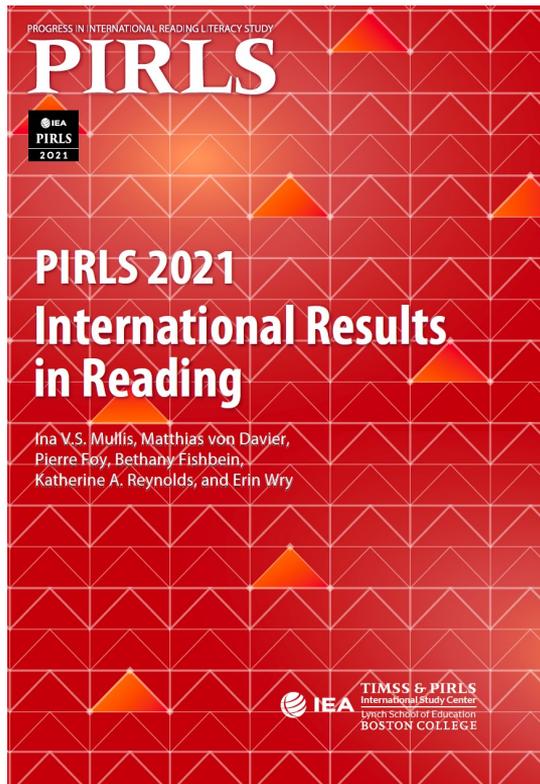


PIRLS 2021 Overview & key insights

What does this mean for literacy organisations?

NASCEE

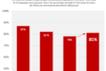
29 May 2023



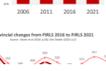
<https://www.iea.nl/studies/iea/pirls/2021>

What are the main findings?

1. In 2021 81% of Grade 4 learners cannot read for meaning in any language, or less than 19% did. This means that only 19% of South African Grade 4 children could read for meaning in any language in 2021 out of 11 languages were assessed. Because PIRLS is a cross-national representative sample, of the 222,222 Grade 4 children in PIRLS, 180,000 could not be meaning in any language. 54% PIRLS score dropped from 2001 (20%) to 2021 (20%), approximately 9 years of learning.



2. We have lost a decade of progress. Between 2006 and 2021, the percentage of children that could read had for has now returned back to 8% (2021). Being one a decade of progress, taking us back to 2011 levels of achievement.



3. The average Brazilian Grade 4 child is three years ahead of the average South African Grade 4 child. The average score in Brazil was 474 points in 2021 compared to South Africa's 203 points. The average Grade 4 child in South Africa is 3.3 years behind the average Brazilian Grade 4 child in Brazil (8% of Grade 4 could read in Brazil, 20% (2021) in 19% in South Africa. How that Brazil and South Africa have roughly the same GDP (per capita \$5000 approx).

4. South Africa had the largest gender gap (boys-girls) of all 67 participating countries/regions. The average Grade 4 girl in South Africa scored 67 points higher than the average Grade 4 boy, showing them about 1.5 years of learning ahead of their male counterparts. While girls outperform boys in all countries, the South African gap is more than the international average gap between boys and girls.

5. South Africa experienced the largest decline in reading outcomes (21 points) of all 25 countries/regions with data in 2016 and 2021. Despite the South Africa score in the state of Brazil's skills do not seem to have improved. It could be argued that PIRLS 2021 is the first nationally representative assessment of learning losses to take. To quote a recent research report involving OECD's international reading to COVID-19: "There has been an attempt to improve data in order to monitor learning losses, apart from very recent attempts in one province. The initiative on a largely bi-national approach to measure learning losses to improve and address the severe educational impact of the pandemic, especially on learners in the poorest countries (García, 2022, p. 14). In contrast, many countries have had national level catch-up programs, for example Colombia's EDUCACIÓN program (PISA 2021), the Indian state of Odisha's OARIP, which is PISA 2021 follow-up, the Department of Education's program in northern Brazil (RELEARN) or the R21 Initiative (2021). The Department of Education in China announced last month, announcing it will have at least 16 million to catch up the learning losses from COVID-19. City, one province (OECD, 2022, p. 14). For more information on learning loss catch-up programs, visit: <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/> (OECD, 2022, p. 14).

