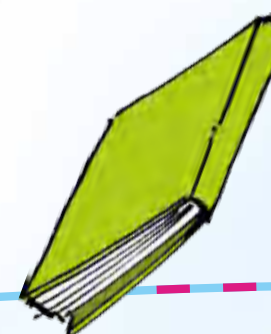
## Nal'ibali's Cultural Manifesto

- 1 Committed to infusing joy through passion, creativity and professionalism.
- 2 Committed to building trust and 100% participation.
- 3 Always with integrity and dignity.



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## Message from our Managing Director

South Africa's literacy crisis is something which affects us all, regardless of which sector of society you are from, and regardless of whether you have children in school or not.

Of course, if you have children of school-going age, then you might see the impacts of a poor reading culture more directly. Children who are unable to engage with learning materials, **forever playing catch up as they move, far too slowly, through the system.** Children who shy away from books as their experiences of them have never been positive. Teachers who lack the confidence to bring books to life for their classes through stories, who are not widely read and so are unable to critically engage with the curriculum, and encourage the children they teach to do the same.

The impacts of a society that does not read then bleed into the rest of our country. **Career choices are limited and so too is the nation's economic growth.** In 2011, a report for the National Planning Commission estimated that **our economy loses R38 billion each year because of illiteracy.**<sup>1</sup> The report goes on to link increases in crime, poverty, disenfranchisement and gender inequality to this root cause.

This is a problem that affects us all, and a problem that can only be changed if a significant enough portion of us decide that the status quo is unacceptable. Nal'ibali's army needs to grow! And so we have! **Thanks to the support of our generous funders, Board of Trustees, partners, and passionate team members,** for the first time, in 2016 we passed the **1 000 Reading Clubs** milestone. By the end of the year there were just under **40 000** children attending weekly reading clubs.

We then decided to throw the doors open to all adults who wanted to join the cause. We know that not everyone has the time to run a club each week, but that there are also many other ways to help nurture this movement. Within a couple of months, we had signed up and garnered the support of just over 2 051 **FUNda Leaders** –



ordinary people who pledged to make change happen in their own spaces, be it through donating books, providing a space for clubs to take place, or joining us at advocacy events.

Our big leap for the year occurred when we became the proud recipients of significant financial support from USAID Southern Africa to initiate the next phase of our campaign, **Story-Powered Schools: A South African Reading Revolution.** Through this grant we will now, over a period of three years, work with selected rural schools in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal to change their learners' future trajectory for the better – all through the power of strong and caring role models sharing power of books and stories.

So, call it enlightened self-interest, or call it concern for the other – there is a need for each of us to put our weight behind efforts, big and small, that help children become readers. The consequences if we do not do so are profound. Join us in taking the magic of stories to the next level!

Jade Jacobsohn

<sup>1</sup> van den Berg S, Taylor S, Gustaffson M, Spaull N, Armstrong P (2011) *Improving Education Quality in South Africa*. University of Stellenbosch Report for the National Planning Commission.

## Our theory of change

Nal'ibali is a behaviour change campaign that is working hard to get our nation reading.

We are up against some tough odds. Too many children in South Africa have too few opportunities to engage with reading role models who demonstrate to them that books are accessible, engaging and important. We know that we are operating in a space where most caregivers do

not consider reading a useful nor worthwhile activity to undertake on their own – never mind with a child. This undervaluing of reading extends too to many teachers whose work schedules have been so rigidly defined and outputs focused that the idea of taking up precious teaching time with storytelling and reading for enjoyment is frankly considered a waste of time, or a "nice to have".



Nal'ibali's theory of change was developed by our founding partners, the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) and the DG Murray Trust, and is based on three key principles:

### 1. Reading for pleasure:

Extensive research over the last three decades confirms that self-selected reading for pleasure results in profound growth in nearly all aspects of literacy.<sup>2</sup> Studies comparing groups of similarly disadvantaged children indicate that those provided with access to books consistently show higher levels of literacy development,<sup>3</sup> and multiple international and longitudinal studies have shown that when children read for pleasure, it has a greater effect on their educational achievement than their family's socio-economic status.<sup>4</sup>

### 2. Mother tongue based biliteracy:

Mother-tongue based biliteracy approaches promote either simultaneous or successive literacy learning, and support children's learning strengths, allowing literacy knowledge and skills to be built and an additional language like English to be learnt effectively from a base of understanding and meaningfulness.

