



“Every child should own one hundred books by the age of five”

Book Dash is a registered non-profit voluntary association (145-694 NPO) and public benefit organisation (PBO 930047958).
Visit bookdash.org. Email team@bookdash.org. Mail 3 Fleming Road, Wynberg 7800, Cape Town, South Africa.

Liz Page, Executive Director, IBBY Secretariat

20 May 2021

RE: FINAL REPORT FROM BOOK DASH ON THE IBBY YAMADA FUNDING RECEIVED

Herewith the final report on the Book Dash project funded by the Yamada fund, namely a **virtual pan-African Book Dash** that was held on 15 May 2021. Please read this report in conjunction with the mid-term report submitted in April.

The Book Dash team is very grateful for the financial support provided by the IBBY Yamada fund. As outlined in this report, the funds have allowed intense and productive creative collaboration by people across 8 different countries, resulting in 10 new children’s books and 10 translations that will be read and enjoyed by children and their families across the world.

The event

The virtual pan-African Book Dash, funded by IBBY Yamada, was held on 15 May. Creative volunteers from 8 different countries collaborated on 10 new children’s books, which were all started and completed within the 12 hours of the Book Dash (9am to 9pm). Book Dash now has 156 original stories, published under an open license, that were created in this way. Our publishing process reduces publishing costs by approximately 80%, which allows us to print the books at approximately 70 US cents a copy.

In the week leading up to the event there were five briefing sessions (for each of the creative roles, and for the facilitators). The purpose of the briefing session is to ensure that the participants are all registered on the virtual platform, and to give them an orientation on how the platform will be used on the day. They are also briefed on their role on the day, and on what is expected of them.

On Saturday 15 May, everyone (including Liz Page from the IBBY Secretariat) gathered in MS Teams at 09:00. After the general welcome and a round of introductions, the first activity was for each team to collaboratively create the flat-plan for their book. This is like a blueprint, showing what goes on each double-page spread, and facilitating discussions and decisions around characters, plot, the pacing of the story, etc.

Straight after that, at 10:15, the illustrators had to start drawing, because they only have 40 minutes to complete each double-page spread. The Book Dash team of 6 facilitators moved between teams according to a carefully worked-out schedule to keep everyone motivated and

on track, and to troubleshoot where there are problems regarding team dynamics or progress.

During the course of the morning there was a technical design briefing for the designers, and after lunch the writers and editors gathered for the Writers Readthrough where the text of each story was shared for comment.

Some fun activities were also introduced throughout the day to keep participants engaged, and to create cohesion. One of the activities was to ask the writers to visually recreate a scene from their book, and to share the result.

<p>Writers' Challenge: Hani recreating a scene from <i>The Best Gift</i>.</p>	<p>Writers' Challenge: Siphili and her daughter recreating a scene from <i>Whose shoe is this?</i></p>	<p>A screenshot taken during the Writer's Read-Through</p>

All participants had received parcels in the weeks preceding the event, with different parcels-within-the-parcel and with strict time-bound opening instructions. Around 5pm, when energy levels always sag, they opened their fun dress-up items and had to find the people in the group who had received the same items. The result was a lot of fun and renewed motivation for the last stretch.

<p>Alison with Viking beard</p>	<p>Ashlyn with Viking beard</p>	<p>Nicolene in Scottish headgear</p>	<p>Thokozani in Scottish headgear</p>

At 20:15 on Saturday it was Storytime, the highlight of the event. This is where each of the teams present the book they had created on the day, and share it with the rest of the group. It's always a magical moment, because the books are incredibly varied in theme, illustration style and approach, and are a reflection of the creative collaboration on the day. The Storytime session was recorded, and can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/IRCYD6e6N8I>

Feedback received from the creative volunteers after the event is that although the pressure to finish in 12 hours was quite intense, they found the day to be enjoyable and meaningful, and loved collaborating with each other across geographical boundaries. The knowledge that they used their professional skills to make a difference to children is very important to many participants. Siphili, one of our writers, shared the following: *"I had a lot of fun and learned so much! How amazing to see other creative people at work and to witness their processes. Thank you for the opportunity and for the work that you do. I can vouch for the wonder it brings into our children's lives."*

The Book Dash methodology of content creation is open-sourced and carefully documented in an openly available Book Dash Manual, and can be replicated by organisations with specific needs for children's books. Organisations in countries like Laos, Nigeria, Cambodia, Angola and France have successfully replicated the Book Dash model. Our detailed Book Dash Manual can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oQB_9MFuthF2X9szm0i4aMRNMS_dtLgbkqgmzko0zyhl/edit#heading=h.l8deqfoylnu

