**South Africa Celebrates National Book Week**

Johannesburg, 21 June – The 7th annual National Book Week runs from the 05th -11th September 2016 and is celebrated across all nine provinces of South Africa with a line-up of activities that speak to this year’s main focus: ‘The importance of books.’

Having as few as 20 books in the home is the leading indicator for children achieving higher levels of education. This is based on a study conducted over 20 years in 27 countries, which found that irrespective of social standing or parents’ level of education, 20 books in a home adds more years to children’s academic progress. What is alarming for South Africa is that more than half of our households do not have a single leisure reading book in the home.

This is a key motivator for the #BUY\_A\_BOOK strategy under the National Book Week Campaign. Book buyers are encouraged to #BUY\_A\_BOOK and donate it towards NBW supported key initiatives as a means to give a book to those who do not own books.

The public are encouraged to support this initiative by buying a book for only R20 during National Book Week at either Bargain Books, Exclusive Books or Takealot and drop it in the National Book Week bin. These will be donated to those who do not have books in their households. With more books in SA households, we are able to empower our communities with youth who may attain further educational opportunities through the exposure to the books donated in this campaign. Quite a significant contribution from an investment of as little as R20.

National Book Week is brought to you by the South African Book Development Council, in partnership with the Department of Arts and Culture.

For more information visit: [www.sabookcouncil.co.za](http://www.sabookcouncil.co.za/) or social media: Facebook

(NationalBookWeekSA) and Twitter (#BUY\_A\_BOOK)

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

To find out more about NBW programmes around the Country, visit our Facebook page for regular updates.

* [www.facebook.com/NationalBookWeekSA](http://www.facebook.com/NationalBookWeekSA)
* Twitter: @NBW\_SA / #READ\_A\_BOOK #BUY\_A\_BOOK

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**About National Book Week**

National Book Week is a dedicated week on the South African calendar

created to celebrate the book and promote a love for reading.

The annual, national programme is a joint initiative between the South African Book Development Council (SABDC) and the Department of Arts and Culture.

National Book Week was developed in response to a study commissioned in 2007, by the South African Book Development Council (SABDC). The study, which focused on the reading and book reading habits of adult South Africans, showed that only 14% of South Africans are avid book readers and a mere 5% of parents read to their children. The survey also indicated that 51% of households in South Africa did not have a single book in their home.

All National Book Week events will promote a key message to encourage reading as a fun activity with each province or location tailoring the programme to meet local demands with a strong focus on promoting indigenous languages, local authors as well as library awareness and access.

Parallel to this, as part of The SABDC’s Indigenous Languages Publishing Programme (ILPP), funded in 2015 by the National Arts Council (NAC we will also be donating books to children/youth and adults hat we engage with along the way a brand new book in the language of the region. At the same time, the Department of Correctional Services will run parallel activities in correctional services facilities to encourage reading as a growth and rehabilitation tool with the Reading for Redemption Programme. while the South African Library for the Blind (SALB) will also join certain programmes during the National Book Week to enlighten sighted and non-sighted people about the available resources.

Communities, churches, social groups, schools and libraries and anyone with an interest in promoting reading, are encouraged to participate in the campaign to bring awareness to the enjoyment and value of reading books.

**What can YOU do during National Book Week?**

* Participate in the programme in your province.
* Donate books to organisations working with women, children, youth, disabled – in all languages.
* #BUY\_A\_BOOK for someone who does not have any.
* Create your own activities and let the NBW team know about it.
* Promote NBW on your social media platforms by sharing news you from our Twitter: @NBW\_SA / #BUY\_A\_BOOK #READ\_A\_BOOK and [www.facebook.com/NationalBookWeekSA](http://www.facebook.com/NationalBookWeekSA) pages.