

**Report to Eastern Cape Department of Education
on Microsoft Partners in Learning Training
conducted between 2008 and 2011**

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Introduction

A range of Microsoft Partners in Learning training has been conducted by SchoolNet SA in the Eastern Cape since the inception of the programme in 2005. In addition to funding some of this training, Microsoft continues to fund the development of the Partners in Learning courseware and capacity building for trainers which enables other organizations, corporate social investment initiatives and departments of education to offer Partners in Learning training cost effectively.

Between mid-2008 and mid-2011, a total of 1 676 teachers, principals and district officials benefitted from Microsoft Partners in Learning training. This report described the training that has taken place in the Eastern Cape between 2008 and August 2011 as sponsored by the Eastern Cape Department of Education; corporate sponsors and Microsoft itself.

1. Partners in Learning training sponsored by the Eastern Cape Department of Education

1.1 *ICT Skills and ICT Leadership for Eastern Cape DoE Officials*

The aim of this project was to further develop the ICT capacity of Deputy Chief Education Specialists (DCEs) and Senior Education Specialists (SESs) after Microsoft South Africa sponsored the first capacity building training session for officials in the Eastern Cape in March 2008. The intention of this project was to enable 60 departmental officials to experience the first two courses of the ICT learning pathway continuum – ICT Skills for Teachers and ICT Leadership for Education Managers.

ICT Skills for Teachers training took place from 8 – 10 December 2008 followed by ICT Leadership for Education Managers training which took place on 11 and 12 December 2008. Training took place at the following three venues:

- East London Institute of Education Leadership
- Education Leadership Institute – Umtata
- Summerstrand Hotel – Port Elizabeth

All three venues were suitable. The Port Elizabeth participants worked on laptops and had very fast wireless connectivity. The Umtata Institute had no electricity for half of the first day of the ICT Leadership course and no internet connection on another day. Despite these challenges the trainer was able to complete activities and discussions that did not require computers or internet access during these times. The East London Institute computers were all in good working order with the exception of the demonstration laptop which was quickly replaced.

Unfortunately the East London session got off to a bad start when the appointed trainer failed to arrive on the first day. Luckily one of the participants was able to step in until a replacement facilitator was found. The East London participants were all e-learning subject advisors, and were thus not computer novices. The trainer reported that they “were very cooperative as they knew the scenarios were relevant to their work”.

Some of the Umtata participants complained about the ICT Skills for Teachers training approach which allows for participants to choose their own scenarios. They worried that this approach would make educators lazy and that it was not fast enough, although others thought that the approach encouraged independence and confidence. By the third day the trainer reported that everyone

seemed happy and believed that the course had been productive. The ICT Leadership trainer reported that he “found some of them very sharp on policy and the demands the e-education policy puts on the roles they must play and the challenges they face in the province”.

The Port Elizabeth trainer said that “the participants were very skilled and the job was easy for me. They found the scenarios very fascinating and enjoyed the workshop every step of the way. They are a really good group to work with.”

ICT Skills for Teachers course

This course is usually run over five days however it was condensed for the officials who attended these courses as all had prior computer skills. One of the aims of the course was for the officials to experience the just-in-time training approach and understand why adult learning principles are so important. All trainers commented on the fruitful discussions that took place amongst participants. At the Port Elizabeth session participants all registered on the EDN and were then able to communicate through a blog which everyone enjoyed.

The following quotations indicate that the training sessions were well received:

“Some valuable advice has been communicated to us and as a result we shall leave this place fired up.”

“This workshop is highly interactive, user friendly and interesting too. I’m of the opinion that its nature will be of even more benefit to the teachers in our districts as they will be able to carry on revising the activities on their own in their schools.”

“The approach used in the CD material is best as it allows an individual to work at his/her own pace.”

ICT Leadership for Education Managers course

This course aimed to develop concepts first encountered in the March 2008 capacity building course. The course is designed for decision makers at educational institutions and departmental offices as it is crucial to involve and capacitate senior management in leading the adoption of ICTs. The modules consist of topics such as the following: what managers can do with ICT, management of ICT resources, uses of ICT for both administration and teaching and issues regarding the ICT policy.

The Umtata trainer reported that some officials were new to their posts and benefitted from hearing what others were doing. The group concentrated on the challenges they were experiencing and the solutions they could provide in their districts. The Port Elizabeth group found the scenarios fascinating and beneficial. Although not everyone in the East London group was an education manager they were excited by the course content and fully utilized all opportunities to participate. The following comments were made by participants:

“The workshop was an eye-opener for me as it challenged my understanding on using ICT in a practical manner. The facilitator was very supportive and was able to challenge us to come up with a practical approach in terms of ICT management. In short terms the course was great.”

“The training was good any very useful and relevant to my job description and it also empowered me.”

“The workshop was very impressive but the time allocated was too short. It would be good for us as e-learning coordinators to spend more time with the facilitator as he sometimes went out of his way equipping us with other ICT activities outside the scope of the workshop.”

Whilst on the whole training went well at the three venues, the following issues were flagged to consider for future sessions:

This project was only formally approved the day before training was due to start. This created numerous logistical challenges, as arrangements had to be made at the last minute. Some participants missed sessions and in Port Elizabeth one official came late and left early as she had another workshop to prepare for. This was distracting for the trainer and the rest of the group and meant that some participants did not benefit fully from the course. At the Port Elizabeth ICT Leadership training an official challenged the trainer with various questions about the relevance of the materials and SchoolNet’s role as service provider. Whilst we welcome honest discussion, questions of this nature should be directed to SchoolNet SA as they detract from the purpose of the training and create an unpleasant atmosphere.