### 3. Positive peer pressure and identity to drive behaviour change:

As social beings, our choices and behaviour are driven in large part by a search for purpose, status, identity and belonging. Public communications and campaigns that exert positive peer pressure, modelling the desired behaviour as being part of "the in-group", are more effective at changing behaviour than simply providing information, training people or invoking fear.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Krashen S (2015) *Free Voluntary Reading: The Most Powerful Tool We Have in Language Education*. Available at: [www.dgmt.co.za](http://www.dgmt.co.za); Clark C & Rumbold K (2006) *Reading for Pleasure: A Research Overview*. Available at: [www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk).

<sup>3</sup> Krashen SD (2004) *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research*. Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited.

<sup>4</sup> Kirsch I et al. (2002) *Reading for change: performance and engagement across countries. Results from PISA 2000*. Paris, France: OECD; see also Sullivan A & Brown M (2013) *Social Inequalities in Cognitive Scores at age 16: The Role of Reading*. Institute of Education: University of London.

<sup>5</sup> Rosenberg T (2011) *Join the Club: How Peer Pressure can Transform the World*. Place: WW Norton.





Since 2012 Nal'ibali has supported and inspired a powerful network of over **2 000 people** – ordinary people from every walk of life – to start reading clubs for children. These reading clubs are fun and informal spaces, where the children feel comfortable to communicate in any language. Where reading materials are available in the child's own home language, and activities that are carried out based on these materials help to break down the negative associations that many children have for written text. The clubs have a name, and that name is woven into the songs and stories shared in these spaces.

Through the activities of these clubs, children and adults are starting to form an identity around being a reader, and they invite others to participate. And so, the contagious and simple magic of stories starts to creep into schools, churches, homes, community centres, clinics and playgrounds across the country.

**So that is the theory, and the campaign is growing. The big question, of course, is whether Nal'ibali's particular "recipe" for igniting behaviour change is working?**

At face value the answer is simple – Yes! With nearly **40 000 children** attending Nal'ibali reading clubs, we know that these children now have spaces where a reading role model engages them around books and stories in languages they understand and in ways that are fun. However, we also know that a deeper analysis of our campaign, beyond the numbers, will give us a more nuanced interpretation of what we are achieving. This has been planned for 2017.

**1 271**  
reading clubs to date  
in  
**7** provinces



## Research

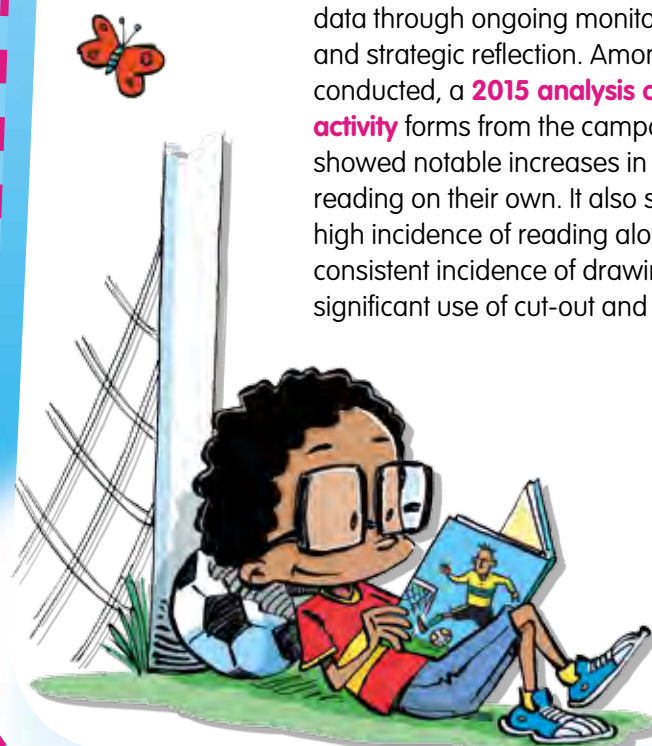
**The research currently underway to deepen our understanding of how our theory of change translates into reality includes:**



- ★ A randomized controlled trial to be conducted by NORC, an independent research organisation at the University of Chicago, as part of the **Story Powered Schools** project. The study will evaluate whether children in the project have attitudes, behaviours and reading skills that are significantly different from children in control schools. These findings will be available in 2019.
- ★ The inclusion of questions about exposure to the campaign, its resources and activities into the **2016–17 South African PIRLS** (Progress in International Reading Literature Study), which investigates reading comprehension ability against international standards for children in Grade 4 (although in South Africa and some other developing countries, it has been written in Grade 5). This data will help us to understand whether exposure to the campaign and its resources correlates against any other indicators of reading ability.

