

ICT DISABILITY CHAMBER MEETING

On the 10th of September SchoolNet SA was invited to attend the first ICT Disability Chamber Meeting held at Burgers Park hotel in Pretoria.

Purpose

The purpose was to focus on the empowerment of persons with Disability within the ICT sector. The aim was to ensure that they eliminate the barriers to access by persons with disabilities and promote mainstreaming of the Disability perspective in ICT policy formulation and implementation and to form a platform of engagement that brings together government, the private sector, academia and civil society with a view to accelerating the implementation of government ICT policies and sector plans. It is also aimed at enhancing trust between various stakeholders and to cement partnerships between all role players.

Objective

The objective of the meeting was to discuss and draft the terms of reference for the chamber and its integration into 4 other chambers of the ICT Forum. DR Praveena Surkhaj-ELY was the chairperson for the day.

Programme of Action for Disability and ICT Chamber

Dr Praveena Surkhaj-ELY welcomed everyone attending the meeting. She spoke of the 4 chambers and emphasised that the aim was to create a platform, to develop working programmes, to discuss timelines and to assign roles and responsibilities. She emphasised that chambers were also created to share ideas.

She spoke of the terms of reference and some of those terms of reference were :

- To establish teams that will implement various aspects of the work programmes
- Monitor the work of the task teams to ensure there is progress
- To engage with various stakeholders and ensure that those contributions are forwarded to the chamber
- Draft a specific year work programme that each chamber will focus on.

Mr Matlole Rampika spoke of the guiding principles for National ICT. The National Development Plan, SA connect and ICT Policy Preview Panel's Recommendation Report should have:

- Coordinated approach
- Ensure inclusiveness of voices of all stakeholders
- Work programmes of all chambers must be shaped by a desire to attain the vision 2030 of the National Development Plan that seeks to create an inclusive information society and knowledge economy.

After the speaker, the attendees were requested to divide into 4 groups (chambers) i.e **Social Chamber**, **Economic Chamber**, **Governance and Security Chamber** and **ICT and Disability chamber**.





These chambers were requested to develop their own terms of reference and to determine a specific work programme. After the discussions, feedback was given to the house including the chairperson. The chairpersons would convene the meetings of the chambers four times a year. Ms Thandi Mdlalose gave a vote of thanks and mentioned that the dates would be communicated through email to the attendees.

Thandekile Verah Ramabu

SchoolNet SA

www.schoolnet.org.za