1.2 One Step Further Training for Eastern Cape DoE Officials

The aim of this project was to further develop the skills and knowledge of the Eastern Cape Department of Education officials who had benefitted from earlier training. In March 2009, the Microsoft Partners in Learning One Step Further course was offered at the following three venues:

Education Leadership Institute – Umtata
Education Leadership Institute – East London
Education Leadership Institute – Port Elizabeth

All three venues were suitable for the training because the computers were in good working order and the Internet connectivity was reliable. However, there was no air conditioning in any of these venues which made it uncomfortable for all participants. In Port Elizabeth there was no projector and no one was able to source one as the network administrator was on leave.

For both rounds of training, SchoolNet only received the purchase orders just before training was meant to start, which led to some challenges regarding the logistics of the sessions. An added challenge was that the organizers from ECDoE did not install the necessary software prior to the training (Encarta and One Note) for the One Step Further courses as they had promised. This reduced the training time on the first day in all three of the training venues as software had to be installed before training could begin.

In East London, the trainer reported that all 16 trainees attended all the course sessions. The participants were a very lively group of people with varying degrees of ICT skills and competencies. In general, the group had intermediate skills and three of the trainees demonstrated advanced skills. The trainer made particular mention of one district official who was eager to assist his colleagues but who neglected his own work in order to do so.

In Umtata the trainer reported that the 24 participants were eager to learn and very accommodating. The numbers in this group increased every day which meant that not all

participants were present on the first day of training. This is unfortunate as they would have missed the important foundations of the course.

In Port Elizabeth the late start was compounded because the training venue was only opened at 8:45 am by the centre manager. The trainer for this session reported that there were e-learning facilitators and CAT educators amongst the 19 trainees. They were all enthusiastic and willing to explore the materials. The director and the DCES for E-Learning attended the entire course and arrived promptly for training – this is to be commended as it sets a good example for other participants on the course. Unfortunately the trainer reported that some trainees were not well informed about the training venue and went to the incorrect venue on the first day of training.

All trainers reported that training went well despite the slow start. This positive perception of the training is echoed in the comments from participants taken from their evaluation forms:

“Teachers on the ground need to be trained on the use of different forms of effective searching and presenting of information to learners.”

“When the workshop started the unavailability of the software led to a lot of frustrations. The facilitator tried his outmost best to calm the situation and I complement him on that. As much as we would like to use this in our Districts this is going to be a challenge as the One Note is not readily available.”

“It was a great a workshop, I wish teachers could attend these on a regular basis and form clusters in trying to assist each other.”

“The workshop was nice and it enhances creativity towards teaching and learning. The teaching will be learner-centered.”

“Ms One note was interesting because it’s another way of integrating teaching and learning with ICT.”



1.3 ICT Leadership for Education Managers in Port Elizabeth

This project involved training forty education managers in the Port Elizabeth area between September and October 2009 in two sessions. These two sessions are described below:

Port Elizabeth College (Algoa Campus) 28-30 September 2009

Nineteen participants that attended this training from thirteen different schools. The venue had sufficient computers for all participants; however the server was not available and thus the training was run off the CD. Training began well but there was a power failure that led to the group continuing with module two using the handbook.

A range of tasks were covered during the training and principals were able to work through the visual ranking tool. This task led to much discussion around the leadership descriptors. It is very unfortunate that there was no sound available on the computers as this prevented videos from being shown. By the end of the session Principals were able to register on the Thutong educational portal as well as set up email addresses for themselves.

The training was very successful as is indicated by the following comments from Principals:

“One of the best workshops I have attended! Hands on experience allows me to be more effective in my day to day management for the school. Thank you so much for allowing me this great opportunity.”

“I wish there could be a support programme in place that will ensure effective implementation of what was learnt during the 3 days of the course.”

“The ICT workshop was a real eye opener to me; hoping to take the information back to my school environment and make it work for my colleagues and learners at large”

Port Elizabeth College (Algoa Campus) 1-3 October 2009

Fifteen participants that attended this training. These participants did not have basic ICT skills and the trainer thus focused on Module 1 which develops ICT skills for principals using contextualized scenarios. Unfortunately there was still no sound on the computers and attempts to find external speakers failed. Despite beginner skills the principals were able to successfully set up email addresses and register on the Thutong education portal.



The comments below reflect positive thoughts on the course:

“Thank you for a wonderful workshop. It was fruitful but can we have more time training. I feel that 3 days was not enough because there was a lot to learn in this short space of time. With information that I have gained from this workshop I am now better equipped, I am going to assist my colleagues. Thank you very much”

“Thank you for this well organized and good structured workshop. A very friendly and always helpful course leader. Please invite me for any forthcoming workshops.”

“I feel great that I have attended this course because my computer skills have improved. I plan to implement changes in my school as a result of this course.”

“This has been a very good and empowering workshop for me; I feel better now on using ICT programme. I believe this information is going to assist all of us in management and the entire staff at large. Thanks very much. I appreciate this.”

