HELLO FRIENDS,

The month of August began with a celebration of women's month from myself and the Funda Wande team. We took some time to recognise and celebrate women in leadership by introducing our all-women EXCO. I would love for you to learn more about their career backgrounds, projects, achievements and the experience they bring. Please go on to our Funda Wande page to see the magic.

In this month’s newsletter, we highlight a few of the termly training that took place in the interventions and engagements; total part in.

Joyce Banda - former and first female President of Malawi once said: "The seeds of success in every nation on Earth are best planted in women and children."

INTERVENTION TEACHER TRAININGS FOR TERM THREE

Our teams have been busy equipping teachers and colleagues in the education field with the necessary skills to see through our interventions and goals.

Our Limpopo team recently conducted their term training where they trained nine Teacher Assistant mentors in both Maths and Literacy. The focus in Literacy for Term three was on Handwriting, Writing, and Group Guided Reading. We have learnt so much over the years about training in education and what it takes to translate the training to improved learner outcomes. The content has been really reflecting on the science of training and maximising time to focus on modelling good practices and for teachers to practice these during the training sessions. The team had a fruitful workshop with lots of practical exercises and I believe our mentors will deliver fruitful training to our Teacher’s Assistants as well.

Other training sessions took place in the Western Cape. This was the seventh training session held since the commencement of the pilot. The programme first kicked off in 2021, with 50 Western Cape Education Department (WCED) schools in Afrikaans and isiXhosa with WCED adding 50 schools, making this a 100 school pilot. For the language training, the isiXhosa and Afrikaans groups were separately trained by their Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Nontsikelelo Nyamza and Albertha van der Merwe. The two teams remained in their language group for Life Skills, which was so eloquently demonstrated by Champion Subject Advisors: Dinise Priga-Ritter and Dalena Steenkamp. In their session, they explain how Mathematics and Literacy are naturally integrated into the Life Skills in the Funda Wande materials. The final session was presented by Portia October - who discussed the ‘Role of genres’ in reading comprehension. The success of the training can be attributed to the growing collaboration and relationship with the WCED Foundation Phase GET Curriculum Directorate led by Karen Dudley and supported by Almaret Du Toit.

In the month of August, I participated in the first Room to Read South Africa conference. The theme was "School Libraries - The Key to Independent Reading". My biggest takeaway from this conference was the reinforcement and the importance of access to high-quality stories in African languages. We tend to only place emphasis on improving reading but we need to remember that one can not play soccer without a soccer ball. Thus, in reading, you can not learn to read or read for enjoyment if you do not have reading books and resources.
I attended the AGGP Summit which was held in Centurion, Gauteng. This summit meets quarterly and it includes CEOs and executives of all AGGP entities. We meet to discuss group strategy, vision and alignments for our respective organisations. Although the broader focus of the AGGP group is Entrepreneurship, Funda Wande fits in this goal by trying to build an enabling education environment where this entrepreneurship can emerge from.

The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) hosted the Reading Indaba at Laerskool Brackenfell. The day was led by Funda Wande’s own Head of Content, Permie Isaac, who was invited by the WCED to be the Master of Ceremonies and our Western Cape Intervention team, Portia October and Janine Jantjies were present amongst 600 other professionals in the field. This conference is one of the WCED efforts to advocate the provincial response plan to have all learners read for meaning by 2030 and build up to the provincial roll-out of the Read Write Count WCED-FW program. We will be in 812 Afrikaans and isiXhosa quintile 1 – 3 schools, reaching 230 506 learners.

The 8th of September is International Literacy Day. Funda Wande will be in conversation with leadership from organisations: Nal’ibali, WordWorks, The Bookery, Numeric and The Learning Trust where we will be discussing this year’s theme: “Transforming Literacy Learning Spaces”. We will be hosted by the brilliant Sihle-isipho Nontshokweni, save the date and keep your eyes on mine and Funda Wande’s page.

CATCH ALL MY PUBLIC CONVERSATIONS HERE

Interview with Radio 2000 “Basic Education Laws Amendment BIL”
http://ow.ly/leYT50K4eYq

Interview with SABC News “Potential changes on the cards for SA’s schooling system”
http://ow.ly/leYT50JTBbp

Interview on Fine Music Radio’s Creative Teen Talk Podcast Episode 3 of 7
https://www.fmr.co.za/creative-teen-talk/