

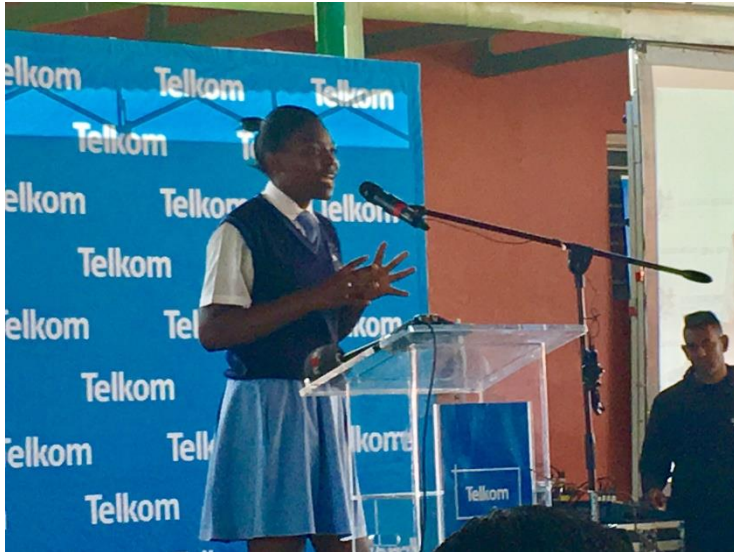
Telkom 's Connected Schools Programme



On Wednesday 19 July 2017, the Telkom Foundation announced a major investment in education when it pledged more than R 200 million over the next five years to contribute towards improving the quality of teaching and learning with a specific focus on Mathematics, Science and English in disadvantaged communities. The programme is currently being rolled out in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng Provinces. SchoolNet South Africa has been involved in the programme since it started in Ga-Rankuwa, Tshwane West where five schools received high-tech infrastructure as part of Telkom's Connected Schools Programme (CSP). SchoolNet was contracted to provide teacher professional development for Grade 8 teachers aligned to the other training aspects on offer, which includes technical training, Extra Marks content and learning management system training, cloud-based tools

training as well as how to integrate these into classroom activities. The Professional Development programme started with Change Leadership for Technology Integration.

This Winterveldt learner, Malta Ngcobo made an impassioned speech at the CSP launch event, saying,



“ We come from disadvantaged areas but we cannot let circumstances define us. We are so grateful. “

At the event, Telkom also announced its Supplementary Programme to support Grade 8 learners through to matric to improve the quality of their pass rate. Approximately R 130 million of the total investment will be used for the Supplementary Programme, which includes the training of teachers. This also includes a focus on the psycho-social element,

which aims to sustain the learners’ performance through support and understanding the effect their home environment can have on their academic performance and life skills. Each of the five schools will receive the upgrade to meet the 21st century look and feel with new furniture and a computer laboratory for 50 learners. Approximately 943 learners and 60 teachers will receive 2-in-1 tablets and 60 laptops, which are loaded with educational content. The computer laboratories will be protected by 24-hour security.

The programme directors for the launch event were Unathi Msengana and DJ Sbo. Mr Sipho Maseko, Telkom’s Group CEO commented, “It has been made very clear that we have a significant skills gap in South Africa, as well as a lack of connectivity in certain areas. While the focus on subjects such as Mathematics and Science at school level has increased, this has not been supported by actual large-scale investment. We are changing that. Through this type of investment, we are training learners and teachers, equipping schools and supporting the DBE by creating environments which encourage growth and development”.



The next area to be targeted by the Telkom Foundation will be Port Elizabeth with the rest of the country benefiting from a phased roll out. The programme aims to benefit 3,000 learners in year one with 934 learners currently taking part.

Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, said: “The use of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) in education is increasingly becoming an important medium for complementing the delivery of curriculum in most developing countries, and most definitely for our country. Therefore,

the continuous and valued contribution by Telkom to assist the Department in placing key ICT devices in the hands of our teachers and learners, has the potential to break the digital divide and indeed assist us in improving the ICT professional development of all teachers involved". The full text of Minister Motshekga' s address can be accessed from this link:

<http://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/Speeches/tabid/950/ctl/Details/mid/6106/ItemID/5426/Default.aspx>