Next steps: Finishing, printing and translations


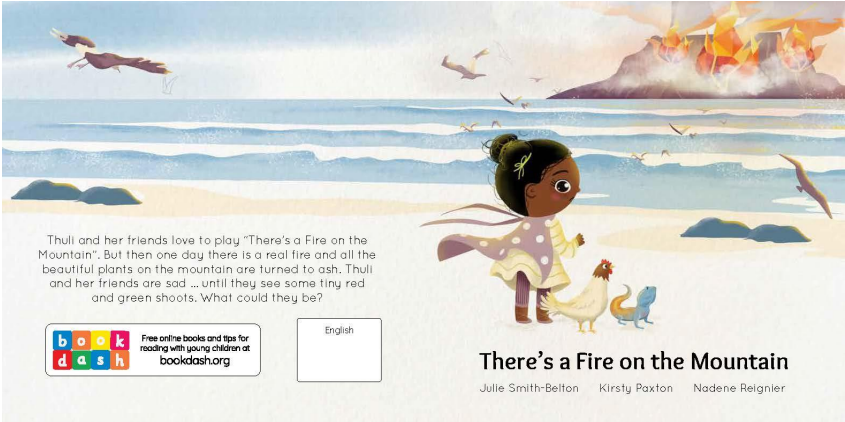
The ten new books are now being finished technically before publication on the Book Dash website, free to read for anyone. The Creative Commons license that governs the books allows anyone to freely download, print, translate and otherwise adapt the books, thereby allowing the books to travel 'far and free'. The aim is to publish all 10 books before the end of May.

The balance of the funding received from IBBY Yamada will be used for printing and translations. A small digital run of each book will be printed for the creative participants and the funders, to provide a tangible result of and reward for the creative marathon to the people who gave their time, skill and passion so generously.

The remainder of the Yamada funding will be used to translate each title that was created at the Book Dash into one other South African language. This means that the event will have contributed 10 English books and 1 book in each of the 10 other official South African languages, to our library. The Book Dash website is zero-rated, enabling anyone to read our free books online, because they do not use any data while visiting the site.

Book title	Translation	Book title	Translation
The Best Gift	Afrikaans	The boy who only ate pancakes	seSotho
There's a Fire on the Mountain	isiXhosa	Whose shoe is this?	tshiVenda
How to Tame a Monster	isiZulu	Little Shoots	xiTsonga
Tlotlego's Tea Party	sePedi	Pako the Pigeon Disappears	isiNdebele
Yes you can!	seTswana	Shaka and Mazi	siSwati

The ten new books, and the teams that created them

Story	Team
 <p>The Best Gift</p> <p>Hani Du Toit Chantelle & Burgen Thorne Ezra Harerimana</p> <p>Jibraan explores his many talents and gifts. He loves learning new skills. But what's the Best Gift of all?</p> <p>Free online books and tips for reading with young children at bookdash.org</p> <p>English</p>	<p>Team 1</p> <p>Designer: Ezra Harerimana, Uganda Illustrator: Chantelle & Burgen Thorne, RSA Writer: Hani Du Toit, RSA Editor: Alison Ziki</p>
 <p>Thuli and her friends love to play "There's a Fire on the Mountain". But then one day there is a real fire and all the beautiful plants on the mountain are turned to ash. Thuli and her friends are sad ... until they see some tiny red and green shoots. What could they be?</p> <p>Free online books and tips for reading with young children at bookdash.org</p> <p>English</p> <p>There's a Fire on the Mountain</p> <p>Julie Smith-Belton Kirsty Paxton Nadene Reigner</p>	<p>Team 2</p> <p>Designer: Nadene Reigner, RSA Illustrator: Julie Smith-Belton, Denmark Writer: Kirsty Paxton, RSA Editor: Margot Bertelsmann</p>



Team 3

Designer: Nadene Kriel, RSA
 Illustrator: Ulrike Mieke Marais, UK
 Writer: Kristen Dembaremba, RSA
 Editor: Mandy Collins



Team 4

Designer: Wilna Combrinck, RSA
 Illustrator: Anja Venter, RSA
 Writer: Sam Beckbessinger, UK
 Editor: Carla Lever



