

**Report to Limpopo Department of Education
on Microsoft Partners in Learning Training
conducted in Limpopo from 2008 - 2011**

Contents

Contents.....	1
1 Partners in Learning training sponsored by corporate sponsors	2
1.1 Vodacom Foundation – Training in Limpopo Schools	2
ICT Leadership for Education Managers	2
HelpDesk	3
ICT Skills for Teachers	4
Peer Coaching.....	9
One Step Further	10
1.2 Multichoice Corporate Social Investment – Training in Limpopo Schools.....	10
1.3 INSPIRE -Tswala Phahla Training.....	12
2 Partners in Learning Training Sponsored by Microsoft	14
2.1 Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum and Innovation Workshops.....	14
2.2 One Step Further Clustered Training for Tzaneen	15
2.3 ICT Skills for Teachers training for Classmate PC Recipients	15
2.1 ICT Skills for Teachers training for Vele School.....	16
Conclusion and Recommendations	17

Introduction

A range of Microsoft Partners in Learning training has been conducted by SchoolNet SA in Limpopo 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 to more schools than Microsoft could fund itself.

In the past three years, 1 183 Limpopo teachers have benefitted from Microsoft Partners in Learning Training. This is comprised of 191 teachers in FY 2009; 352 teachers in FY 2010 and 640 teachers in the 2011 financial year.

This report outlines the training that has taken place in Limpopo between 2008 and June 2011 as sponsored by the Limpopo Department of Education; corporate sponsors and Microsoft itself.

1 Partners in Learning training sponsored by corporate sponsors

1.1 Vodacom Foundation – Training in Limpopo Schools

As part of their commitment to improving South African schools, in 2010 Vodacom commissioned SchoolNet SA to offer Microsoft Partners in Learning training to 35 schools in Limpopo. In 2010 the following courses were offered:

- ICT Leadership for Education Managers
- ICT Skills for Teachers
- Student HelpDesk

And in 2011 the following courses are taking place:

- Peer Coaching
- Innovation workshop
- One Step Further
- WebQuests

Below is a brief description of the various courses that have been run as part of this initiative:

ICT Leadership for Education Managers

- **Vhembe District of Limpopo (29 – 31 March 2010)**

According to the trainer “the workshop was an eye opener to a lot of the trainees and they rated the training as very much important”. Whilst the trainer reported that the participants had said that they wished more teachers could receive this training – it was disappointing that only 11 of the 25 participants who were invited to the course attended.

This course was held at Tondalushaka High School – one of the schools involved in this programme. There were sufficient computers available however the courseware had not been installed prior to the training and there was a power cut on the second day. To compensate for these delays the group agreed to stay late on the final day to complete the training.

- **Mopani District of Limpopo (23 – 25 April 2010)**

The trainer described the participants at this session as “computer literate” and “very committed”. She noted that the participants attended the course over a long weekend and were still prepared to complete homework tasks in the evenings which they brought in for discussion the following day. Two of the participants indicated that they were planning to participate in the Microsoft Innovative Teachers Awards. By the end of the training each school went home with a training plan for their school.

For this course Tzaneen Primary was used as a venue as none of the schools included in the training rollout was suitable. At Tzaneen Primary the computers were all working and the internet access was good. The trainer noted that the course “went very well and I am pleased with the outcome. It was a pleasure to work with these educators”.

HelpDesk

- **Vhembe District of Limpopo (10 – 14 June 2010)**

This training took place at Mbilwi Secondary School which is one of the schools participating in this project and it included learners and teachers from three schools in the cluster. According to the trainer the venue was well equipped with 50 computers and internet access and the principal and teacher in charge of the computer room were always on hand to assist when something was required. For example, there are sections of the course that require the use of the command line and administrator privileges and the computer room teacher was able to change the user permissions to accommodate this. The school also provided old system units that the group was able to open to check the internal components.



The times for the training were adjusted to accommodate the World Cup games that were being played at the time – however through starting early and shortening breaks no training time was lost. The trainer reported that overall the training went well as the group was small and easy to manage.

