



**LITTLE
ZEBRA
BOOKS**

**“MY BOOK, MY STORY,
MY LANGUAGE”**

Strategic Plan 2025 – 2027




EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Little Zebra Books is a non-profit organisation based in Cape Town, South Africa, founded in 2012. We are committed to promoting a reading culture in print-scarce African communities by developing affordable, high-quality, culturally rich children's books in African languages. Since its inception, Little Zebra Books has published over 40 titles in 33 languages and distributed more than 1.5 million books to children across Sub-Saharan Africa.

In the next three years, we aim to grow our book distribution by 1 million books to a total of 2.5 million books across Sub-Saharan Africa. This expansion is crucial to meet the growing demand for educational resources in underserved and under-resourced regions where children have limited access to books in their home language.

We will also develop 18 new titles and continue to advocate for mother tongue reading, ensuring that African children have access to stories that reflect their own languages, cultures, and contexts.

This plan outlines our strategic objectives and key strategies to achieve these goals, including strengthening our partnerships, expanding our distribution network, and increasing community engagement.



VISION:

Little Zebra Books exists to inspire children in Africa to grow in their love for reading and their love for the Lord.

MISSION:

To promote a reading culture in print-scarce African communities through the development of affordable, high-quality, culturally rich children's books.



CORE VALUES

- ✔ **Trustworthiness:** We conduct our work with honesty and integrity, and we manage resources responsibly, ensuring sustainability and long-term impact.
- ✔ **Creativity:** We strive to make our books fun and inspiring for children through a culture of creativity and innovation.
- ✔ **Quality:** We believe all children deserve books of a high quality and hold ourselves accountable for ensuring our books are well made with beautiful illustrations and that we pay attention to detail in everything we do.
- ✔ **Accessibility:** We strive to make our books adaptable, culturally relevant, and affordable for all children in their home language, especially in underserved and under resourced areas.
- ✔ **Collaboration:** We believe in working together with individuals, communities, and organisations to achieve shared goals and maximize our impact.

UTASA special
R100 each

UMVUBU NOMMVUNDLA
HIPPO AND RABBIT
SEEKOEI EN HAAS

Ubuse nomzimba
"Face and Body"

Umzimba

Ubuse

Nye mbini neath

WIMBIE

- ## Partners love our books and see the value in partnering with us

- ✓ Advocacy for mother tongue reading
- ✓ Largest distributor of Nyungwe children's books
- ✓ Key collaborations
- ✓ Culturally relevant books
- ✓ At the forefront of Christian books for children in Southern Africa





STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (2025–2027)

Objective 1: My book

1 million more books distributed across Southern and other African countries.

Key Implementation Strategies:

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- ✓ **Geographical expansion:** Expand our programmes to at least two additional provinces in South Africa, ensuring that books reach children in more underserved and under resourced areas.
 - ✓ **Partner collaboration:** Strengthen existing partnerships and develop new partnerships with community organisations to use and distribute our books in their existing literacy programmes. In South Africa, this will be achieved through expansion of our community centred literacy programme Masifunde Sidlala.
 - ✓ **Faith-based collaborations:** Work with churches, Bible societies and faith-based organisations to distribute Bible stories in African languages, enriching both children's spiritual and educational development.
 - ✓ **International expansion:** Increase distribution to Mozambique (where the vision for Little Zebra Books was founded) and 3 additional African countries, ensuring books reach children in regions with limited access to quality literature in their mother tongue.
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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (2025–2027)

Objective 2: My story

Create 18 new proudly African book titles that inspire children to read.

Key Implementation Strategies:

- ✓ **Diversity in content:** To ensure our books reflect the rich diversity of African heritage, we will develop new traditional stories drawing on the rich oral storytelling traditions across Africa, while making them accessible to today's young readers. In addition to traditional tales, we will create stories that reflect modern African life, touching on everyday experiences that children can relate to. Topics may include education, friendships, family, and community life, as well as navigating the challenges of growing up in today's world.
- ✓ **Bible stories with cultural relevance:** We will develop Bible stories that are not only faithful to the original Scriptures but also illustrated in ways that are relatable to African children. By incorporating local customs, dress, and landscapes, we aim to make Bible stories feel closer to the lived experiences of the children reading them.
- ✓ **Collaborating with local storytellers and artists:** We will actively seek to collaborate with local authors and artists from various communities in South Africa and beyond. By giving African authors and artists the opportunity to tell and illustrate their own stories, we will not only preserve cultural authenticity but also empower local storytellers to contribute to the literary world.
- ✓ **Community collaboration:** Each book will be developed in collaboration with local communities to ensure that the stories resonate deeply with children and families. Local educators, parents, and community leaders will be involved in the creative process, ensuring that the stories are culturally relevant and reflect real-life experiences.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (2025–2027)

Objective 3: My language

Advocate for children owning and reading books in their mother tongue

Key Implementation Strategies:

- ✓ **Maximise our alignment** with the Department of Basic Education's Mother Tongue based bilingual education strategy.
- ✓ **Thought leadership:** Contribute to dialogue and engagement through presentations at conferences and stakeholder engagements.
- ✓ **Media engagement:** Utilise social media and other platforms to promote mother tongue reading.
- ✓ **Advocate** for every child or parent to receive books to take home in their home language.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (2025–2027)

Objective 4:

Ensure Sustainable Growth and Long-Term Impact

Key Implementation Strategies:

- ✓ **Revenue diversification:** Develop a fundraising strategy to increase funding through a variety of sources, including grants, partnerships, individual donations and book sales and service offerings.
- ✓ **Monitoring and evaluation:** Strengthen M & E frameworks to allow us to assess both quantitative and qualitative outcomes of our programmes and progress towards our strategic objectives.
- ✓ **Strategic partnerships:** Strengthen partnerships with like-minded organisations, both local and international, to leverage resources, share knowledge, and maximize impact.
- ✓ **Capacity building:** Invest in training and development for staff and partners, building the organisation's capacity to grow and manage increased demand.

