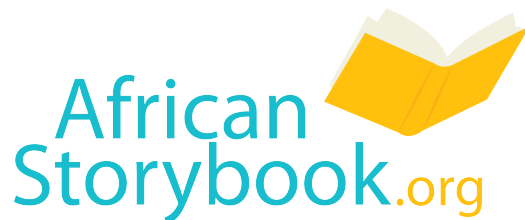


Expanding access to high quality learning materials: Creating storybooks offline with Saide's new African Storybook (ASb) Maker

By Dorcas Wepukhulu



South African Institute for Distance Education (Saide)

- Works across sub-Saharan Africa to achieve **educational transformation** through
 - ✓ Collaboration with initiatives that uphold **open** learning principles including OERs;
 - ✓ mediated through **technology**;
 - ✓ ASb is Saide's **digital publishing** initiative responding to a **severe shortage** of books for early reading for children in Africa in their **own languages**.

- In 2014 to 2017, ASb was piloted in Kenya, South Africa, Lesotho and Uganda; and then
- Extended to Ethiopia, Rwanda, Cameroon, DRC, Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia;
- The ASb www.africanstorybook.org launched in 2014: 120 books; 64 languages of Africa;
- Has 1300+ books; 5000+ translations; 190 languages of Africa.

Saide

- Through innovation, continues to innovate to **expand access, use and contribution;**
- At the end of 2019, the ***African Storybook Maker*** was developed –

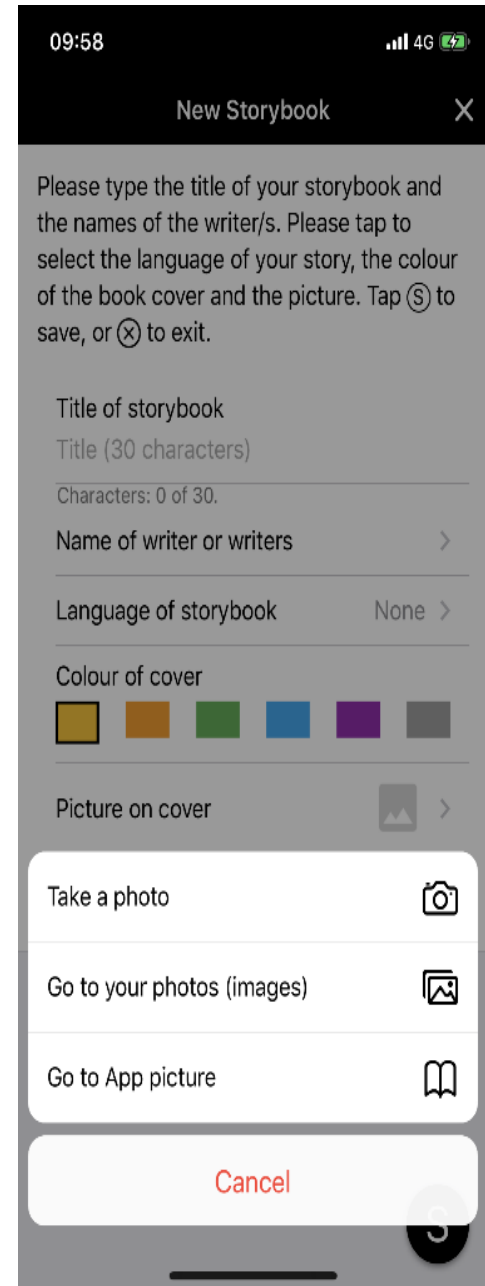
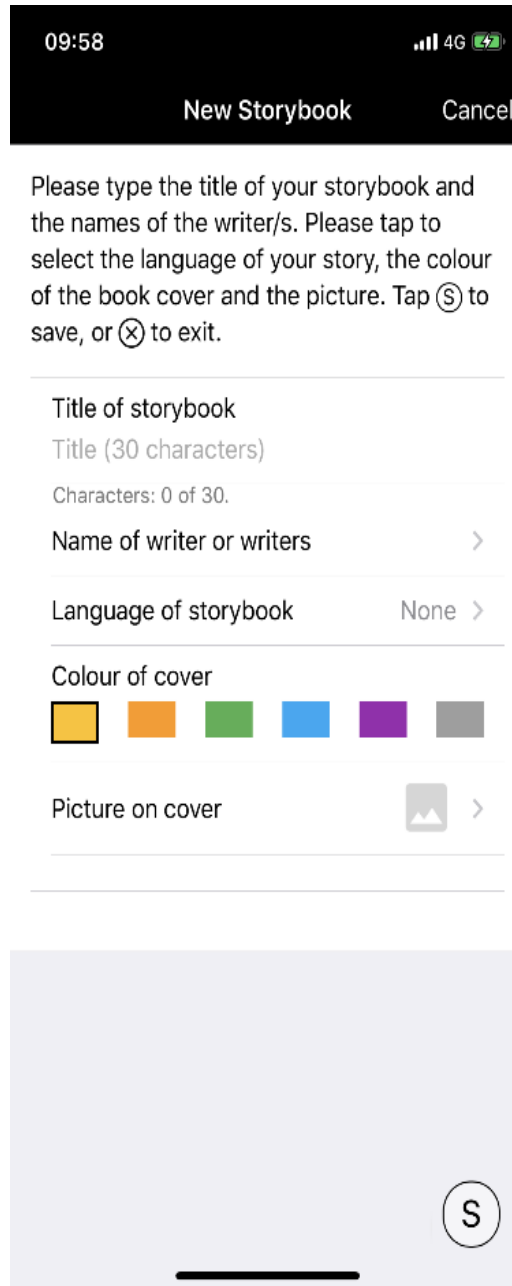
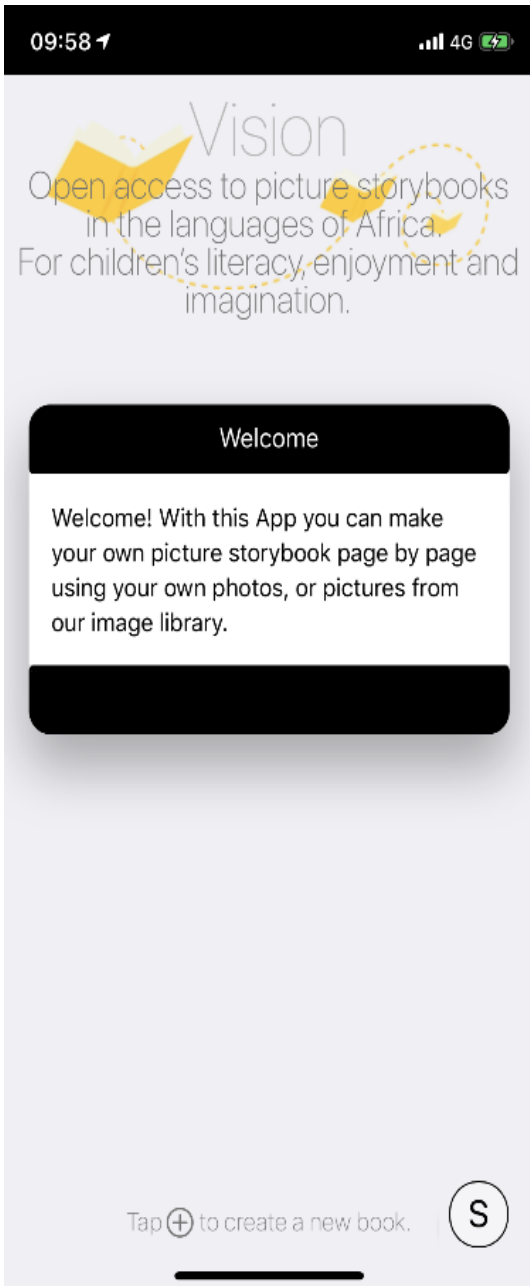
Now **PILOTING in KENYA**