- **Mopani District of Limpopo (21 – 23 May and 29 – 30 May 2010)**



This course was divided into two parts – three days of initial training and a two day follow up. It was well attended by 22 learners and 6 educators who were described by the trainer as “cooperative and enthusiastic”.

Training took place at Mandela Barloworld Secondary School which offers CAT as a subject. This venue had enough computers for each delegate to have his or her own computer to work on and the CAT teacher was on hand to help where required. The trainees also remarked that the catering team was very good.

- **Mopani District of Limpopo – Giyani** (30 and 31 July and 1, 7 and 8 August 2010)

The initial training for this course took place at Tivumbeni Education Centre however the follow up training was moved to Mbilwi Secondary School as this venue was closer to home for most of the participants. Unfortunately only 17 of the 30 participants that had been expected attended the training and of these many of the learners battled to communicate in English. Despite the challenges the trainer reported that “for them this was the beginning of them no longer being ordinary educators and learners at their schools but also computer technicians”. The trainer concluded that the session was a success and that the participants became increasingly more self-reliant as the training progressed. His one disappointment was that all of the invited schools did not send participants.



ICT Skills for Teachers

- **Charles Mathonsi Secondary** (23 – 27 June and 1 and 2 July 2010)

The trainer reported that the fifteen teachers who attended this session coped well with the scenarios and found them to be relevant to their classroom practice. He noted that the group was ready for the next course and that they had the skills to cope well with the One Step Further Course. There were sufficient computers for each participant to have his or her own computer, however the computers had viruses which complicated the reading of the training materials CD. Teachers who did not already have email accounts were able to set these up during the training session.

- **Nyanisi Secondary** (10 – 14 June 2010)

Thirteen teachers attended this session and the trainer reported that they were “appreciative, cooperative and they wanted to go on and on for it was such an exciting moment for them to learn how to use a computer.” The venue had been well prepared in advance, but the computers had a range of software on them – from Office 2000 to Office 2007 – making it difficult for the trainer to demonstrate a scenario that would then look the same on all the participant’s computers. The internet was not working and the trainer’s 3G modem failed to connect which was disappointing to teachers who had hoped to learn more about using the internet. The eager teachers started as early as 7am and cut short their lunch time because they were so eager to spend more time with their “newly found toys”.

- **Mandela Barloworld** (10 – 14 June 2010)

This training session included fourteen teachers from this school as well as a teacher from Molabosane High School who had asked to be included in the session. The trainer described the group as “eager to learn and cooperative” and reported that the training went well. He noted that it was encouraging that these teachers were prepared to attend five full days of training during the World Cup Soccer holiday and said that they can be commended for the active and dedicated way in which they participated in the sessions.

- **Maloti Secondary** (4 – 6 June and 16 - 17 July 2010)

The computers at this school were all functional and using Office 2007. There were only nine trainees present, and most of these teachers were computer literate which made it easy for the

trainer to help those present further advance their skills. Although the computers did not have internet connectivity, the trainer used her 3G modem to demonstrate some of the scenarios that require Internet access. The teachers enjoyed the course, especially as one teacher noted “it is specific to my work. What I learn is what I am going to use or apply when preparing my lesson plans etc.”.

- **Tondalushaka Secondary** (15 – 16 May and 8 -9 June 2010)

The initial training at this school was cancelled and rescheduled twice before the principal finally committed to training dates. The Monday after training supposedly took place, the principal phoned our project administrator to say how good the training was and how much everyone had enjoyed it. We were delighted by this phone call until a short while later when the trainer phoned our project manager to say that when he arrived for the training only the principal and two staff members were present, and when the training was rescheduled to begin the following day only the principal and one staff member arrived. Whilst no training took place, the trainer said that the principal had told him to still submit his report and invoice to SchoolNet and that he would phone SchoolNet to confirm that the training had taken place so that the trainer would still be paid. We were grateful for our trainer’s honesty and were forced to take up the matter with both the principal and the district official to say that this was unacceptable and that teachers would actually have to attend the sessions to receive certificates.