1. Increased Reach and Literacy Impact

- ✓ 1 million more books distributed: Our goal is to place 1 million additional books in the homes of children, ensuring they have access to high-quality, culturally relevant literature in their home language. This will inspire a love for reading, fostering early literacy skills and creating a foundation for lifelong learning.
- ✓ Strengthened reading habits: As more children gain access to stories that reflect their own lives and cultures, we anticipate sustained reading habits by children who love reading.

2. Expansion of Book Distribution

- ✓ Reaching underserved regions: In addition to distributing 1 million books annually in Southern Africa, we aim to expand into new provinces in South Africa and other African countries where access to educational resources is limited. Our goal is to ensure that no child is left behind due to geographical or economic barriers.
- ✓ Increased translation efforts: We will expand the availability of our books in more African languages, ensuring that children from diverse communities are able to access literature that speaks to their unique cultural and linguistic identities.

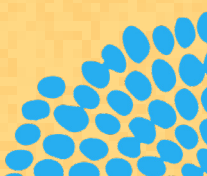
EXPECTED RESULTS (2025–2027)

With the implementation of our strategic plan, we expect the following outcomes

3. Advocacy: Impact on Children and Communities

- ✓ Media and stakeholder engagement: We will strategically engage with media outlets and social media platforms to share the impact of our work. We will also ensure we are contributing to thought leadership through sector engagements. These could include interviews with beneficiaries, featured stories about conference presentations, literacy projects, and expert opinions on the importance of mother-tongue literacy in early education. Our advocacy efforts will not only raise awareness but also encourage more organisations and individuals to support children's education in their mother tongue.

4. Sustainable Growth and Organisational Strength

- ✓ Long-term educational impact: By aligning our efforts with national and local education strategies, such as the Department of Basic Education's focus on mother tongue based bilingual education, we expect to contribute to long-term improvements in literacy across Southern Africa. Our books will play a key role in the educational and spiritual development of children in underserved areas, helping them build strong literacy foundations that extend beyond the classroom.
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MEASURING PROGRESS

To ensure we are on track to meet our goals and objectives, we will employ a range of evaluation methods that will allow us to assess both quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

Evaluation Methods include:

- ✓ **Surveys and feedback:** Collect feedback from local communities, educators, and families to gauge the impact of the books on children's reading habits and literacy development.
- ✓ **Partner feedback:** Collect feedback from key partners regarding the effectiveness of collaborations and identify areas for improvement.
- ✓ **Tracking distribution records:** Maintain detailed logs of book deliveries and reach to ensure the accurate tracking of numbers.
- ✓ **Partnership effectiveness:** Evaluate the number and quality of partnerships formed with organisations that distribute books.
- ✓ **Financial reports and fundraising campaigns:** Regularly review financial reports to assess the success of fundraising efforts and ensure sustainability.

IMPACT EVALUATION

In addition to measuring progress against the objectives, we will also assess the **long-term impact** of our work. This will include:

Impact on Community partners

✓ INCREASED ENGAGEMENT IN READING ACTIVITIES:

We will measure the level of engagement in reading activities facilitated by our community partners. Key indicators include the frequency of reading sessions, the number of children participating in these sessions, and the quality of the interactions during these sessions (e.g., do children actively engage with the books, ask questions, and show interest in reading?). We will gather feedback from programme leaders about any improvements in the enthusiasm or participation of children.

Sustained Partner Engagement

✓ PROGRAMME PARTNER RETENTION AND EXPANSION:

A key indicator of success will be the continued engagement of programme partners with Little Zebra Books. We will track how many programmes renew their commitment to using our books and how many new programmes join the initiative over time. Success in this area would indicate that our materials and capacity-building efforts are having a lasting impact on the programmes' sustainability and effectiveness.



Increased Awareness and Advocacy for Mother Tongue Reading

✓ UNDERSTANDING AND ADVOCACY FOR MOTHER-TONGUE LITERACY:

We will track changes in programme partners' understanding and advocacy for mother-tongue literacy. This will include gauging knowledge about the benefits of reading in children's first language, and whether this understanding influences their approach to literacy activities. Success will be measured by an increase in the number of programme leaders and educators advocating for and implementing mother-tongue reading practices with their students.

CONTACT US

www.littlezebrabooks.com



Tel/ WhatsApp: 065 323 9584

info@littlezebrabooks.com

17 Atlantic Road (above Epic Print)
Muizenberg 7945
Cape Town, RSA



LITTLE ZEBRA BOOKS™