6. A generalised catch-up? The new PIRLS 2021 results are not directly comparable to an assessment to use and implement and support them with 14 countries (see <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/>). The results of national assessments to measure and address learning losses in the <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/> (the government's Presidential Youth Employment Initiative (PYEI) Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) established by the Department of Education and Technical Education, a former assisted programme of state. The Limpopo programme demonstrates that it is also leading to meaningful rapid learning outcomes and provides a model for investment, learning and teaching to achieve full independent learners of the PYEI - AKA Fund program could incorporate these findings to catch up learning losses.

7. Ruling out attributes of graded readers to all grade 1-3 children. Most children do not have basic skills needed to read the text in their home language or other at home. PIRLS uses the international Grade 4 text and attributes of graded readers that are R1000000000. For a third period of years (2019 and 2020) the Chief Executive Officer of Basic Education and Technical Education, currently a job of about 20 independent clinics aimed at teaching children to read in their home language. The program was evaluated and shown to improve reading outcomes in schools for the children who received their targeted (Pretorius, 2022).

8. Training teachers how to read and equipping them with comprehensive workbooks and teacher guides. (Pretorius, 2022). Research in Limpopo, South Africa, for equipping teachers with workbooks and teachers with books, in addition to not having any in-school training per year led to a 60% of year of learning increase compared to no-school schools.

9. Using teacher-coaches to support teachers on how to teach reading. The <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/> (Pretorius, 2022). Research in Limpopo, South Africa, for equipping teachers with workbooks and teachers with books, in addition to not having any in-school training per year led to a 60% of year of learning increase compared to no-school schools.

PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) is an independently administered, nationally representative assessment of reading comprehension from a sample of Grade 4 learners in 50 countries. South Africa has participated in PIRLS for three times (2006, 2011, 2016 and 2021). The tests are set by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and administered in South Africa by the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) at the University of Pretoria. The tests are comprised of one hour and 45 minutes sessions, with 45 tests translated into the official languages of each country in South Africa: all 11 languages are tested. Children are tested in Grade 4 to evaluate the language of instruction in their schools. It is the option for an official language or an official second or third language used in the school.

Useful links:
 1. <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/>
 2. <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/>
 3. <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/>
 4. <https://www.oecd.org/education/learning-losses/> (Pretorius, 2022)

1

2

3

4



81% of Gr 4 learners can not read for meaning



S.A eroded all learning gains made in the last decade



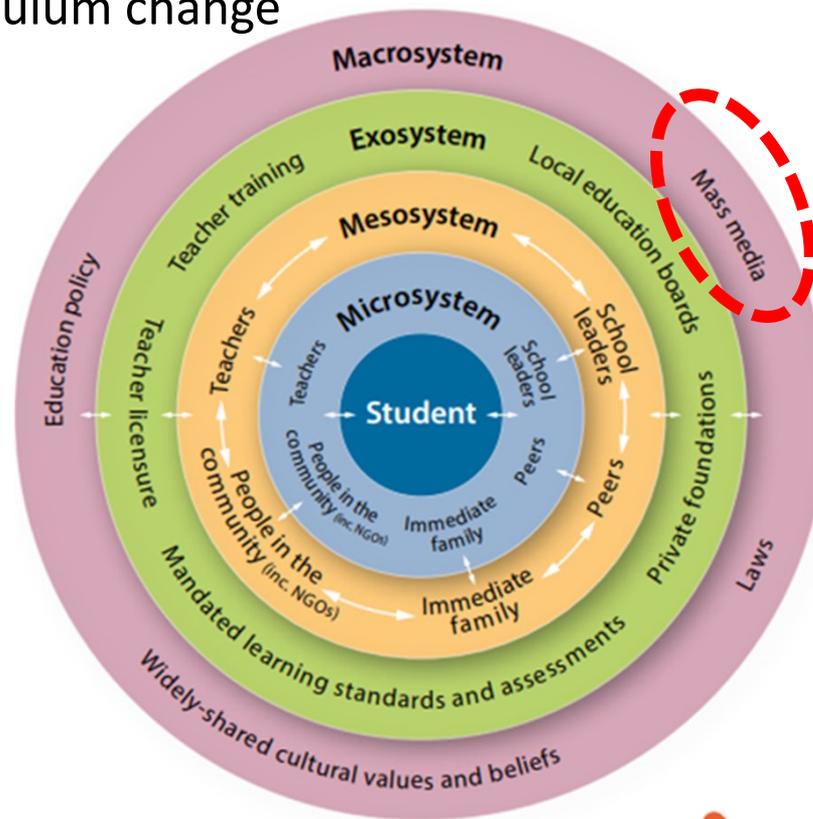
Rural provinces had the largest decline & African language continue to lag behind English and Afrikaans