Eventually the course was rescheduled and eleven participants attended. They complained that the dates had not been well chosen by school management as they were in the middle of the time when teachers were busy marking end of term papers. By the follow-up training, school had closed and the trainer reported that this session went better than the initial training as the teachers were no longer distracted by their marking. In fact, at the follow-up training the teachers were saying that the computer skills that they were learning were going to make their CASS (continuous assessment) files look very well organised. The participant evaluation forms include praise for the trainer and a comment that “the workshop opened my eyes. It was really empowering.”

- **Siloam Primary – Vhembe District** (29 -31 March and 8 -9 May 2010)

Only nine participants attended this training session and the trainer reported that on the first day he sensed that those present had been compelled to attend the session. Once he explained the benefits of acquiring ICT skills and once the participants started to see what the course was about, he noted that their attitude changed and by the end of the initial training the group was looking forward to the follow up session and receiving their certificates. As the training progressed the teachers became more confident about navigating through the scenarios on their own. As one participant reported, “The training is useful and relevant to me as an educator. I found it outstanding as it improved my knowledge of computer skills. I would strongly recommend SchoolNet to any educator for the course is useful to their day-to-day work at school.”

- **Basopa High** (17 - 19 September and 23 and 24 September 2010)

On the first day of training most of the sixteen participants were computer illiterate and relied heavily on the trainer for support. By the second day the trainees were eager to work more quickly and wanted to acquire the skills to type a letter and a test. The trainees completed work



in pairs and individually and were keen to show off what they had created as presentations. Members of the school management team were present and were particularly interested in how they could use a database to track records at the school.

- **Gija-Ngove Secondary** (10 -12 September and 17 -18 September 2010)

This school had enough computers for each of the fifteen participants to have his or her own computer, however the computers were old and used either Office 2000 or Office 2003 and there was no internet connection or data projector. Many of the teachers were already computer literate, however they were each able to use the list of scenarios to find an activity to do that would be new and useful. In particular the group was interested in mail merge and they planned to use this function when designing the end of term progress reports. As one participant reported “I am computer literate, however I gained more confidence since there were a lot of new things I did not know before – all in all the training was very helpful.”



- **Hivuyeriwile High** (17 -18 September 2010)

Twenty one teachers benefitted from this initial training session. They found the examples and scenarios to be useful and relevant to their professional work. The session followed the correct training approach whereby the trainer demonstrated a scenario to the group and then allowed the participants to select their own scenarios. Follow up training will be scheduled for these teachers before the end of 2010.

- **Lephai Secondary** (8 -10 October and 15 -16 October 2010)

On the first day of training – a Friday afternoon – the participants informed the trainer that the principal had not told them about the training in advance. There were only ten participants present – but these teachers were cooperative and willing to learn. Technical issues at the school resulted in both the training materials and the work that the teachers had produced being wiped off the computers and the computers switching themselves off automatically – a frustrating experience for the participants and the trainer. Despite this, the participants enjoyed the session with one teacher commenting “The training was excellent and I am now ready to implement the skills I acquired.”



- **Laerskool Messina Primary** (9 -10 October 2010)

Unfortunately only ten staff members attended this training however those present enjoyed the sessions and felt that they benefitted from them. It was also encouraging to have members of the management team in attendance. One teacher reported that she would have liked to have seen the list of scenarios before the session to decide if the course would cover skills that she was not familiar with.



- **M.K Khambani** (8 -10 October 2010)

This session began with only ten trainees in attendance – and whilst the trainer reported that these teachers were “passionate” it is disappointing that so few members of staff made use of the opportunity to improve their computer skills. The school did not have sufficient computers and supplemented the computers that they had available with borrowed laptops. The teachers promised to implement what they had learnt and the principal said that he was most appreciative of the scenario on using publisher to create certificates as this was something he would now be able to do for the school.



- **Mpandeli Secondary** (7 -9 August and 23 -24 September 2010)

There were twelve trainees at this training session as other staff members had gone to a teachers’ union briefing. Those that were in attendance were cooperative and eager to follow the instructions to work through scenarios that they had chosen. The trainer was supported by the computer teacher who helped to prepare the computer room and he reported that the learners who had attended the HelpDesk course were on hand to assist with any problems related to the hardware. One participant remarked “I really enjoyed the training session. The workshop was an eye-opener since I have learnt many things which I was not knowing.”