- ★ A set of questions about awareness of, exposure to, interaction with and participation in reading campaigns and projects, including the Nal'ibali campaign, have been added to the **National Survey into Books, Book Reading and Book Buying Behaviour**, a nationally representative survey conducted by the South African Book Development Council. The survey will give the first national snapshot of the degree to which ordinary South Africans are aware of the Nal'ibali campaign – in a sense, serving as a "pre-scale" baseline. It will assist us to develop our strategy and target resources to maximise impact as the campaign scales up. It will also be possible to conduct additional analyses to assess our impact.

- ★ Nal'ibali also collects programme performance data through ongoing monitoring, evaluation and strategic reflection. Amongst other studies conducted, a **2015 analysis of reading club activity** forms from the campaign's inception showed notable increases in writing and children reading on their own. It also showed sustained high incidence of reading aloud, relatively consistent incidence of drawing, and continued significant use of cut-out and keep books.





## 2016 highlights

2016 saw major achievements in Nal'ibali's mission to spread the power of stories and reading nationwide. Here are some key highlights:



With an **\$8m USAID** grant, **Story Powered Schools** will:  
**reach 720 primary schools**,  
**train around 14 640 adults**,  
**create 2 160 reading clubs**,  
**reach 172 000 children** in  
 classrooms, and  
**benefit 200 000 children**  
 through events and activities.



See  
page 14  
for full  
story

## FUNda LEADER

Network launched in June, and by the end of the year **enrolled 2 051 FUNda Leaders**, exceeding our sign-up target by

# 37%!

See  
page 15  
for full  
story

## WILL YOU BE SA'S NEXT STORY BOSSO?

Our annual national storytelling talent search saw  
**2 124 entries in 2016**,  
 a  
**42% increase**  
 from 2015.



## World Read Aloud Day

Thanks to parents, teachers, librarians, family members and hundreds of readers, we read aloud to

# 365 849

**children on one day in 2016**  
 more than double the figure for 2015  
 – an astounding record for Nal'ibali and South Africa!



A pilot of **Story Powered Homes** distributed **180 foldable, mobile hanging libraries**, packed with books and activities.



During **2016**, we established **182 new partnerships** to strengthen and expand the impact and reach of our campaign.

See  
page 17  
for more...



## 2016 highlights

### New content

We launched a new **Story Power Guide** series and a **read-aloud story collection** series in

**all 11 official languages.**

We **trained**

**2 717** people

and

**940**

**FUNda Leaders,** and produced two **FUNda Leader** training videos.

### Radio

We reached an audience of **7.16 million people** with weekly audio stories through our partnership with SABC Education!



### Public relations

**R7 780 214 of free media coverage** – thanks largely to the SABC around **World Read Aloud Day**, and our media partner **Times Media** who secured us **R5 500 357 in advertorial** and **R2 204 477 in editorial cover.**

**74** new employees

joined Nal'ibali to help run **Story Powered Schools** and boost our Head Office staff complement.





# Community Work Programme

The Community Work Programme (CWP) is a government initiative, housed in the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG).

Participants receive a state stipend to do part-time useful work in communities, offering an economic safety net for thousands of unemployed people and developing skills through work experience and training.

In the CWP, an estimated **10 000 participants** across the country work in the education sector, at schools and educare centres, where they carry out tasks like cleaning, maintenance, child minding and cooking. Few have received formal training on how to run exciting, educational activities for children – and that's where Nal'ibali comes in!

Under the auspices of a broader agreement between our funding partner the DG Murray Trust and DCoG, Nal'ibali has launched partnerships with the CWP in the Free State and the Western Cape.

"We need to change reading behaviour in the home. We speak to parents about it at ECD centre meetings. Nal'ibali produces newspaper supplements filled with children's stories. We cut them out and put them in the children's backpacks to take home. People don't have much access to books here."