Although the course evaluations show the participants’ eagerness and enthusiasm for the course there were a number of challenges and suggestions for future workshops. These included allowing for more training time especially for participants with few computer skills; maximizing attendance by confirming who would be attending in advance; and district coordinators following up with participants after the training to motivate and assist the managers in implementing their ICT policies.

2. Partners in Learning training sponsored by corporate sponsors

2.2 Telkom Foundation: Alice HelpDesk Training

The Telkom Foundation had donated computers to most of the schools that attended this training and it was hoped that through acquiring technical skills at this course that teachers and learners would be able to maintain their own computer labs. The first group of 33 participants was trained from 29 March – 4 April 2008 and the following schools were represented:

Amajinqi High School	Jeanet Mahonga Primary	Lonwabo Secondary School
Thobelani Senior Sec School	Khobonqaba Primary School	Telkom Foundation Trainers
Eyabantu Senior Sec School	Vulindlela Primary School	
Inyibiba High School	Healdtown High School	

The second group of 23 participants was trained from 7 to 11 April 2008 including representatives from the following schools:

Nzululwazi High School	Ely Primary School	Tyume Primary School
Gobizembe High School	Siphumile Primary School	
Caesar Mlumbi Primary	Sivuyisiwe Primary School	

Training took place at Nzululwazi High School in Alice, Eastern Cape which is very close to Fort Hare University. Both groups had participants who were computer literate and those that had never touched a mouse or a keyboard before. Those who were computer literate became tutors and helped others. The participants all participated actively and they even forgot that there was a mixture of principals, educators and learners all sitting behind the desk.

These extracts from the evaluation forms indicate how much the training was enjoyed:

“This computer training was very fruitful to me because I was really not a computer user because I knew nothing about it. At least I know the parts of the computer both the Microsoft hardware & software. Also the computer terminology and how to connect and all precaution measures and dangers. I always thought that I won’t be able to use the computes because of the high rate of technology. I wish I was born earlier than this. My trainer was a cool, humble somebody who knows what is he doing. Thank you TELKOM you brought light to us with your skilled employers: GOD BLESS.”



“The course had a strong impact on my technical skills. I thus extend a hand gratitude to the following organizations i.e. Schoolnet, Telkom Foundation, Microsoft and the facilitator Mabaso Themba. I will be glad if these worksops could be further run to other schools and communities because they are of utmost benefit.”

“I like to thanks Telkom Foundation for this opportunity as we are in remote areas, these things are very limited to us, and the people who can help (like you) have no interest to visit because of the distances and the condition of the road. Our facilitator was very patient, inspiring, confident and

enthusiastic person. He have done his best to explain the manual and also he was encouraging throughout the course. Everything was normal as also he is time cautious man. We have been disturbed by the bad shedding.”

2.2 BEFSA: HelpDesk Training

The intention of this project was for Microsoft and the Borain Education Foundation (BEFSA) to offer technical skills to teachers from the schools supported by BEFSA. Training took place at the University of Fort Hare in the Eastern Cape from 1 – 4 July 2008. The following schools and institutions were represented at the training:

Qaka Primary School	George Mqalo	Ngangelizwe High School
Bedford Primary School	Eyabantu Secondary School	Ntlama
Dalabuhle High School	Tinis Primary School	Ngcwengxa
Sakhuleka Secondary	Newton Primary School	Gcato
St. Josephs	Imingcangathelo	Jabavu
Maqoma Primary School	Victoria Mxenge	FB District Office
Buhle Primary School	Thembalabantu	University of Fort Hare
Fundisa School	Mbizana	
Emmanuel Primary School	St Patricks	



Unlike at other HelpDesk sessions there were no learners in the group and most schools were only represented by one teacher. As enthusiastic as the trainees were, the trainer felt that the participants may lack the time to implement what they learnt at the course – especially in the case of schools represented by the principal. Many of the trainee reports also showed that participants were interested in becoming technicians – which would be a loss to the schools.

The trainer reported: “Alice, as a small town, does not even have a computer shop where one could buy a simple thing like a keyboard or a mouse. One can imagine the shortage of computer technical skills in such small towns. It is suggested that more training of this nature be offered to schools in such towns like Alice where most teachers are from rural areas. Adding on that, it is strongly advised that learners get involved in such trainings so as to form Helpdesks teams at their schools. In that case such knowledge can be sustained.”

2.3 Multichoice Corporate Social Investment: One Step Further

Multichoice has equipped three previously disadvantaged high schools in the Eastern Cape with multimedia laboratories. To help ensure that teachers will use the equipment to develop their own educational resources the One Step Further courses were offered to participants from the schools. Below is a description of each session along with selected quotations from participants.



Mzikayise Dalasile Senior Secondary School (21 – 23 January 2011)



Although the computers at this school were in good working order, they were running Office 2003 which is not compatible with OneNote which the One Step Further course is written in. Although the trainer demonstrated how OneNote works to the group, they were unable to use the application themselves, and needed to improvise to create their learning objects. The group enjoyed working with Encarta and found the discussions around creating open-ended questions stimulating.

“I gained a lot of information that I will soon use to make teaching and learning life sciences interesting. I learnt how to create open-ended questions that will stimulate critical thinking in learners. “

“I learnt a lot in the course,so now it’s easy to search the information in the in computer, using Encarta and internet.”