- **Realedisha Secondary** (8 -10 October 2010)

The trainer remarked that 40% of the 17 trainees who attended this session were computer literate at the outset. The nature of the ICT Skills for Teachers course, however, is such that there are scenarios to accommodate computer users at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Some of the more advanced members of the group impressed the trainer by completing the dynamic mark-book scenario and others volunteered to assist their colleagues in the creation of a simple mark-book.

- **Shingwedzi Secondary** (17 -19 September)

This training session was well attended – with 25 educators benefitting from the course. The trainer noted that approximately 90% of the trainees were computer literate and that they were able to use the tip sheets to work independently. The computer lab was functional to some extent however it would be beneficial to the teachers to have their software upgraded and for Encarta to be installed.



- **Thonzwe J Primary** (12-14 November 2010)

The session consisted of 10 zealous participants who from start wanted to work at their own pace. Participants in this session were independent and they struggled with some of the course work however being persistent they managed to complete most of the course work on day three of the session. The trainer mentioned that “the trainees were enjoying it a lot. “Referring to the course. Trainees requested for more training after this session mentioning how great the course is.

- **Ramauba Primary School** (26-28 November 2010 & 3-4 December 2010)

Because the training session ran with no internet connectivity the participants could not complete scenarios modules that required internet connectivity.

Despite this, the teachers were happy about the modules that they covered and they said they are ready to alleviate illiteracy in their community by introducing computer literacy for grade 8 and 9 and offering classes to community members. The trainer reported that this training session brought about change in the school because teachers were looking at ways they could make create change at the school to better their methods of teaching. One of the ideas was that was put forward was to buy a digital data projector so that they can use the computers they have for lessons in their classes.



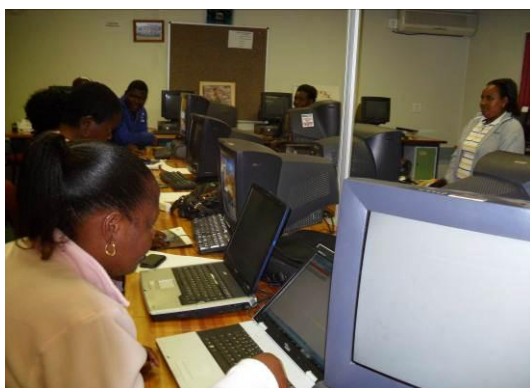
- **Taxila Secondary School**(28 March -1 April 2011)

This school was selected as a replacement school after the original school, Khataza High School kept cancelling training as a result of lack of interest and computers. Taxila Secondary School had previously received training and the CAT teacher had requested more training as many staff members had changed since the initial training was conducted. The educators were very positive during the training and three educators who are very competent in using computers provided assistance and motivation to their colleagues. The trainer reported that the teachers made mention that the coursework is relevant to the needs of educators and particularly felt that the scenario on creating mark sheets would be put to good use.



- **Edison Nesengani Secondary School** (4-6 March 2011 & 16-17 April 2011)

This training session was attended by fourteen eager participants who worked with no formal tea breaks or lunch throughout the training so as to maximize the training time. The trainer reported that some participants brought in templates for their learning area and redesigned them during the training. They were able to relate the training with their day-to-day activities. During the follow-up session participants highlighted the importance of constant practice. Most delegates had not



practiced what they did during the initial training as a result they had to spend some time trying to remember what they had been doing previously. This exercise however did not discourage the eager participants as they were able to move on and learn more skills. This training session resulted in many teachers wanting to own personal computers.

- **Tshivhidzo Masiagwala Secondary School** (3-6 June & 11-12 June 2011)

This training consisted of 11 committed participants who were not confident about their computer skills. It was important for these teachers to work at their own pace as this helped them understand how computers work. The first three scenarios of the session were done as a group as it was a struggle for most of the participants. The pace improved by the fourth scenario as participants were then familiar with the computer. By the third day teachers were looking forward to working on more scenarios as they had realized the benefit of the course and how it could help them. One educator came late on some training days as she had been on a dialysis machine. Her commitment to make sure that she remained “on par” with the rest of the participants was an inspiration to others.