Nancy Tsotetsi,  
CWP,  
Makholokweng



In the Free State, in partnership with the Lima Rural Development Foundation, we have trained a total of **369 CWP participants** and **14 CWP coordinators** to run Nal'ibali "story play" sessions in partnership with educare centres. The partnership is in five municipalities of the Thabo Mofutsanyane District. Launched in 2015, this year the project has a total of **175 active CWP participants** running Nal'ibali "story-play" in **three municipalities** and reaching **3 942 children** in **86 ECDs**. A total of **175 participants and coordinators** in two more municipalities are still setting up their story play sessions with local ECD centres, hence numbers of children reached will be increasing **in the coming months**.

In the Western Cape, in partnership with Die Stigting vir Bemagtiging deur Afrikaans (SBA) and Lima, we have trained **265 CWP participants** and **seven coordinators** to launch reading groups at educare centres and schools in **four municipalities**. By the end of 2016, **123 participants** were running regular reading sessions with **2 961 children in 65 schools and 11 ECDs**. A portion of 98 participants from the 265 trained will be launching more reading groups in 2017.

For many people who enter the CWP with few formal skills, the training and work experience offered can become the **first steps on a career path in ECD or education**. Two coordinators from Free State were promoted to Head of Coordinator positions and five facilitators in Western Cape have been promoted to more senior fulltime positions within the CWP.



**Malifu Moloi** is the CWP coordinator for the Nal'ibali programme in Vrede, a small Free State town. Her parents died when she was in her teens, leaving no money behind for a tertiary education, and Malifu struggled to find a job in Vrede, where youth unemployment tops 34%.

Four years ago, she joined the CWP, and was soon leading a group of 25 participants cleaning local ECD centres: **"I always knew I wanted to work with people, but Nal'ibali gave me direction. After the first day of their Story Play training in 2014, I knew it was for me. This was fun! We perform the story with the kids, we sing, we engage their imagination."**

Malifu has noted a change in her CWP team as well – the cleaners-turned-Nal'ibali storytellers: **"They are different now, this work is important. We are empowering children. I would rather make a child smile than pick up a broom and sweep the floor."**



**"We see it in the reports of the children who attended last year – they are doing better than the others. But, it's about more than literacy. We had some very shy children here. During Nal'ibali Story Play, they forgot to be shy and just joined in the fun."**

Jessie Sigasa, ECD centre head





## Some words from the DG Murray Trust

Stellenbosch researchers have projected that our national GDP would be 25% higher if we had a fully literate nation.

What an opportunity! The ability to read is a crucial make-or-break for our country. The key, it seems, is to ensure that all children are reading well by Grade 4 – when they're about ten years of age. If they were able to read well, there would be far fewer school drop-outs, higher quality Grade 12 results and much better outcomes from vocational training institutions and universities.

The lifetime prospects of a baby born today – and collectively, the future of our country – will be decided by what we do over the next decade. Starting today, not only when that child goes school.

Teachers have a crucial role to play in shaping the foundations of literacy and numeracy. But they can only work with the material they've been given. What gives teachers powerful material to work with is books in the home, parents who have told stories and read to their children from birth, and children with great vocabularies who enter school loving stories and books. That's the material that teachers can use to develop a reading nation.

We need to learn from countries like India and the United Kingdom, which have mobilised massive national efforts to create a culture of reading and ensured that children and young people have access to books and other fascinating reading resources.



These are the goals of Nal'ibali, and the reasons why the DG Murray Trust has made a long-term investment in it. But we couldn't sustain the effort at scale for long enough and with sufficient intensity without other partners – government, business, civil society and other funders. That is why we helped found the Nal'ibali Trust as a stand-alone entity, which everyone can feel belongs to them.

Within just four years, Nal'ibali is an established national programme that excites children, parents and teachers. It has great momentum – great brand equity, great media and great community programmes. Let's put our efforts behind initiatives that work. Be part of helping Nal'ibali achieve its mission – because it's a mission that none of us can ignore.

David Harrison, CEO of DG Murray Trust and a Nal'ibali Trust Board member

## Message from USAID

Reading exposes us to new ideas, helps us better understand the world, let's us see someone else's perspective, and sparks our imagination.