Zwelakhe Secondary School (27 – 29 January 2011)

The trainer reported that the first activity was difficult for new users, as after taking pictures they couldn’t insert their pictures into their documents. Despite this, colleagues helped one another and eventually everyone was able to insert a picture from a file or a picture that they had taken themselves. The trainees discussed why they want learners to be able to gather information and where resources be found. Trainees performed very well in this activity and the trainer found that their thinking skills were good. By the end of the session participants were able to work independently with their thinking partners by following the instructions to design a graphic organizer, learning objects and to conduct simple research.

“I feel strongly empowered by the course and I now feel confident that I can integrate ICT more efficiently in my lessons. The course was so important and awakening, I look forward to receiving more training of this nature.”

“I now feel confident in the computer usage and I am going to apply it in my teaching. My learners also will benefit a lot from teaching.”

Letuka Senior Secondary School (4 – 6 February 2011)

The trainer reported that the teachers at this school were very cooperative, participated actively when they did activities and were willing to share what they had created with the rest of other teachers. Highlights of the course included learning how to design learning objects and working with Encarta and OneNote.

“The programme was so good that it gave me additional knowledge ,I appreciate it keep the good work SchoolNet.”

“This training has provided another opportunity to work on courses that eventually assist our learners with technological material. I am very grateful that I was part of it. I gained a lot, thank you SchoolNet and Microsoft.”

3. Partners in Learning Training Sponsored by Microsoft

3.1 ICT Skills for Teachers

In 2007 a decision was made to continue to work in schools that had already received some Partners in Learning training and to focus on offering teachers from these schools more advanced training. Nonetheless, ICT Skills for Teachers was offered to some schools which had shown a tremendous interest in training and where we were confident that the skills developed through this course would be put to good use. Below is a description of the various Microsoft sponsored ICT Skills for Teachers courses that have been run in the Eastern Cape over the past four years.

Jonguhlanga Secondary School

Jonguhlanga Secondary School in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape received 10 computers as a donation. However they were never taken out of the boxes as the school lacked a suitable place to put them and the expertise to connect them. SchoolNet South Africa's Technical Manager, Themba Mabaso



gave the principal of the school, Mrs Grace Lusu, telephonic advice and the school was able to organise a suitably converted and secure classroom. Once the classroom was set up a technician was sent to connect the computers allowing the teachers to complete the ICT Skills for Teachers course. As there were more than 10 teachers to be trained, some of the Dell laptops from Microsoft's Schools Innovation and Technology Centre were couriered to the school which enabled every teacher to have his or her own computer to use for the training.

Initial training for the Jonguhlanga teachers took place in December 2007 and follow up training took place on 31 January and 1 February 2008. The trainer reported that "the school has staff that struggled at first (first time users)" however "the management was supportive. The teachers availed themselves and were always punctual".

The principal of the school wrote: "The hands-on approach was difficult at first as we are used to note taking but we soon acclimatized and enjoyed it. It led to information sharing and helping each other... Initially 14 educators were to be trained but 12 have undergone the training. Angela from Microsoft was kind enough to lend us 5 laptops. This gesture is greatly appreciated and we are extremely humbled. Themba interacted with us now and again and we felt cared for, thank you very much. We were all motivated to the extent that some educators took a decision to buy themselves laptops. The computers are utilized right now."

The delight of the teachers is captured in the comments below:

"The workshop was interesting and motivational. I enjoyed working with it. I have gained new skills especially printing. I was very slow in the beginning, but because of this session I am now faster."

"The training was very fruitful indeed. It encouraged me to have more practice and to buy my own computer so as to improve my teaching."

“Thank you very much to SchoolNet especially Themba who made it possible for this training to take place. Our facilitator was very competent, professional and helpful. There was great enthusiasm of all educators. Sharing was extremely good. A lot of after-care was given by the facilitator (Soso) who phoned to assist when doing our homework.”

Rainy Junior Secondary School

Training for the Rainy Junior Secondary School teachers took place on 12 – 13 September 2008 and 29 – 31 August 2008. The teachers at this school were described as “an enthusiastic group – willing to know more”. Whilst three participants had never used computers before and the others had “rusty” ICT skills, their dedication and willingness to work carefully through the tip sheets resulted in improved computer confidence by the end of the course. The trainer also took care to introduce participants to the Microsoft Digital Literacy Curriculum so that the teachers could continue with this programme independently after the training session. The school did not have access to the internet however the trainer used his laptop to show teachers how the Internet and email work.

“The training was wonderful in that I got unlocked and developed a positive attitude towards computers. I strongly acknowledge this opportunity.”

“For the first day it was so difficult but as the time goes on I develop confidence and I can use it alone.”

St Johns College

Microsoft’s Managing Director, Mteto Nyati, requested that his alma mater receive ICT Skills for Teacher training. Although St John’s College was a recipient of Partners in Learning training in 2005, the principal requested basic ICT Skills training to ensure that all staff would develop some computer literacy and those with some computer skills could improve these.

The teachers from St John’s were very eager to receive this training and this was demonstrated by their 100% attendance. The training was reported to be fun and very enjoyable for the participants. The general computer literacy of participants was quite good and the trainer also reported that it was good to see teachers so willing to help one another. The trainer reflected that there was “positive competitiveness to complete scenarios and to come up with the best end-product”. The participants’ enjoyment of the course is reflected in the comments below:



“This training helped me a lot. I enjoyed every piece of work done and I gained more skills”

“The programme was interesting and it helped to restore my confidence. The trainer was so supportive.”