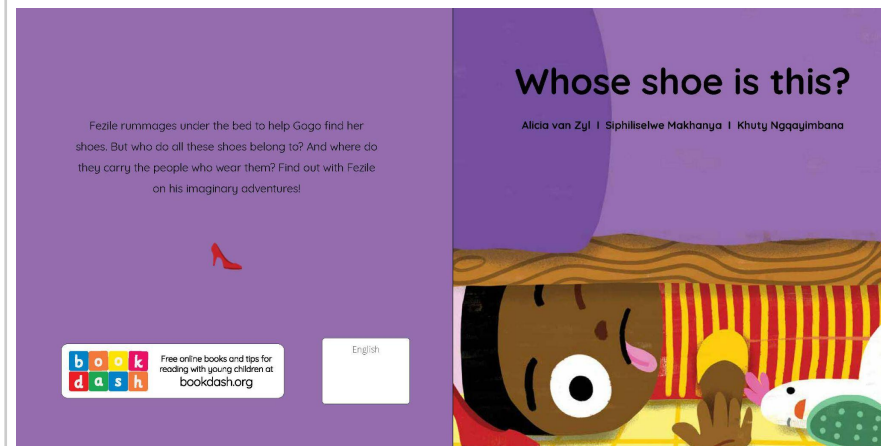
Team 5

Designer: Ashlyn Atkinson, RSA

Illustrator: Nicolene Louw, RSA

Writer: Laura de Lange, RSA

Editor: Nabeela Kalla



Team 6

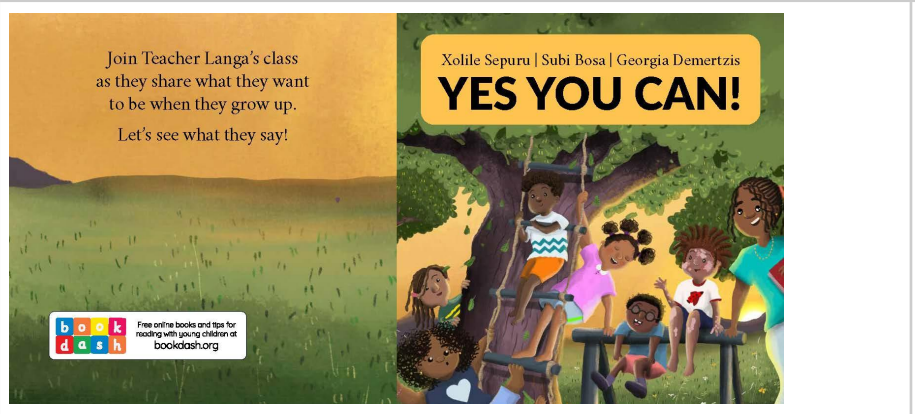
Designer: Khuty Ngqayimbana, RSA

Illustrator: Alicia van Zyl, RSA

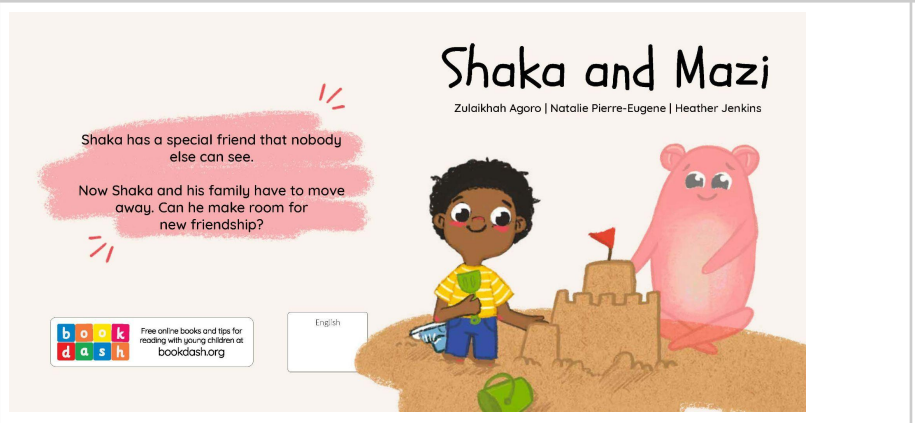
Writer: Siphiliselwe Makhanya, RSA

Editor: Nabeela Kalla

<p>Layo can't wait to grow. But just like the bamboo seeds he and grandma plant, it might take a little longer than he wants!</p>  <p>Little Shoots</p> <p>Sope Martins • Wiehan de Jager • Thokozani Mkhize</p> <p>English</p> <p>Free online books and tips for reading with young children at bookdash.org</p>	<p>Team 7 Designer: Thokozani Mkhize, RSA Illustrator: Wiehan de Jager, RSA Writer: Sope Martins, Nigeria Editor: Alison Ziki</p>
<p>Pako the Pigeon Disappears</p>  <p>Tukupashya Ally • Cristy Zinn • Job Mubinya</p> <p>English</p> <p>Free online books and tips for reading with young children at bookdash.org</p>	<p>Team 8 Designer: Job Mubinya, Kenya Illustrator: Cristy Zinn, RSA Writer: Tukupashya Ally Kasongo, Zambia Editor: Mandy Collins</p>



Team 9
 Designer; Georgia Demertzis, RSA
 Illustrator: Subi Bosa, RSA
 Writer: Xolile Sepuru, RSA
 Editor: Margot Bertelsmann



Team 10
 Designer: Natalie Pierre-Eugene, RSA
 Illustrator: Heather Jenkins, RSA
 Writer: Zulaikhah Agoro, Nigeria
 Editor: Carla Lever