



## **Report on the Microsoft Global Forum Dubai: 22-23 February 2015**

The Microsoft Global Forum - Dubai took place on 22 - 23 February 2015 as part of the Microsoft Global Forum event series. The Forum brought together more than 400 education leaders, government officials and partners from the Middle East and Africa who are supporting students around the world to be better prepared for work and life.

### **The South African Delegation to the Microsoft Global Forum - Dubai**

Included in the South African delegation were the following Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts who participated in the Educators Track:

Karen Stadler from Elkanah House Primary in Cape Town, Western Cape presented her Travelling Rhino Project as an example of how technology could be used for "Connecting Educators, Students and Classrooms".

Lyneth Crighton of Brescia House School in Bryanston, Gauteng spoke about a number of collaborative projects that had been undertaken at her school which illustrated "Concepts and Contexts for Deep Learning" including her most recent learning activity entitled Risk: The Game of Global Domination

Phuti Ragophala, the principal of Pula Madibogo Primary School in Mankweng, Limpopo relished every opportunity presented by the Dubai Forum to network with other teachers and to share what she had learnt using social media via @PhutiRagophala. Phuti's Sway depicting her experience of the Dubai Global Forum can be viewed here.

Kathryn Riva from Micklefield School in Cape Town, Western Cape has shared an impressive thirteen different learning activities on the [Microsoft Educator Network](#) illustrating how she has managed to integrate technology into a number of her Grade 5 lessons. We are sure Kathryn has returned from the Forum with more ideas to try out in her grade five classroom.

In addition to the Educators Track, the School Leaders Track provided an opportunity for principals and officials to share their experiences of using technology in the classroom. South Africa's Microsoft World Tour School – Brescia House School – was represented by ICT Coordinator Lyneth Crighton and Head of the High School Benedikte Nott. During the Forum Benedikte had an opportunity to share Brescia House School's experiences with opting for a one-to-one laptop solution as well as their experiences of using Microsoft Office 365.

Megan Rademeyer of SchoolNet SA was a panellist for a session entitled "Concepts and Contexts for Deep Learning". In this session Megan shared SchoolNet SAs experiences of running the Microsoft 21st Century Learning Design course and how two teachers subsequently incorporated some 21st century skills into their lessons. Saretjie Musgrave of the ICTISE Unit of the University of the Free State spoke about the Technology Enriched Instruction course as a worthwhile option for vocational training for pre-service teachers. Both Megan and Saretjie enjoyed the opportunity to share their respective organisations experiences of implementing Microsoft programmes within the South African contexts.



An official from the South African National Department of Basic Education, Claude Tshimanika and various officials from the Mpumalanga, Free State, Gauteng and Northern Cape Departments of Education were invited by Microsoft to be part of the Global Education Forum. They enjoyed meeting their counterparts from other counties, having a round table discussion with Anthony Salcito (Vice President: Microsoft Worldwide Education), visiting a school in Dubai, and participating in a South African envisioning workshop run by Jaye Richards-Hill (Tablet Academy). The group enjoyed learning from the international perspectives offered at the Forum, but also used the time in Dubai as an opportunity to forge relationships between departments which will lead to more collaboration between provinces upon their return to South Africa. Finally the group included representatives from Microsoft South Africa partner companies, Intel, Compute and Spintelligent who had an opportunity to network with the Microsoft officials from across the region.



### **Programme Highlights**

The Global Forum – Dubai included a number of keynotes of which the most notable was when Microsoft Worldwide Education Vice President, Anthony Salcito gave a thought provoking presentation on the real value of incorporating technology into education. He noted that buying a device for every child should not be the dream – and that instead it should be about shifting potential and providing access to learning. He further noted that deployment is the easy part of a device rollout and that changing pedagogy is the real challenge. Cigdem Ertem of Intel presented Intel’s vision for enhancing teaching and learning and emphasised Intel’s partnership with Microsoft. Various representatives of the United Arab Emirates Education Ministry also welcomed delegates to the event.

Microsoft’s Chief Technology Officer, Brad Tipp presented a session on Cloud Applications and Devices for Education Leaders and Educators. Brad posed the question of whether “BYOD equals Bring Your Own Disaster” and then discussed how being able to use Microsoft applications across platforms helps to mitigate some of the challenges of teaching in a diverse and changing educational landscape. Other presentations showed how Microsoft tools including Office 365, OneNote, Digital Ink, Office Mix and Sway could be incorporated in the classroom. Many of these presentations included actual examples of schools and teachers using the technology in meaningful ways which helped teachers to think of ways in which they could make use of the tools in their own contexts.

The Innovation Area of the Global Forum provided delegates with an opportunity to experience different tools and devices in action and to ask questions about the products on offer. Whilst teachers did not formally share their projects as at previous Forums, sharing took place informally and many sessions incorporated teachers talking about their projects.

In the closing session, each country’s Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts and Showcase Schools were applauded and the teachers and school leaders who were present at the Forum were presented with certificates recognising their achievements by Eve Psalti, Microsoft Director Worldwide Education.



### Special Events

On the first evening of the Global Forum – Dubai, delegates were treated to a Regional Dinner at another hotel in Dubai. This dinner provided an enjoyable evening of networking and an opportunity to view Dubai from high up in a skyscraper. On the second evening of the Global Forum the South African delegation had dinner on a traditional dhow whilst cruising up and down the Dubai Creek. The evening provided the South African officials and teachers with an opportunity to discuss their experiences of the Forum in an informal setting.

On 24 February 2015 delegates could attend the GESS Exhibition which included displays from countless vendors of educational technology, hardware and software providers, toy and furniture distributors. It was great to see what was on offer which one may not have seen before at a similar South African exhibition. A programme of speakers was also available for delegates to attend workshops of their choosing at no cost.

### Conclusion

All members of the South African delegation enjoyed the opportunity to be exposed to the latest Microsoft technology and to attend sessions on how this can be used to enhance education. Other sessions and panel discussions for the different tracks also gave delegates a chance to both share their South African experiences and to learn from the experiences of delegates from other countries. As with other Microsoft Forums – the true benefit of the event was in the networking – both amongst the South African delegation and with teachers, officials and school leaders from other countries. Our thanks to Microsoft for this enjoyable professional development opportunity.

**Megan Rademeyer**

**Programmes Manager**

**SchoolNet SA – February 2015**