“This is a brilliant idea for educator upliftment. What I have gained from the course will help me tremendously in achieving my goals and motivating me as an educator. I would really love to see this programme taught to a lot more educators so as to improve delivery in the classroom.”

“It was exciting to be an ICT learner. I have improved my knowledge. It has helped me a lot because it contains information which is useful in our daily life as educators and individuals.”

Through providing this well-resourced school with ICT Skills for Teachers training and an introduction to the Digital Literacy Curriculum we hope to start building a relationship with this school that will lead to increased integration of ICTs into teaching and learning. The fact that majority of teachers displayed confident use of ICT skills and that they were so keen on receiving training indicates that this school is well positioned to receive additional training in the Partners in Learning curriculum. It was also encouraging to meet the acting principal and a teacher from St John’s College at the Microsoft Innovative Schools workshop - Mr.Zolisa Magaqa and Mr. Nzuphelele Msindo.



Good Shepherd Cluster



SchoolNet SA received a request to provide ICT Skills for Teachers training to a cluster of teachers working in the Grahamstown area as part of the Good Sheppard project. Previously teachers from Grahamstown were very involved in training and we hoped that this training session would reignite that interest. The course was supported by the Good Sheppard project but training took place at Rhodes University as they had better facilities, internet access and technical support.

Training for 19 teachers took place in March 2009. The trainer remarked that “The participants were very good. They all showed enthusiasm and determination to master as many application skills as they could.” By the showcase session on the final day of training the teachers were able to explain what artifacts they were most proud of and they also shared useful tips regarding applications that they would be able to use at school. The trainer remarked that it would be fantastic to offer a more advanced course to this group of committed and skilled teachers. We will therefore endeavor to invite teachers from these schools to any clustered training held in the area.

Classmate PC Recipients

ICT Skills for Teachers training was held for teachers in the Eastern Cape whose schools had received donations of Intel Classmate PCs. The intention of this project was to equip teachers with basic computer skills in the hope that they would then feel more confident about using the Classmate PCs with their learners.

Training took place at Caritas Primary School in the Eastern Cape in July 2009 and included participants from ten schools in the Uitenhage District. The trainer reported that the teachers who attended the training were actively involved, with most of the participants completing basic and intermediate scenarios and some teachers also attempting the advanced scenarios. Whilst the teachers found the scenarios useful and applicable to their professional work and reported enjoying the training approach – many remarked that they would have enjoyed more time to practice their computer skills.

The following participant comments give an indication of how well the training was received:

“I must have my own computer to help learners and community. The training was good. The department must also help to buy computers.”

“I enjoyed this training. I have learnt many ways especially in addition and percentages. I thanks the trainer for guiding us. And I also learnt that by practicing using the computer, at the end I will be an expert.”

“The Training was so effective.”

ICT Skills for Dwesa Teachers

In February 2011 an ICT Skills for Teachers course was offered at Rhodes University for teachers involved in the Dwesa project, which involves equipping rural schools with computers. Microsoft was asked to provide this training by the Lecturer in ICT Education who wanted teachers who were involved in the Dwesa project to be trained on how to use computers. A new lab had recently been launched by Dwesa and it was hoped that this training would help to ensure that the resources are fully utilized.

The trainer reported that many of the participants at the training were so engrossed in their work that they did not want to take a break. She also remarked that they took the training seriously and appreciated the opportunity that they had been offered. The lecturer had paired the teachers so that beginner computer users sat next to more experienced colleagues. The participants found the activities very useful as there were scenarios applicable to their needs. Highlights included learning how to make documents using publisher and using features in Excel to create graphs and add colour to their workbooks.

University of Fort Hare – ICT Skills for Teachers support

The Fort Hare University now includes the ICT Skills for Teachers course as part of its Bachelor of Education degree. To facilitate this, university lecturers were trained to offer the course in 2008 as part of a Microsoft sponsored capacity building training. In subsequent years, Microsoft has covered the costs of SchoolNet SA providing each student with a Partners in Learning CD and each student who successfully completed the course was issued with a certificate. In turn, the college lecturers provided a report and attendance registers at the end of each semester to keep a record of this training.

ICT Skills for Teachers/ Principals at University of Fort Hare

Twenty participants attended this training at University of Fort Hare in April 2008. The venue was adequately prepared with sufficient computers; however the Internet was not functional on the first day and load shedding disrupted some session. To compensate for this, the training session was extended to ensure that the required coursework was covered.

The participants were reported to be happy to have been given this opportunity and were interested in seeing how the PiL programmes integrate with each other. The participants were computer literate and this helped them develop useful tools for use in their respective roles. Some teachers expressed a need to have more access to computers to practice what they have learnt.

Train the trainer: ICT Skills for Teachers

This session was held in April 2008 to develop additional capacity in the Eastern Cape to be able to offer the ICT Skills for Teachers course. This training followed immediately from the ICT for teachers' course and it was assumed that the participants would be school principals and University of Fort Hare faculty members but general show of hands regarding roles and affiliation made it apparent that the group consisted of only one faculty member and two principals. Despite the participants generally not being faculty members they were all able to produce presentations and work with ease on the scenarios. The training model was discussed at length. Participants were then asked to lead the session and to give each other feedback. All participants that attended this training are suitably qualified to conduct ICT skills courses for teachers.