Early grade reading competency is critical for continued retention in school and success in future grades, which is why one of USAID's biggest education priorities here in South Africa, and around the world, is improving the reading skills of primary grade learners. Children who are not good readers at the primary level are on a trajectory of limited educational progress and therefore limited economic and developmental opportunity.

USAID is proud to support Nal'ibali, an organisation with many exciting activities aimed at encouraging South Africa's children to read more. I would like to congratulate them on their success in reaching more than 40 000 children through over 1 200 reading clubs in seven provinces.

Through our partnership with Nal'ibali and the Department of Basic Education on the Story Powered Schools Project, we will put stories at the heart of schools across KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. The 720 participating Story Powered Schools will receive training and support from Nal'ibali Story Sparkers to enable them to develop and sustain a culture of reading for enjoyment.

"Nal'ibali has impressed us with their world-class reading materials, extensive mass media campaign, and mentoring, training and support for reading clubs and events across the country."

This project will not only show children new ways to experience books and stories, but also demonstrate to teachers how motivation, confidence, writing and linking language to children's real-life experiences through reading for pleasure can support curriculum objectives and increase children's literacy development and school success.

Together with Nal'ibali, my USAID colleagues and I are proud to advance a culture of reading in South Africa, and we hope our collaboration will help spark a "reading revolution" across the country.

Alonzo J. Wind, USAID/Southern Africa Acting Mission Director







## A South African Reading Revolution

2016 saw a major milestone for Nal'ibali with the launch of **Story Powered Schools: A South African Reading Revolution**, in partnership with USAID. Focusing on nurturing a love of reading for joy in English and home languages to spark children's potential and unlock their school learning, this exciting, ambitious initiative will extend our reach in rural areas in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

**Story Powered Schools** is endorsed by the Department of Education, and will roll out in Grade R-4 classrooms in 720 primary schools over three years. Nal'ibali will provide special trainings, regular site visits and mentorship, as well as books, stories and other literacy materials in English and other home languages, for school staff and community volunteers.

These adults will be helped to establish after school reading clubs that allow children from other grades to enjoy reading activities and reap the benefits. Schools and their surrounding communities will be encouraged to get involved in other literacy events and competitions run by Nal'ibali at national and provincial levels.



"Research has shown a direct link between reading for pleasure and children's school success. We are excited to be putting stories into the hearts of the classrooms that need them most."

Jade Jacobsohn,  
Nal'ibali Managing Director



# FUNda LEADER



## The FUNda Leader Network

The **FUNda Leader** Network was born out of the consistent demand from people wanting to be trained on how to start and maintain reading clubs.

### FUNda Leaders:

- ★ Are adults who care about and respect children
- ★ Want to help children learn and become literate through fun and relaxed interaction with stories
- ★ Are willing to be reading role models in their communities
- ★ Are eager to share their storytelling and reading abilities with others.



By providing basic training tools, the **FUNda Leader** Network is Nal'ibali's "light touch" model where people can join our reading revolution and learn how to become literacy champions, in their own way.

In the training sessions, **FUNda Leaders** learn about the Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign and our vision. They discover what motivates children to read, different activities to encourage this, and how to implement them. They are shown how adults are good reading role models for children, through the demonstration of what a reading club is and to how to facilitate reading club sessions.

Through guided interactions, **FUNda Leaders** learn about the benefits of different languages and literacy activities, in places other than physical reading clubs. They are also taught where to get books and other resources suitable for sharing with children. Most importantly, **FUNda Leaders** learn how to get support and motivation to promote reading, so that they too can support and motivate people to read.





## Message from the Board



I am so proud of the achievements and exponential growth of the Nal'ibali campaign in 2016.

Being part of the literacy network in South Africa, I am acutely aware of the dangers we face as a nation with potential illiteracy and it is both refreshing and encouraging to see how Nal'ibali continues to make a difference in children's lives and to change the shape of South Africa's future.

The campaign has really gained traction since it started in 2012, and its heightened visibility is evident through their events, community programmes and media presence. It has been a pleasure to observe the progress.



I would like to congratulate the dedicated Nal'ibali team on the achievements of the past year, and to warmly welcome all new staff members. My support goes to everyone at Nal'ibali, the growing network of FUNda Leaders, and our partners for their valued contribution to this important cause.