- ✓ allows people to create picture storybooks **offline** on their **mobile phone or tablet**, and
- ✓ **publish** them on the ASb main website when they are **connected** to the internet.

Using the ASb Maker to create a story

- Download from Google Play/App Store
- Open app
- Type the **title** of the storybook
- Name of the **writer/s** – then select it
- Scroll to select the **language** of the story
- Select the **colour** of the book cover & picture for the cover



Pictures


Writers can illustrate their storybooks with their own pictures by:

- **Taking** a photograph of a picture (e.g. of a child's drawing) – name of child as illustrator;
- Using a picture or photograph from the **cellphone or tablet** – name of photographer;

OR

- Using a picture from the Maker App **picture library**.

Creating pages of the storybook

- A page has a place for a **picture** and up to 50 words of **text**.
- Type the **words**, or add a **picture or do both** in each of the pages of your storybook.
- **Save** each completed page by tapping **S**
- **Add** new pages by tapping **+**
- Move pages using 
- **Edit** as many times as you want.
- If happy and connected, can **Publish**
- A **line summary** needed when publishing.
- **Delete**

Main features:

Tap ⊕ to add a page. Tap Ⓢ to save the storybook. Tap anywhere on a page to edit it. Tap ↕ to sort the pages. Tap ✕ to delete a page.

Cover:



Rain

Pages:



Rain makes plants grow.



Rain makes water animals happy.



Rain gives us enough water to...



Vision
Open access to picture storybooks in the languages of Africa.
For children's literacy, enjoyment and imagination.

Edit Publish Delete

Rabbit under the tree
Phumy Zikode

English

Edit Publish Delete

Lihle has a great day
Thoko Rasodi

English

Tap ⊕ to create a new book.

Progress

- In 2019, story writing workshops with children held in SA to help develop a **guide** to creating storybooks with children, including using the Maker - **15 books**;
- A draft *ASb Guide to Creating Storybooks with Children using the Maker* is ready;
- In 2020, **20 books** were developed and published in a workshop in SA using the Maker;
- **Seven** Librarians from six libraries and **16 teachers** from two schools trained in Kenya;
- Goal – Encourage **use** and **republishing on other platforms**.

ASb Maker provides the following solutions:

- The **connectivity** challenges of many users by providing an offline solution to create storybooks for and with children.
- The **limited computer skills** by making it easy for users to create their own storybooks following simple instructions using phones and tablets.
- It highlights the importance of the four areas of children's literacy: **Read, Write, Listen, Speak**
- Makes it possible to write in **African languages** increasing the supply and availability of African language storybooks.

As piloting continues, issues addressed

- 130 storybooks have been independently created using the Maker – Quality Assurance;
- Problem with double marks (“) and sometimes the use of the apostrophe – been resolved;
- How to signal books created using the Maker, by Children or adults;
- Support for champions to use in Covid-19 era;
- Piloting continues post Covid-19.

Asanteni!
(Thank you)

