

Annual Report 2025



Introduction



In 2025, Siyawela implemented a variety of programmes as part of our *Learning Schools Initiative (LSI)* in primary schools in the Eastern- and Northern Cape provinces.

These programmes, which focused on improving learners' literacy and numeracy, enhancing teachers' pedagogy and wellbeing, and empowering local community members, were implemented in partnership with:

- Cookhouse Wind Farm Community Trust (CWFCT); and
- Renewable Energy Investment South Africa (REISA).

The pages that follow, showcase our programmes' key impacts and achievements for 2025.

LSI in the Eastern Cape

Literacy and Numeracy Support for Foundation Phase

Since Siyawela first partnered with the Cookhouse Wind Farm Community Trust (CWFCT) in 2015, a variety of LSI programmes have been implemented in 15 participating schools in Adelaide, Bedford, Cookhouse and Somerset East. As in 2024, we were contracted to implement two programmes as part of the LSI in 2025:

- *Education Assistant Programme*
- *Professional Development Programme*

1 Education Assistant Programme

15

Community members trained and equipped to be EAs

In the *Education Assistant Programme*, selected community members are trained to assist Foundation Phase teachers in the classroom by helping with day-to-day tasks, working with learners who need additional assistance and facilitating small-group activities. In addition to providing classroom support, the education assistants (EAs) earn a stipend, gain valuable work experience and increase their employability.

Programme Activities in 2025

- All 15 EAs from the close of 2024 were re-appointed to work in 29 participating Foundation Phase classes in 2025.
- Each EA attended 11 full-day workshop sessions which focused on providing literacy and numeracy support, administering and marking benchmark assessments, professional conduct, and personal wellbeing.
- EAs supported Foundation Phase teachers on their respective schools' Maths Days.
- A total of 600 benchmark assessments were administered across the 15 schools and EAs were an integral part of this process.
- EAs encouraged learners to participate in classroom activities, which helped to improve learners' behaviour, focus and academic performance.
- EAs provided daily assistance in the classroom and helped teachers to manage large classes more effectively.
- Siyawela facilitators provided ongoing mentoring and support to EAs, encouraging them in their work at the schools.





Education Assistant Workshops

LSI in the Eastern Cape

Literacy and Numeracy Support for Foundation Phase

Education Assistant Programme – Benchmark Assessments

Two rounds of benchmark assessments were administered in 2025 – in February and October. These assessments helped us to track learner progress and tailor programme content so that we could provide learners with the academic support they needed.

600

Benchmark
assessments
administered

Details of Benchmark Assessments

- 300 Grade 3 learners (20 per school) completed standardised assessments in February, and again in October – providing helpful data to gauge learner progress during the year.
- Key assessment areas were:
 - literacy (word recognition, sentence reading and comprehension); and
 - numeracy (number recognition, counting, basic arithmetic, problem-solving and maths reasoning).

Achievements and Findings

- Implementing the *LSI* over two consecutive years, has shown strong results.
 - The overall improvement in learner performance average was 17%, from February to October – a significant increase on the 7% improvement achieved in the same period in 2024.
 - In 13 of the 15 schools, at least 70% of learners improved their results – also up from 2024 (8 of the 15 schools).
- The data showed that learners still need support in:
 - mental maths activities (counting skills);
 - addition and subtraction; and
 - word sums (stronger literacy and analytical skills).

In 6 of the 15
schools

100%

of learners improved
their results

"I enjoyed discovering my own learning style. This also helped me to better understand and support my learners."