*Palesa Morudu, co-owner of Clarity Editorial, Managing Director of Cover2Cover and Nal'ibali Trust Board member*



## Partners

**A heartfelt thank you to all of our partners – we couldn't do what we do without your support!**

Effective partnerships and collaboration are critical for expanding our reach and deepening our collective impact on literacy, by rooting reading-for-enjoyment practices into the daily lives of children, their caregivers and communities.

In 2016 we embarked on a pilot with Pick n Pay where we inserted specially developed bilingual story booklets into selected editions of *Fresh Living* magazine, giving the campaign added visibility.

### Corporate partners

- ★ Jet
- ★ Boxer
- ★ Pick n Pay
- ★ Ackermans
- ★ SABC Education
- ★ South African Booksellers Association
- ★ Cape Town Partnership

### Media partners

- ★ South African Post Office
- ★ Big School Enterprises
- ★ Jacana Media
- ★ Cambridge University Press
- ★ New Africa Books
- ★ PEN SA
- ★ Rogue Works
- ★ Moving Picture Books
- ★ Times Media Limited



We also embarked on a pilot with Boxer stores where we dispensed specially developed bilingual story booklets and posters at points of sale in selected stores in the Eastern Cape.

We entered a pilot partnership with the South African Post Office, who deliver **3 100 Nal'ibali reading supplements** free of charge to **8 Post Offices** in Limpopo every second week. The supplements are collected by various reading clubs and copies are also dispensed to the public via participating post offices.

### Programme partners

- ★ Department of Basic Education
- ★ Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
- ★ Lima Rural Development Foundation
- ★ LoveLife (Uitenhage)
- ★ Rotary International
- ★ General Motors South Africa Foundation
- ★ Harare Library, Khayelitsha
- ★ Project Read Grahamstown
- ★ The Gauteng Department of Sport, Arts, Culture Provincial Library Services
- ★ The Family Literacy Project
- ★ ORT SA (part of World ORT)
- ★ Persona Doll Training
- ★ The South African Education and Environment Project (SAEP)
- ★ The Shine Centre
- ★ Wordworks
- ★ Centre for the Book
- ★ The FunDza Literacy Trust
- ★ Book Dash
- ★ Biblionef

### Initiating and funding partners

- ★ The DG Murray Trust
- ★ United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- ★ The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA)
- ★ HCI
- ★ Volkswagen Community Trust
- ★ Ponahalo
- ★ Varsity College





## Nal'ibali in numbers

Since our launch in 2012, Nal'ibali has grown rapidly as the figures below show:

**338 155** books

and

**21.1 million**

supplements distributed

**2.7 million** to reading clubs  
and **18.5 million** in  
newspapers



**1 271**

reading clubs in

**7** provinces

**8 906** people

trained at

**332** training  
events

**2 051**

FUNDa leaders  
joined the network

**514**

CWP participants  
trained

**39 425**

children reached  
directly

**73** new stories,

**314** translations,

**118** supplement  
editions in **6** languages,

**1 794** radio stories  
in **12** languages



## Financial statements

The Nal'ibali Trust

(Registration number IT547/2016)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016

### Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2016

Figures in Rand

2016

#### Assets

##### Non-Current Assets

Property, plant and equipment

396 688

##### Current Assets

Trade and other receivables

28 933

Cash and cash equivalents

4 201 819

4 230 752

#### Total Assets

**4 627 440**

#### Equity and Liabilities

##### Equity

Trust capital

1 000

Accumulated surplus

62 103

**63 103**

##### Liabilities

##### Current Liabilities

Trade and other payables

1 802 191

Other financial liabilities

302 462

Deferred income

2 459 684

**4 564 337**

#### Total Equity and Liabilities

**4 627 440**

### Statement of Comprehensive Income

Figures in Rand

2016

Revenue

18 279 059

Operating expenses

(18 279 059)

#### Operating surplus

-

Investment revenue

62 103

#### Surplus for the year

**62 103**

Other comprehensive income

-

#### Total comprehensive income for the year

**62 103**





It starts with a story...

## Get in touch!

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**Illustrations:** Rico

**Photographs:** Nal'ibali

**Project manager:** Vaun Cornell

**Auditors:** Grant Thornton Cape Inc

**Contact us** by calling our call centre on **02 11 80 40 80**,  
or in any of these ways:



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