Girls do better than Boys

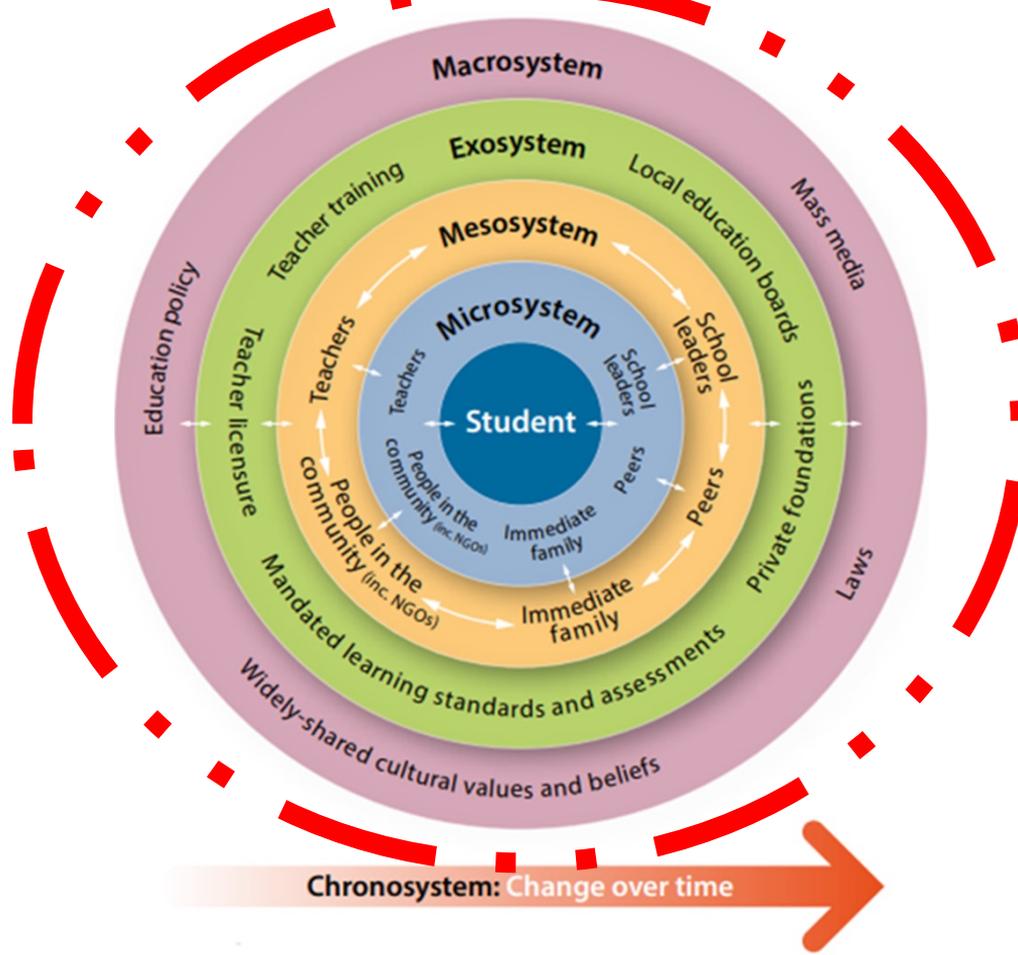
The ecosystem of curriculum change

NASCEE PIRLS SSESSION



Where is PIRLS given a platform?