Education Assistant



2025 LSI Impact Update

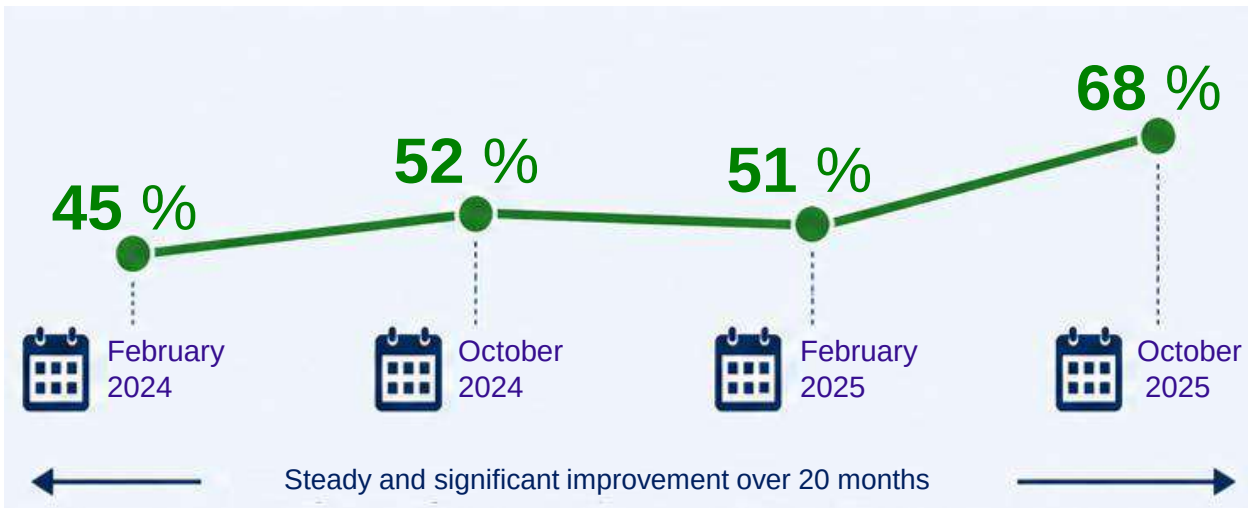
Exceptional Learner Gains



13 of 15
schools met the target of 70% of
learners improving their
performance in 2025



In six schools,
100%
of learners improved
their results



Programme Targets for 2025



15 education assistants trained and deployed



106 teachers enrolled

Target: 75



96.7% EAs' average
workshop attendance

Target: 100%



73.6% teachers' average
workshop attendance

Target: 80%



LSI in the Eastern Cape

Literacy and Numeracy Support for Foundation Phase

2 Professional Development Programme

The *Professional Development Programme* is designed to equip Foundation Phase teachers with the skills and resources necessary to enhance their teaching of maths and literacy. By supporting teachers, the programme also aims improve learners' academic performance.

Programme Activities in 2025

- Across the four towns, a total of 106 Foundation Phase teachers participated in 31 afternoon workshops sessions.
- The interactive workshop covered topics such as:
 - personal growth;
 - SACE registration;
 - teaching 'unplugged' coding and robotics using bottle tops and egg trays;
 - using finger puppets to enhance storytelling and cultivate a love for reading;
 - using the VARK model to accommodate different learning styles;
 - using the CUBE method to simplify word sums;
 - strategies for teaching money, number bonds and expanded notation;
 - addressing reading barriers; and
 - preparing for Maths Day.
- Teachers appreciated learning about various teaching strategies and receiving resources to use in their classrooms.
- Siyawela facilitators visited teachers in their classrooms, providing on-site support and mentoring.
- Teachers were excited about hosting Maths Days, saying that it helped to make maths fun for learners.
- A professional highlight for teachers, was receiving their SACE-accredited certificates for participating in the programme.

"All the booklets that we received, are neatly done and it is so practical. It will help us with activities in our classes.

The demonstrations to present it in different ways, were just as helpful."

Professional Development Participant





31

Workshops
facilitated

106

Teachers
equipped

Professional Development Workshops

LSI in the Eastern Cape

Literacy and Numeracy Support for Foundation Phase

Professional Development Programme – Maths Days

The Maths Days held at each school in the third term, were a highlight of the LSI in 2025. Designed to make mathematics interactive, enjoyable and accessible for Foundation Phase learners, each Maths Day comprised 15 different 'stations', set up with game-based activities for learners to complete.

- 'Stations' featured games and brain teasers (e.g. Bingo, UNO, tangrams and puzzles) and practical skills activities (e.g. building 2D and 3D shapes, practising measurements).
- Teachers and EAs acted as facilitators at each 'station', guiding learners through the rules and concepts.

"After our Maths Day, learners became more eager to do maths after seeing how much fun it could be."

Professional Development Participant

"I loved the idea of the different work stations with different activities; learners will learn to problem-solve."

Professional Development Participant

- Teachers, EAs and learners thoroughly enjoyed the Maths Days which helped to:
 - identify where learners might need additional support;
 - spark learners' enthusiasm for maths;
 - break through language barriers; and
 - encourage collaborative working between learners.
- Inspired by the positive impact of Maths Days, a number of schools also decided to host Literacy Days, which aimed to help learners improve their vocabulary and phonemic awareness.





Maths Day Fun





LSI in the Northern Cape

Siyawela has partnered with Renewable Energy Investments South Africa (REISA) since 2018, to implement empowering programmes in the Northern Cape. In 2025 our *LSI*, implemented in the same three primary schools as in 2022-2024, comprised three programmes:

- *NeuroNet Learning*
- *Six Bricks Learning Support*
- *Professional Development Programme*

709

Learners
benefitted from
NeuroNet

"Seeing a boy who could not write, finally decide to write in his book, due to a the EA's patience and encouragement, was a golden moment for me."

Foundation Phase Teacher

1 **NeuroNet Learning**

The *NeuroNet Learning* programme uses movement-based learning to help learners develop fluency in reading, mathematics and handwriting skills.

