



Capability Statement - 2013

Status of organisation

A Section 21 Company - Incorporated Association Not for Gain under Section 21 of the Companies Act, Act No 61 of 1973, As Amended
Registered as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO), in terms of Section 30 of the Income Tax Act Section 18 A Company

Nature of current business

- Project management and consultation for educational ICT
- Educational support in schools
- Educator development in ICT integration
- Materials development for professional development in ICT integration
- Capacity building for education managers and education department officials
- Conceptualisation of models of teacher development for ICT integration
- National implementation of training in global teacher development programmes
- Quality assurance for educational ICT professional development programmes
- Quality assurance of training implementation in ICT professional development
- Coordination of conferences for educational ICT
- Coordination of judging processes for international ICT competitions
- Advocacy around the educationally effective uses of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in schools with particular reference to innovative technologies

Summary of South African resources and capacity

- Full time staff of 14
- 234 contracted part-time trainers in the field across all provinces
- Mentoring and tutoring capacity to facilitate online courses
- Specialist Educational ICT Consultants contracted to SchoolNet SA
- Integrated database driven tracking system incorporating Web 2.0 tools
- Access to copyrighted quality assured professional development course materials
- Volumes of teachers trained in major projects:
 - Partners in Learning programmes -28 645

- Intel® Teach - 45 000;
- Educators' Network – 10 000

Proven Experience

SchoolNet South Africa has been the Regional Training Agency for the Intel® Teach Education programme for the past 9 years. SchoolNet South Africa has been the national implementation agent for professional development in the Microsoft Partners in Learning Programme over the past 7 years. This includes writing the training course materials, conducting training and organising national competitions such as Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum Awards in 2006 – 2011 as well as organising and coordinating the entries and judging of the Pan African version of the same competition in Ghana in 2008, in Mauritius in 2009 and Mombasa in 2010. SchoolNet SA was responsible for all African participants in the global finals in Brazil in 2009 and for organising many of the activities and particularly the judging of the 2010 worldwide event in Cape Town.

SchoolNet South Africa provided services (content, tutor training and coordination) for the delivery of the Advanced Certificate in Education (ICT Integration) a distance qualification from the University of KwaZulu-Natal for 5 years. SchoolNet SA offers its services to other universities such as University of Johannesburg and Witwatersrand for the purposes of curriculum in ICT Integration qualifications. Through its relationship with the Commonwealth of Learning, SchoolNet has been responsible for convening seminars for Deans of Education in higher education institutions in order to promote the integration of ICT in student teacher training and is currently facilitating the Commonwealth of Learning Certificate for Teacher ICT Integration by training potential tutors in the Bahamas, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago and Lesotho.

In the past few years SchoolNet has undertaken capacity building among provincial officials who are ICT co-ordinators in the following provinces, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Free State, Mpumalanga, North West and Limpopo.

SchoolNet worked in partnership with the South African Institute for Distance Education to conduct an evaluation of e-readiness and e-maturity in all schools in Gauteng in 2010. This study was commissioned by the Gauteng Department of Education.

SchoolNet South Africa has coordinated national and provincial educational ICT conferences bi annually since 1997.

Number of years in business

16 years

History

SchoolNet SA was established as a national organisation due to the efforts of volunteer educators and innovative thinkers in school networking during the 1990s. SchoolNet SA was formally founded in 1997 with the support of the Department of Education's Centre for Educational Technology and Distance Education and several corporate sponsors. The first projects included training teachers in the Telkom 1000 project, The Open Society Institute for South Africa and the World Bank's Links for Development in the late 1990s. SchoolNet SA operated as a project of the IDRC till 2001 when it became a Section 21 non-profit organisation. SchoolNet has more recently played a role in influencing decisions and content of e-education policies and national guidelines.

Large scale projects implemented by SchoolNet have included:

- The Educators' Network (SA Department of Education/Finnish Government)
- Telkom Super Centres
- Nortel Phumelela Networks Projects
- Thintana Consortium I-Learn projects
- Bridges to the Future Initiative
- Intel® Teach to the Future
- Microsoft Partners in Learning
- Vodacom Foundation
- Multichoice ICT in Schools
- NOKIA MoMaths
- WCED Principals' Tablet initiative

Project support has been provided to the following projects:

- Global Teenagers project - Youth Making A Difference In The World
- I-EARN - The International Education and Resource Network
- Academy for Educational Development - Youth Employability Project
- Adobe Youth Voices
- Mtandao-Afrika (Telkom and SchoolNet Africa)
- INSPIRE project in Limpopo province

SchoolNet SA was requested by the Education Labour Relations Council to coordinate the training of teachers for the Teacher Laptop Initiative. To date this has not been implemented.

Involvement in e-Education in South Africa

SchoolNet SA is mentioned in the e-Education White Paper as an exemplary organisation in furthering the aims of the e-Education Initiative. SchoolNet SA has developed professional training strategies aligned with its own teacher development framework since 2000. This was later revised to align with the NEPAD teacher professional development framework, and can now be aligned with the DoE

framework of teacher ICT integration competencies. SchoolNet's deep understanding and close alignment with national and international teacher professional development competencies in ICT integration has involved SchoolNet in a wide range of activities that foster these competencies and enhance learning in the classroom.

SchoolNet maintains a strong membership programme through a variety of social media that includes Facebook, Twitter, a blog, newsletter, YouTube channel and Diigo network. The programme is designed to build up teachers who want to actively pursue more intense programmes of professional development and grow into innovative educators integrating ICT across the curriculum and in the broader school context.