The following comments indicate that the training was well received and we were delighted to be able to add additional people to our pool of trainers:

"I am very pleased and happy about this training because it really helped me to know or do things that I did not know before and also meet other people. I will keep doing the exercises in my free time."

"Actually the course was a bit more advanced and I have learnt a lot. There is more that I know now and it has motivated me greatly."

"One might think that he/she knows but the exercise part might prove one wrong. I thought I knew, but I discovered that there is still a lot I need to learn in order to be a specialist."

"Training was relevant and useful. Could we have technical training next time so as to fix PCs when there are problems."

3.2 WebQuests – ICT Integration

In 2008 a decision was made to offer WebQuests training to clusters of teachers who had the necessary ICT skills, and where possible to include teachers who had already completed preliminary Partners in Learning training. In April 2008 clustered Microsoft WebQuests training took place in East London with teachers from the following schools in attendance:



Vukuhambe School
Umthiza
Sandisiwe

George Randell Primary
Claredon Primary
Byletts Combined School

Stirling Primary School
Stirling High School

Many of the participants on this course were completing the Peer Coaching programme and expressed an interest in WebQuests as they saw this as a practical tool which they could use for ICT integration.

The WebQuests training session was only two days long and was also disrupted by load shedding, which resulted in some participants not fully completing or adapting their WebQuests. Despite this, the training was a great success with the trainer reporting that she “thoroughly enjoyed working with this group of teachers. All participants were computer literate and passionate about the challenges of learning with the integration of ICT.”



Selected feedback from the trainees appears below:

“Interesting – and I look forward to trying to compile more Webquests on my own since I can see how it will engage learners, keep them focused and provide them with a great sense of achievement and give them something for which they will take proud ownership since it the completed WebQuest is their own work.”

“When I first attempted some of these activities I thought they were easy but as we continued working I found the web quest activities challenging and did not require someone who will look at face value. Your critical thinking and creativity skills should be involved in these activities. To me this workshop was an eye opener I am glad I had an opportunity of attending this one.”

“Fantastic, wonderful way to revitalize your outlook on teaching. The pupils in our Grade will thoroughly enjoy this new concept. I hope that I can continue to perfect this wonderful idea. Presentation of the course was done in a relaxed and informative manner.”

“I am very excited about this and look forward to using it in the classroom. I do feel a little rushed to have my WebQuest ready for evaluation and would have appreciated more time. I have thoroughly enjoyed this!!”



“Very practical. A useful method to use. Way to integrate technology into the classroom Idea of not having to start from scratch but being able to use ideas from other teachers and then adapting to meet own classroom needs”

3.3 ICT Leadership for Education Managers

ICT Leadership for Education Managers was offered at the Education Leadership Institute in September 2009 for managers from WillowPark, Pfefferville and St Johns' College. A total of 15 managers were trained on this course. On the whole the participants were very positive, with the trainer reporting "The trainees were happy with the training. They wished that all principals were there. According to them this is a very good management course in terms of ICT Leadership."



The trainer began the course by introducing himself and asking participants to introduce themselves and to give a brief profile their knowledge of ICTs. The group completed the scenarios together – except when an activity required participants from the same school to work together. Some of the time was also spent giving feedback to groups and engaging the participants in discussions, especially of good practice.

With the exception of a district official who claimed he did not learn a great deal from the workshop, and a suggestion that participants first complete a computer literacy course prior to this course to prevent time being wasted, the feedback was largely very positive, as illustrated by the comments below:

"My sincere appreciation to Schoolnet for affording us the opportunity to form part of this wonderful course. My personal thanks to Saul, our presenter. I am a SA SAMS presenter in the EC Province and find its integration into this programme very useful."

"Course content very useful, but mostly applicable to principals as they are the authoritarians of schools. Interacting and groupwork broadened my understanding of other schools and interesting ideas came up. Facilitator helpful and patient. Registration on Thuthong site fantastic!"

"Truly speaking, it's been an educational and inspiring training. I don't regret my coming here. The facilitator presented his work exceptionally well. I have learnt a lot including Thusong portal. Well done Schoolnet for this inspiring adventure in an attempt to not only improve our education but to make this nation information technologically-wise"



3.4 Peer Coaching

The peer coaching programme is a whole-school professional development model that is aimed at training teacher leaders to serve as coaches for colleagues in order to encourage engaged learning and ICT Integration into teaching and learning practices. The peer coaching programme is a nine month programme (five workshops) that prepares teacher leaders on how to improve lesson design, mastering coaching skills and workshop activities that highlight engaged learning strategies.

In the first workshop, coaches attend with their principal. They discuss who they will coach at their respective schools, how the principal will make the schools' resources available and they set up a coaching plan for the year. The second workshop, is centred around communication strategies to

make staff aware of the peer coaching programme as well as communication skills that will promote discussion around improving learning activities. The third workshop focuses attention on lesson improvement techniques to assist teachers in designing authentic and engaging problem-based tasks for use during teaching. The fourth workshop brings together communication skills, lesson improvement skills and knowledge gained during the past workshops to refine existing goals for teachers. In addition roadblocks are analysed and solutions are brainstormed. The fifth workshop culminates with a discussion between the principal and coach on effective school-based professional development and then explores further how peer coaching can assist with this model. Throughout the process, coaches explore online and share resources as a way of keeping abreast of new developments in education and how to use these effectively in coaching.