Chronosystem: Change over time

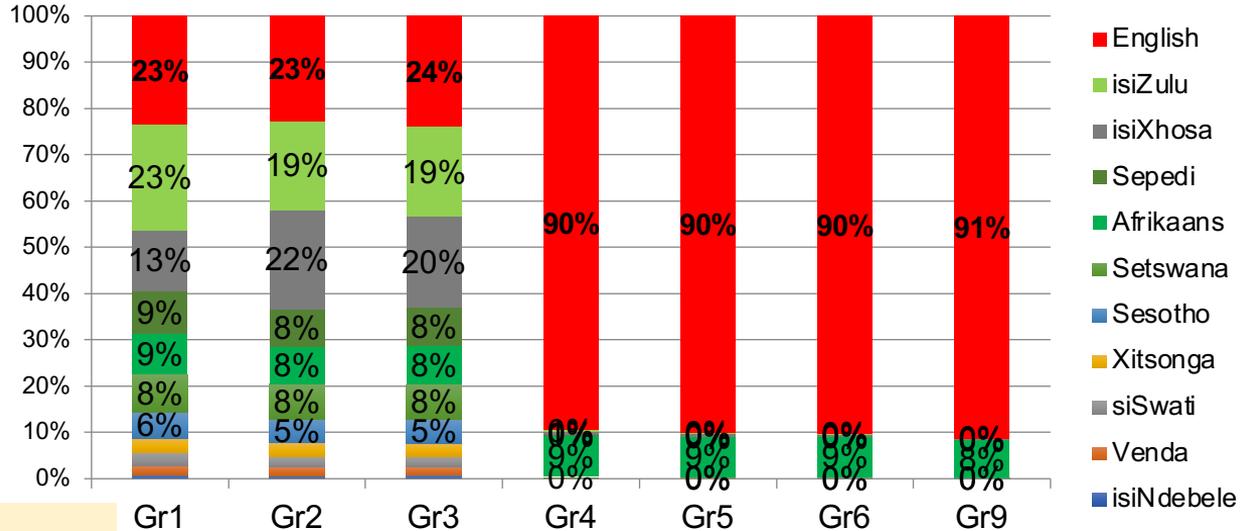


What does it look like to bring along the different systems?

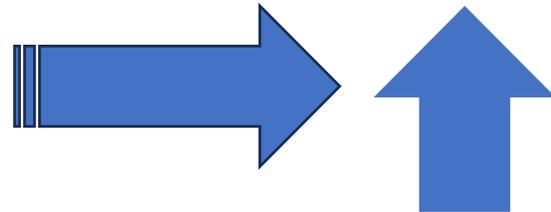
Some considerations.....

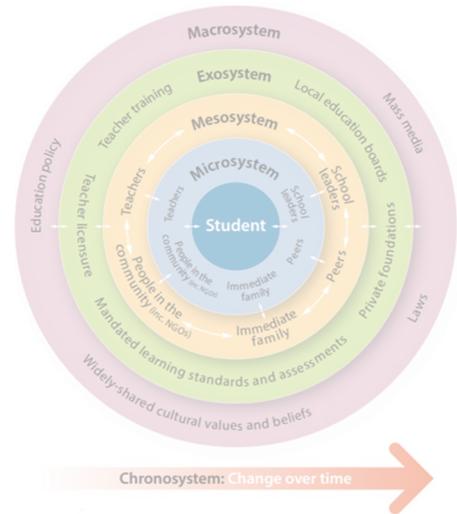
More than 70% of SA children learn to read in an African language before switching to English in Grade 4

Pretorius & Spaull, 2019



PIRLS measures reading proficiency in Foundation Phase LOLT





Grade 4 Benchmark Attainment

81% of South African Grade 4 children were not able to reach the lowest benchmark, as shown in Figure 6.