Organisational Capacity

SchoolNet South Africa is a not for profit, non-government organisation which has a fully equipped project office, based in Johannesburg that has successfully implemented projects of significant scale. Countrywide SchoolNet currently employs 234 part-time trainers who conduct face to face training in all provinces across a range of professional development programmes.

SchoolNet South Africa has the capacity to offer face to face or online tutor or mentor supported courses to teachers in ICT Professional development both nationally and internationally. SchoolNet South Africa has been delivering on projects that have trained very large numbers of teachers in the past and has the capacity to further upscale delivery in the future.

Geographic Reach and Language Capacity

SchoolNet operates across all nine provinces and has trainers situated in all nine provinces as well as some other countries in Africa. SchoolNet's office-based staff is able to operate in the following languages: English, isiZulu, isiXhosa, Se-Sotho, tshiVenda, Tshisonga, SeTswana, Sepedi, and Afrikaans. Many of our trainers are second language English speakers and cover all South African languages.

Experience

SchoolNet South Africa is very familiar with the educational ICT environment in South Africa and has built up a deep understanding during its 15 year history. Having embarked on a ground-breaking blended learning mode of delivery in its early history in the late 1990's, SchoolNet has learnt many of the pitfalls of online, as well as face to face learning with ICT. SchoolNet South Africa has the flexibility to offer a range of programmes that can be delivered in a range of modes, face to face, online and blended.

SchoolNet is currently involved in a range of projects and pilot initiatives that use ICTs to enhance education:

- **Mobile phone technology:** SchoolNet is the country partner for Nokia's Mobile Maths project in South Africa which targets Grade 10 learners and Maths teachers. This is one of the many projects using the locally developed MXIT mobile platform and using Moodle to track usage.
- **Game-based and Gesture-based learning:** SchoolNet project managed an intervention for Microsoft USA to evaluate the impact of Xbox 360 Kinect gaming on English language skills of Foundation Phase (Grades 1, 2 and 3) second language learners at a rural primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. This pilot project included the development of specialist training materials for Foundation Phase teachers to focus on second language English acquisition for use with new technologies. These materials incorporate ideas for language supportive pedagogy which are currently being evaluated. .
- **Tablets and Classmates:** SchoolNet is commissioned by Intel to conduct training for teachers in their World Ahead 1:1 Learning Series Program for Classmate computers (CMPC). The advantage of 1:1 learning is that learners have prolonged access to the device and the training is on the promotion of 21st century learning, e.g. creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, being self-directed, information literate, etc. SchoolNet training with the CMPC programme includes a rich source of content and teacher development materials.
- **SchoolNet has a partnership with Sangari South Africa to provide training to teachers who use the Mobiview tablet technology with the iBox.** These devices allow learners to be engaged hands-on and to lead the learning process far more effectively than for example with the use of interactive whiteboards which have proved in many cases, to return teaching methodology to being teacher-centred. Encyclopaedia Britannica content is available with this technology; it is available offline, is credible, unlike many other online sources of content, and is not only valuable for directly increasing learner literacy but it can also address some of the shortcomings in teacher content knowledge.

SchoolNet firmly believes that technology in the hands of competent and motivated teachers, who have received effective training on how to integrate ICTs into teaching, can support our mission to improve learning.

SchoolNet exists because of a community of educators, learners, trainers, mentors, tutors and department officials who have come to rely on SchoolNet for direction and expertise.

SchoolNet has worked in most bands and phases of education, GET, FET as well as Higher Education and some out of school, community work. Not only is SchoolNet

mentioned in the e-Education white paper but we have been continually developing a comprehensive set of principles for ICT professional development and teacher ICT competences that have influenced most aspects of ICT national teacher development frameworks - as well as the NEPAD teacher development framework.

Education management issues related to ICT have been high on the agenda of SchoolNet South Africa. This has been particularly valuable in recent years once provincial departments began appointing officials responsible for ICT coordination in provinces. SchoolNet has an effective capacity building programme for provincial department officials in ICT professional development.

SchoolNet's Professional Development Approach

SchoolNet has developed a range of ICT professional development programmes that dovetail to cover the continuum of ICT teacher education competences and align closely with national department policy. SchoolNet has developed insight into which proven methods work when it comes to the implementation of educational ICT projects.

The training and learning approach adopted and developed by SchoolNet is very specific and based on an educational paradigm as opposed to technological or an industrial ICT training paradigm. This is due to many years of experience in the educational ICT field as well as the formative assessment of course content conducted by the South African Institute of Distance Education. Apart from the elements of good practice that one would expect from generic professional development materials (outcomes based, appropriately pitched for target audience, language and tone, accommodating different learning styles including effective assessment strategies) the SchoolNet South Africa training approach incorporates adult learning principles particularly concerning ICT literacy. These include just in time learning rather than just in case and learning skills in contexts that are meaningful according to the teacher. SchoolNet's ICT integration courses are focused on promoting higher order thinking skills and a spirit of enquiry across all curriculum subjects.

Microsoft's Partners in Learning Programme is a worldwide initiative that is offered to more than 100 countries. SchoolNet South Africa has had the benefit of input from experienced trainers and teachers around South Africa to localise the professional development courses and to ensure that they dovetail with other existing programmes such as Intel® Teach and The Educators' Network, thus forming a continuum for professional development or ICT learning pathway for teachers in South Africa.

The range of courses offered by SchoolNet has been mapped to the outcomes detailed in the Guidelines for Teacher Training and Professional Development for ICT. It can be clearly seen that all competences outlined in the document can be developed through a systematic study of this range of SchoolNet courses.

www.schoolnet.org.za

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