In 2008, 2009 and 2011 Peer Coaching clusters have been run in East London and Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape. These clusters are described in more detail below with comments from the participants following the descriptions of training.

2008 – East London Cluster

For this cluster, SchoolNet aimed to include schools that had previously received Partners in Learning training. The following East London schools were included in this cluster:

AW Barnes Primary	Clarendon High School	Nosizwe Senior Secondary
Clarendon Preparatory	Hudson Park High School	Stirling High School
Clarendon Primary School	Hudson Park Primary	Stirling Primary School

“It was extremely valuable to become aware of the extent to which computers are being used by other schools in various subjects and at different levels. The realization came to me that it is imperative that we become part of this trend as soon as possible... Thank you for this opportunity for enlightenment!”

“I know that I have been successful when my peer comes to me, excited about what he/she has planned and eager to put the project to the test with their pupils. Also, if your peer comes to show you the end result of their lesson or project and is eager to get your feedback. Thirdly, if your peer asks you when you are available to help them plan another or asks advice for the next project.”

2008 - E-Monti Cluster

The following schools were included in this cluster. It should be noted that three of these schools have now completed 5 of the 6 the Partners in Learning bouquet of courses.

George Randall High School	Clarendon High	Byletts Combined
Stirling High	Sandisiwe High School	Byletts
	Mdantsane High School	Qhasana Senior Secondary

“This programme has had a more positive spinoff than many other development programmes. The enormous preparation, planning and practical examples allowed the staff to practice the skills and become highly proficient and therefore enhanced the quality of learning and teaching. Thank you for a well-structured and effective programme. Very professionally presented. Many thanks”

“I believe that my slant on teaching has definitely been changed and I am a converted disciple! Our school is focused on bringing IT into teaching with more and more classrooms becoming IT equipped. The things we have learnt this year I am definitely going to be trying to put more of into practice next year with my department and my peers. “

2009 – East London Cluster

This cluster included participants from the following schools:

Stirling High School	Kusile Comprehensive
Sandisiwe High School	Qhasana Secondary School
Byletts Combined School	AW Barnes School
Stirling Primary School	



This cluster was not supported by leadership in the participating schools. This lack of commitment from management hampered the ability coaches to cultivate their colleagues. Despite this, the following extracts indicate that the coaches saw the value of the training:

“Collaboration is important because one is part of a group and there is also a sense of sharing. This sharing can foster more confidence as well as generate knowledge for said purposes”

“I strongly feel that peer coaching is a necessity in our educational institutions. As part of Staff development it will minimise problems such as mismanagement, maladministration, poor communication etc if it is properly and effectively instilled; it will reduce a mammoth work load for teachers and learners. Since it is ICT- Internet based it will further provide skills such as communication and collaboration with peers, management , the global adult community and learners.”

2009 - Port Elizabeth Cluster

The following schools participated in the cluster

Getrude Shope Primary	Phaphani High School	Gamble Street Secondary
Malabar Primary School	Ilinge Primary School	Malmaison Primary school
Collegiate Junior School	Solomon Mahlangu Sec.	Siyaphambili School
AV. Bukani Primary School	Pellrus Primary School	Sydenham Primary School



This was the first time that a Peer Coaching cluster was hosted in Port Elizabeth. This cluster involved mostly schools from disadvantaged communities. The nomination process was difficult at first but once the group got going they were very happy to be on the programme.

This cluster was not adequately supported by leadership in the participating school and the lack of commitment from management could have hampered the potential of the programme and destroyed the coaches’ enthusiasm. Despite this, by the end of their workshops the



Buluga Farm School
Cradock District Office
De Vos Malan High School

group had plans to grow the programme and even went so far as to nominate colleagues to attend the following year.

2011 East London Cluster

The following schools participated in this cluster:

Fikile Bhengu Primary	Nxuba Primary School
Komga Public School	Pefferville Primary School
Kopano Secondary School	Stirling Primary School
Matthew Goniwe Comp	Willow Park Primary
Nonyaniso Primary	

Training is hosted at Stirling Primary School which has and has a spacious laboratory with 35 workstations.



coaches to participate in this course.

The 2011 cluster consists of teachers from 11 schools and a representative from the District office. Schools were mostly clustered around East London; however the district official and teachers from Nxuba Primary from Cradock travel in excess of 200 km (one way); teachers from Kopano Secondary of travelled in excess 150 km from Queenstown and Nonyaniso Primary in Middleburg which is in excess of 250km away. This certainly displays the dedication of

Principals are usually only invited to two workshops – one at the beginning and one at the end. Despite this, one principal so enjoyed the first session that he has since attended every other session.

The positive, productive working relationship of the group was described by the trainer as follows:
“There is a good relationship between the facilitator and the coaches. Everybody’s ideas are respected. It was so nice working in groups as respect was the key aspect. I definitely hope that after this my teachers will be more than ready to coach others”

“The training is giving me more insight in using ICT in teaching and learning”

“I learned that using ICT in the classroom needn’t be complicated! It can be used to enhance a lesson. I also learned what a good lesson plan should look like, and how to revise them. We are teaching digital learners!”

“I have learnt the importance of setting up a well-structured lesson plan as this can make a big difference when doing projects.”