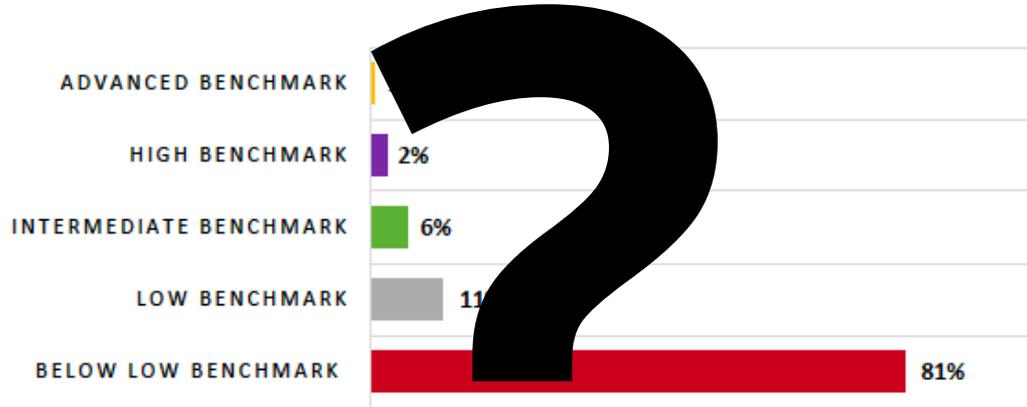
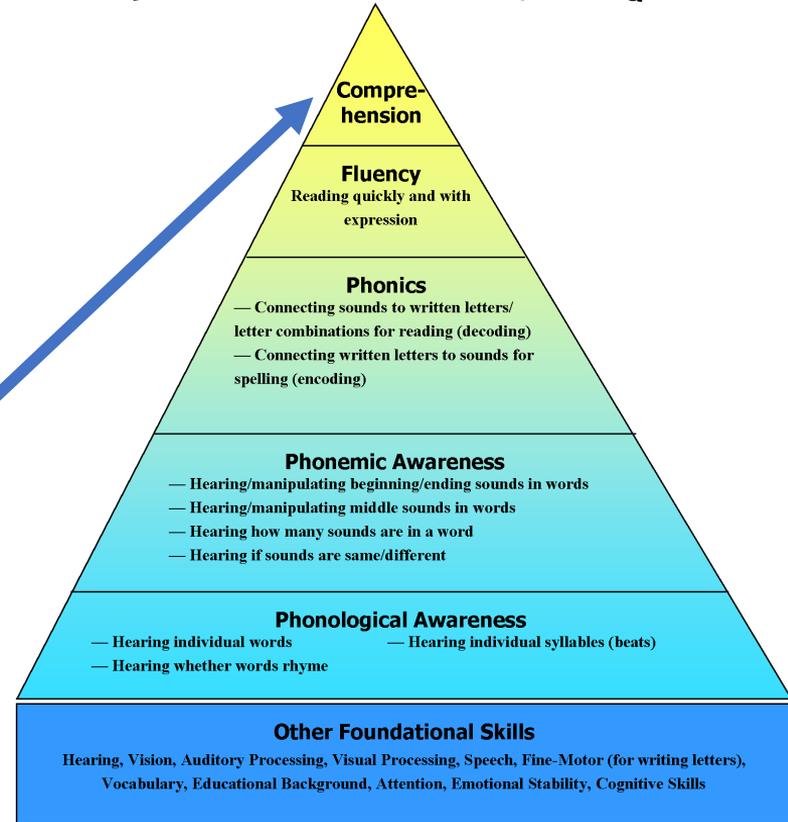
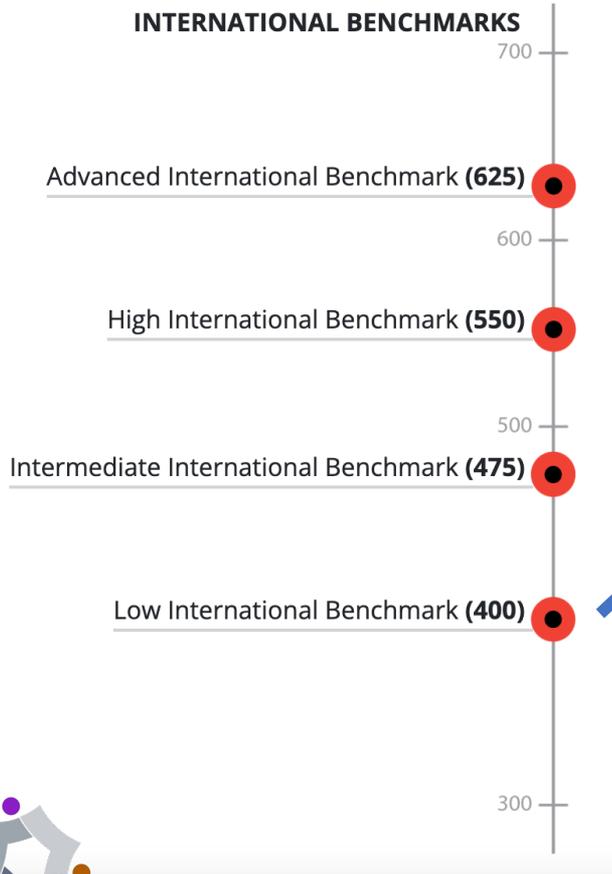
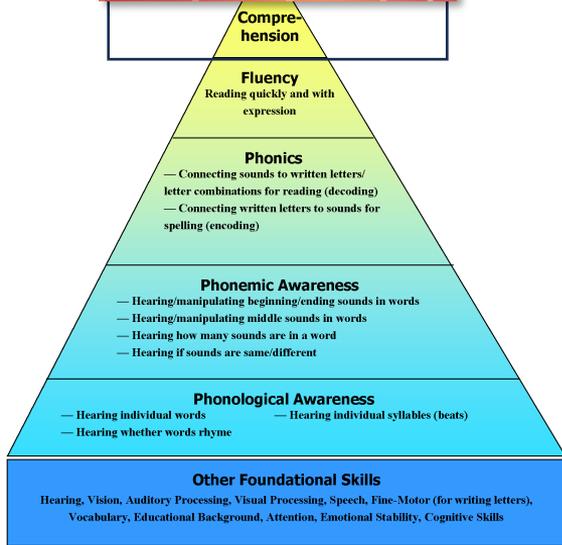
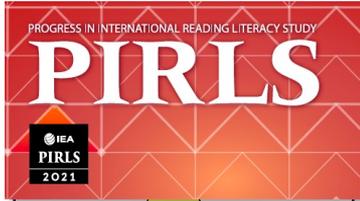


