



## SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA **LEARN ENGLISH** Audio Programme

**Inclusive, quality language learning  
and teaching through digital innovation**

### About the project

- LEAP contributes to improving outcomes in English and mother tongue language and literacy, especially listening and speaking skills vital for foundational literacy development. The programme has been designed for rural and under-resourced schools with large and multi-grade classes.
- LEAP audio lessons were designed to link directly to the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) curriculum and national workbooks. LEAP has also been mapped to the national curricula of Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe.
- The audio lessons are accompanied by songs, as well as bilingual storybooks (in English and 17 African languages) written and recorded by teachers and volunteers under the African Storybook Initiative and the British Council Storymaking project.
- LEAP is a versatile digital solution that has been delivered through a variety of modalities, devices and platforms since 2013, including solar-powered MP3 players, USBs and SD cards on teachers' laptops and mobile phones. During Covid-19 the audio content was migrated to a WhatsApp Chatbot platform, with animated versions airing on [Openview](#), South Africa's first free-to-air satellite TV service platform, and [YouTube](#).
- LEAP was selected as a promising digital solution to showcase at the United Nations Educational Solutions Day on 17 September 2022, ahead of the [United Nations Transforming Education Summit 2022](#).

### Key objectives

- Increasing the use of quality audio resources for the development of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills
- Supporting teachers with a reliable means of playing audio content in their English classes
- Enabling learners to self-access audio resources
- Enabling teachers to manage multi-grade and under-resourced classes more effectively
- Building the capacity of parents, guardians and teachers (particularly those in disadvantaged and/or remote areas) to access and use digital resources to provide remote delivery at home



"The Learn English Audio Project is an innovative approach to providing materials to teachers to improve their subject knowledge in English, and other languages, as well as for learners to access materials to improve their language skills."

*Mr Mathanzima Mwel, Director General, Department of Basic Education*





"This sharing session was fabulous. Thanks to the British Council now I'm free to go and share with the teachers in my school. The equipment you just gave to us will develop the education in our country. This training enhanced my confidence towards the learners. The sharks are not sleeping but in motion."



Teacher, East London

## Why it matters

- LEAP 'puts the most marginalised learners at the centre' by focusing on large and multi-grade classes in rural and under-resourced contexts.
- It 'develops free, high-quality digital content and platforms', for example providing materials free via the WhatsApp Chatbot, clickable PDFs and WhatsApp data bundles, and constantly keeps abreast of technological advances by, for example, establishing relationships with mobile phone providers and Meta (Facebook).
- LEAP constantly seeks to 'facilitate pedagogical innovation and change' through teacher training, monitoring, evaluation, research and learning.  
(UN, 2022, *Transforming Education Summit: Thematic Action Track 4 on 'Digital learning and Transformation'*)

## Theory of change

**IF...** parents, guardians and teachers (particularly those in remote and disadvantaged areas) are equipped with quality language and literacy learning and teaching resources

**AND...** the resources are provided through an accessible digital mechanism (e.g. WhatsApp, TV)

**AND...** follow-up support is provided

**THEN...** learners will have a greater chance of developing language and literacy skills

**BECAUSE...** with high-quality resources delivered in an accessible format more learners will develop language and literacy skills more effectively

## Partners

LEAP was co-created by the South African Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the British Council, with support from UNICEF, the South African Institute of Distance Education's African Storybook Initiative, and the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. During Covid-19 the LEAP collaboration was extended to the Ministries of Education in Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe.



LEAP on WhatsApp and DBE TV has been made possible through funding from UNICEF and the Government of the United Kingdom.

## Key activities

Build the capacity of parents, guardians and teachers

Enable especially those in disadvantaged or remote areas to access and use digital resources to provide support to children in English First Additional Language (EFAL) and African languages

Develop quality digital language and literacy content

Content created for Grades R-4 in English First Additional Language supported by Home Language literacy

Employ effective digital content delivery

Set up and manage digital delivery mechanisms (e.g. WhatsApp, TV) that are accessible and user-friendly to South African parents, guardians and teachers (particularly those in disadvantaged or remote areas)

Provide effective follow-up support

Provide parents, guardians and teachers with an introduction to digital resources and increase their confidence in using educational materials with learners, through training, advocacy, ICT troubleshooting, messaging and wraparound support

Promote LEAP and increase visibility

Use social media channels to onboard parents, guardians and teachers while raising the visibility of the intervention within appropriate channels

Embed Monitoring, Evaluation, Research & Learning

Monitoring, evaluation, research and learning constantly inform project design and delivery