Programme Activities in 2025

- Six community members were appointed and trained as *NeuroNet* assistants to facilitate *NeuroNet* sessions with Grade R and Grade 1. An additional community member was appointed as an admin assistant.
- Assistants attended 11 training workshops which focused on preparation for facilitation of *NeuroNet* sessions and administering benchmark assessments, as well as personal wellbeing and financial literacy.
- Siyawela facilitators conducted school visits to observe assistants as they facilitated *NeuroNet* sessions, audit assistants' *NeuroNet* equipment and provide constructive feedback on assistants' facilitation skills.
- **164** learners completed benchmark assessments in February and October, in order to measure learners' growth in literacy and numeracy skills.
 - 86% of these learners achieved an improvement of 20% or more in their literacy and numeracy results.
- Teachers observed that participating learners became more confident, showed improved motor skills, and developed better handwriting and counting abilities.

1740

NeuroNet sessions
facilitated



“A left-handed learner who previously wrote from right to left, began writing correctly after starting NeuroNet.”

Foundation Phase Teacher

NeuroNet Learning



LSI in the Northern Cape

2

Six-Bricks Learning Support Programme

The *Six-Bricks Learning Support Programme* is a play-based initiative designed by the Lego® Foundation to enhance learners' foundational skills such as memory, language, problem-solving and fine-motor coordination. The play-based approach also encourages a high level of enthusiasm for learning.

Programme Activities in 2025

- 14 community members were appointed and trained as *Six-Bricks* assistants (SBAs) to facilitate *Six-Bricks Learning Support* sessions with 1043 learners.
- SBAs attended 14 on-site training sessions and online support sessions which focused on:
 - facilitating *Six-Bricks* sessions with Grade 2 learners, and Coding and Robotics sessions with Grade 3s;
 - building strong professional relationships with teachers and peers; and
 - personal development (goal-setting and personal wellbeing).
- SBAs facilitated 42 *Six-Bricks* sessions with 516 Grade 2 learners.
 - Learners used Duplo® bricks to complete fun activities such as "The Colour Challenge" (sorting and connecting bricks), "Tricky Tower" (collaborative building) and storytelling sessions where learners built creatures inspired by stories like *Anna the Elephant*.
- SBAs facilitated 42 Coding sessions with 527 Grade 3 learners.
 - Learners were introduced to Coding and Robotics concepts using "unplugged" resources (e.g. egg trays and bottle tops). They practiced grid-based thinking, coordinates, algorithms and debugging through activities such as "Egg Tray Coding Maze", and creating and performing their own songs or action rhymes.
- SBAs also assisted teachers with administrative tasks, helped learners to catch up on key concepts, and promoted learner wellbeing by encouraging active participation in classroom activities.
- Siyawela facilitators observed SBAs as they facilitated *Six-Bricks* and Coding sessions, provided feedback and audited programme resources.

"The Grade 3 learners really enjoyed the Algorithm Song, and they still sing it now."

Six-Bricks Assistant

672

Six Bricks sessions
facilitated with
Grade 2 learners

Six Bricks

630

Coding sessions
facilitated with
Grade 3 learners

“Unplugged” Coding



LSI in the Northern Cape

3

Professional Development Programme

The *Professional Development Programme* aims to grow teachers' professional capacity through informative training workshops held at their respective schools.

The programme is designed to:

- enhance teachers' pedagogical skills;
- introduce the latest technological teaching tools; and
- help teachers meet their SACE professional development requirements.

Programme Activities in 2025

- 40 teachers participated in a series of 15 afternoon workshops (5 sessions per school).
- Topics addressed in workshops, included the following.
 - Coding and Robotics (using 'unplugged' resources to teach key concepts)
 - The RUCSAC method to help learners with word sums
 - Strategies to improve early reading fluency
 - Planning and preparing for a Maths Day
 - AI tools that could support classroom management
 - Personal development and wellbeing
 - Creating and updating SACE portfolios
- Teachers received certificates to acknowledge their commitment to the programme, and which provide additional evidence for their SACE portfolio of evidence.

"I can use the RUCSAC method in my classroom, because it will help learners solve maths problems step-by-step."

Professional Development Participant

"What I found valuable in the workshops, is that I learnt a lot about myself. This will be useful to focus on areas which I need to develop."

Professional Development Participant

Contact Us



Community members, teachers and parents who have participated in our programmes, all attest to the positive impact of Siyawela's training interventions.

Should you be interested partnering with us to implement in any of our programmes, please visit our website or contact us for further information.

Website: www.siyawela-rts.co.za

Email: admin@siyawela-rts.co.za



Siyawela is an independent, non-profit training agency that implements and manages education programmes aligned to the needs of the South African communities.

Established in 2000, we have an extensive portfolio of effective education programmes that can be offered in a variety of contexts.

Our Vision

Educators, government officials, youth and adults who are skilled to realise their potential and bring about vibrant communities and work environments.