Figure 6: Grade 4 benchmark attainment

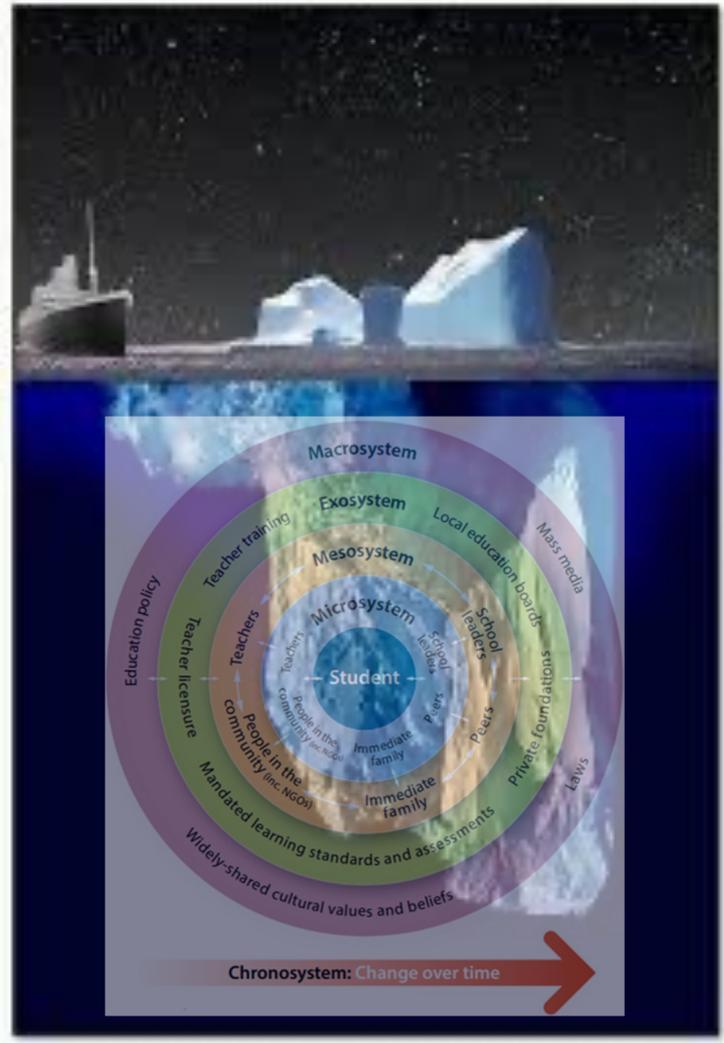
The Reading Skills Pyramid



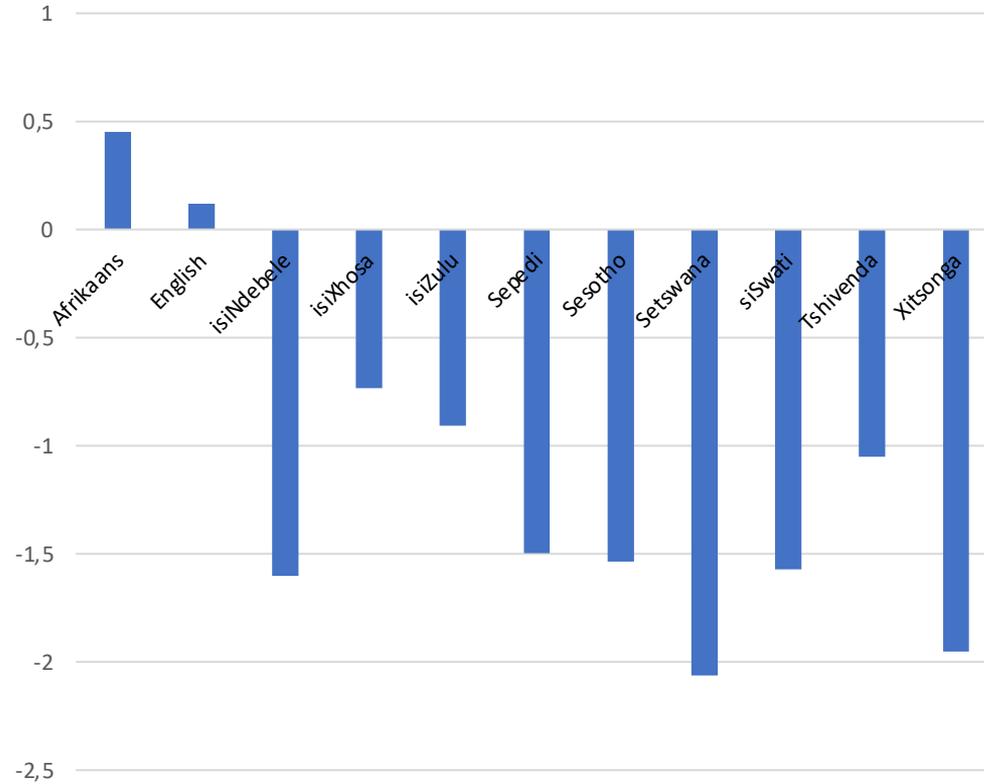
Created by Dite Bray, MSW in 2013 <http://www.atlantareads.org/>



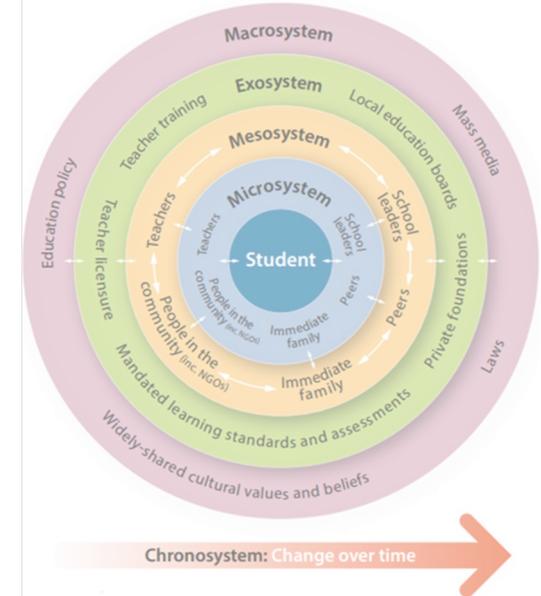
Created by Dite Bray, MSW in 2013 <http://www.atlantareads.org/>



Year of learning per language



NASCEE PIRLS SSESSION



Civil Society opportunities

01



Clear levers
for change

02



Remaining
responsive to
the sector
need

03



Creating a
package of
interventions
that can
support the
system

04



Responsible
advocacy

05



Better
understanding
of what works
& supporting
organizations
in proof-of-
concept phase