2011 - Port Elizabeth Cluster

Training in Port Elizabeth is held at Algoa College which has sufficient working computers with internet connectivity. Mr Sammy Bouwers, a district coordinator is always on hand to assist with technical challenges. Eleven schools are participating in this course and teachers from Blueilliesbush Primary school travel in excess of 250km from Tsitsikamma to attend this training:

Blueilliesbush Primary	Malmaison Primary School	St Theresa Primary School
Daniels Primary School	Pellsrus Primary School	Woodlands Primary School
Helenvale Primary School	Sivuyiseni Primary School	Zamukukhanya Primary
Malabar Primary School	Solomon Mahlangu	

In the main, coaches found that there were ample opportunities to practice collaboration and communication during workshops with sufficient hands on activities to be engaging and encourage improved skills in coaching.

"I found this workshop very informative and I learnt a fair amount about what is expected of a coach."

"It is a challenging and exciting process"

"there is a lot one gains from (watching) presentations of different groups on how to improve lessons"

"this is a very rewarding session. I feel very privileged to part of this programme"

3.5 Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum and Innovation Workshops

The Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum is an annual event that recognizes teachers who are using technology in creative and engaging ways in the classroom. The Eastern Cape has consistently been one of the best performing provinces in terms of the number of entries submitted, and a number of teachers from the Eastern Cape have made it to the finals of this competition.

In May 2008, Yolanda Peter from Byletts Combined School presented her Electricity Audit project at the first ever Pan African Innovative Teachers Forum which was held in Ghana. In 2009, Nicci Hayes from Victoria Girls High represented South Africa at the regional forum in Mauritius, and from there, she was selected to attend the Worldwide Innovative Education Forum in Brazil.



In 2009 SchoolNet SA began running Innovation Workshops in various provinces to boost the quality and quantity of entries received into the Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum. These workshops facilitated by a former Innovative Teacher winner or finalist and expose participants to a range of innovative ideas for projects. The most recent workshops – held in East London and Port Elizabeth in March 2011 are described in more detail below:

East London Innovation Workshop

This well attended workshop included teachers who had come from as far away as Port Elizabeth, King Williamstown, Dutywa, Flagstaff, Komga, Byletts and Mdantsane as well as four teachers who are currently part of the Peer Coaching cluster in East London. The workshop was also attended Drik Greeff, newly appointed CES for E-Learning in the Eastern Cape, who had been very supportive of the workshops and who had helped to distribute invitations across the province.



The trainer reported that 90% of the participants had very good computer skills which allowed her to complete most of the activities in the scheduled time. She was also able to include demonstrations on how to use Auto-collage and Mouse Mischief as most of the participants had not previously seen these tools.

The detailed feedback from the participants indicates how engaged they were by the course. For example, one participant stated “I enjoyed finding out how other people plan their lessons. This helped in learning how one can approach different topics and be innovative, how to involve the learners and how ICTs can be used in teaching and learning. One has to look at the end product of the lesson, how are learners or community going to benefit from the outcomes of the lesson”.

Our hope is that as a result of the workshop, participants will develop their own projects and they will share what they learnt with colleagues. In some cases we believe this will happen as at least one teacher stated: “Thank you for the opportunity to attend a course like this. It definitely motivated me to become a much more innovative teacher. I will go back to my school and motivate my colleagues to have a paradigm shift in our approach to preparing for our classes.”



Port Elizabeth Innovation Workshop

The Port Elizabeth Innovation Workshop took place at Laerskool Setlaarspark which is headed up by Andre Schlemmer – a previous Innovative Teacher finalist. Andre was so keen for there to be an Innovation workshop in Port Elizabeth that he offered his school as a venue, assisted with the arrangements and helped to distribute invitations amongst his network of teachers. Having a Peer Coaching cluster in Port Elizabeth as well as supportive district personnel also helped to get the word out about the workshop. In fact three district officials attended the workshop and promised to pass on the information that was provided to their respective districts.

Whilst the facilitator, Nicci Hayes, only expected three to five teachers from her group to enter the Innovative Teacher competition this year, she noted that on the whole the group was far more ICT literate than the group she had trained in Grahamstown in 2010. She credited this better caliber of

participant to the more explicit invitation that made it clear that the workshop was aimed at teachers with strong computer skills.

An activity that the group was reluctant to participate in was the activity that involved reworking projects to make them more innovative. They claimed that the projects were already fantastic and that they could not think of improvements. The facilitator suggested that in future instead of improving previous entries, they could be asked to think of a past project they themselves had done, and explain to others how they would improve it in light of the criteria of the Innovative Teachers competition.

As with other groups, the participants at this workshop enjoyed seeing and hearing about previous inspiring projects. According to trainer Nicci Hayes, they also enjoyed “being told that you don’t have to be superwoman to enter and do well”.

Conclusion and Recommendations

SchoolNet SA is proud of the training that we have offered to teachers in the Eastern Cape and believe that we have helped to empower teachers to begin to use ICT effectively in education. We are grateful to Microsoft for their continued commitment to enhancing the training materials and developing capacity in the province. It is this investment that enables the DoE and other sponsors to be able to offer quality training more affordably to a larger number of schools. Our hope is that we will be able to continue to offer training to more teachers at more schools in this province and that we will be able to go back to schools where we have already offered some training to continue to develop skills further. We look forward to working with the Department of Education, Microsoft and other stakeholders to continue to offer professional development opportunities in the Eastern Cape.

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SchoolNet SA – August 2011