06



Developing
the next
cohort of
leaders in
the sector

07



Strategic
Partnerships

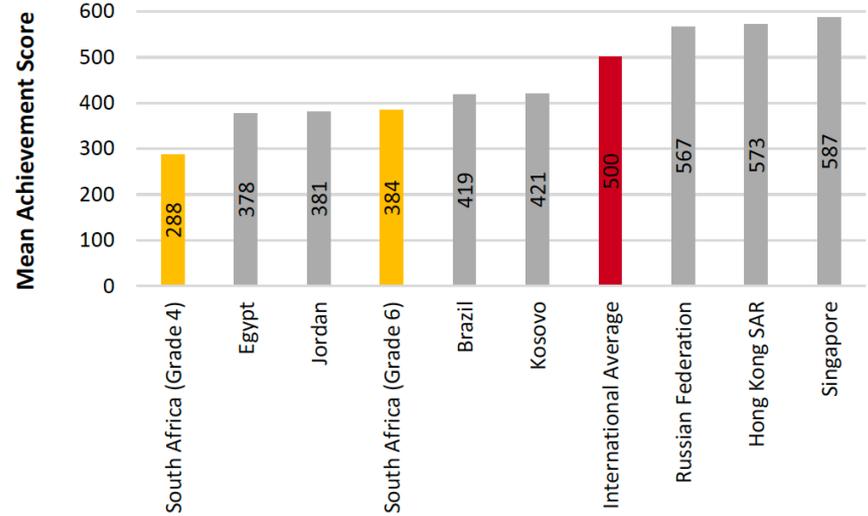
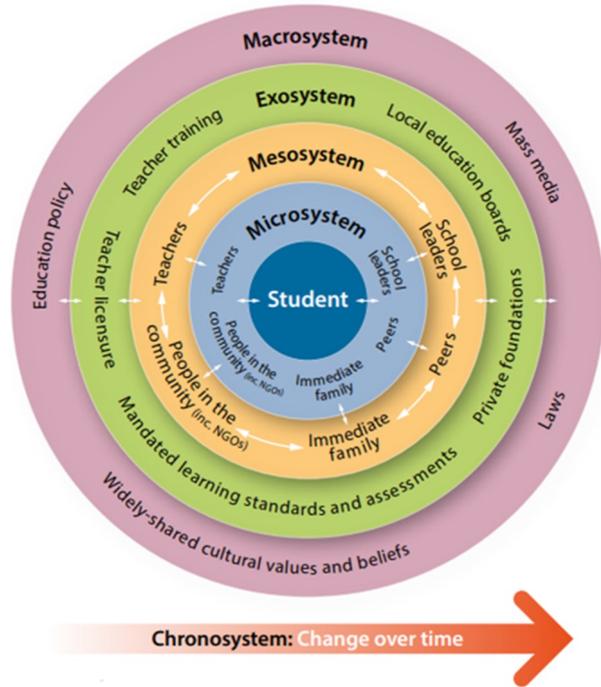


Figure 1: South African Grade 4 and 6 achievement compared to other PIRLS countries

What do we do?

1



The development of
Foundation Phase
LTSM in 5 x languages

2



The development of
pre and in-service
teacher training
and support

3



Testing 3 models for
teacher training and
support to improve FP
literacy and numeracy
outcomes

4



Responsible
research &
advocacy



3 x interventions:

120 647 learners

3 833 teachers

675 youth

LTSM = Learning and Teaching Support Materials | FP = Foundation Phase

How are we thinking of responding to PIRLS

Western Cape



Interventions

848

IsiXhosa & Afrikaans Schools

Research Questions

What does it take to ensure sustained rollout scale?

Strategic Relevance

1. Only the second time that there has been a province-wide programme of this nature rolled out and funded by government
2. Develop a blueprint for scale alongside government

Eastern Cape



80

40

intervention

control

IsiXhosa Schools

How might we integrate behavioural science perspectives to understand, shift and sustain new teaching practices?

1. Increase programme fidelity and embed new teaching practices
2. Contribute to the emerging behavioural science research in the broader international education landscape

Limpopo



30

Sepedi Schools

How might we contribute to scenario planning for active policy responses to the Teacher Demographic Dividend?

1. Limpopo will be the hardest hit province by teacher shortages
2. National/provincial discussions for Limpopo to be the model province for responses
3. Influence the presidential youth employment initiative



ide

Thank You