Peer Coaching

- **Limpopo Vhembe cluster** (session 1-5)

This training session started with 17 participants from 7 different schools. On the first day of training participants were all on time some were even at venue an hour and a half before starting time which showed great enthusiasm from the participants. The trainer reported that the group was great and that she was excited about working with them. The trainer did however express concern about the three participants from Siloam Primary School as they did not show any ICT skills. SchoolNet has since offered Getting Started training to the school as they already received ICT skills training.



During session two and three participants mentioned that they had to travel long distances to get to the training venue. It was suggested that some schools that were close to Mopani join that cluster. By the fourth and fifth session the trainer reported that there was definitely an improvement in computer skills of the participants. This improvement made it possible to focus more on peer coaching skills and improving teacher lessons. The trainer noted that some teachers had nice ideas that could take the participants to greater heights.

- **Limpopo Mopane cluster** (session 1-5)

This group of 16 participants was very motivated and as a result the trainer was keen to work with them. Group work was very well received and the group all worked effectively. The participants were committed and the trainer commended the group by saying she was sure we are going to have amazing results in these schools.

For both session two and three participants worked constructively all the time and tried to save time by eliminating drinks breaks. This group settled in well and



the trainer feels that they are on their way to becoming effective peer coaches. Session four and five of training went very well because most of the schools brought lesson plans from teachers as requested. This was very helpful because participants were able to evaluate the plans, discuss them in groups and then went back to their schools with improved plans. These participants have shown great enthusiasm for the program and are looking forward to learn more as time progresses.

One Step Further

- **Mopane cluster (24-25 June 2011)**

This group was easy to work with since participants were all computer literate and were well informed about ICT integration in the classroom. Exploring the resource CD was no challenge either. The trainer stated that all he had to do was relate the scenarios into their day to day work. The participants found the course so interesting that they did not want to leave at the set time because they were enjoying what they were doing. Participants felt that time given for the course was too little they needed to practice the new skills they had gained. Trainees said that they would use the skills learnt to make learning more interesting for the learners.



- **Vhembe cluster (24-25 June 2011)**

The training consisted of 19 teachers from six different schools and it took place at Westfolia Resource Centre. The lab consisted of 28 working computers with internet connectivity. Training started with a word of prayer and participants moved to workstations to get started. Some participants had forgotten skills learnt from the ICT skills course however this was not a stumbling block because in a short space of time participants were able to remember what was forgotten. After the basic session trainees were able to work independently and assisted each other. The trainer reported that he was satisfied with the work that the participants had produced and he mentioned that he can “proudly say the training was a success.”

As one participant remarked: “I personally enjoyed attending this course, because it made me realize how effective ICT can be integrated into learning. One Step Further has made it easier for me to prepare a simple research task for my learners.”

1.2 Multichoice Corporate Social Investment – Training in Limpopo Schools

Multichoice has equipped two previously disadvantaged high schools in Limpopo with multimedia laboratories. To help ensure that teachers will use the equipment to develop their own educational resources the schools each received training in the ICT Skills for Teachers course in June 2009 followed by the One Step Further course in December of 2009. Below is a brief description of each of these courses:



Moreko Secondary School

The ICT Skills for Teachers course was well received at this school with all 18 participants being present for all five days of training. By the final day of training many of the participants were rated by the trainer as being self-sufficient. This indicated that the teachers were suitably comfortable with the training materials to continue with the more advanced scenarios at their own pace. The trainee feedback described the course as “fascinating”, “wonderful” and “fantastic” with some teachers planning to incorporate what they had learnt in their lessons. The trainer was very impressed with the principal and he reported that he was very involved during the training. The principal wanted to see all his teachers ICT literate and the effectively using the ICT resources at the school.



Teachers from this school participated in the One Step Further course six months after the ICT Skills for Teachers course. The trainer noted that as many of the teachers will still novice computer users each step of the sections of the development of learning objects took very long and the group continually waited for his input. To help increase the pace of the course and to help teachers improve their own computer confidence, the trainer decided to ask them to work in pairs to support each other both in ICT skills and cognitive demand of the activities.



He noted that despite the challenges, the group gave their all to make the course work for themselves. They were all enthusiastic and willing to venture into learning object creating journey. He further stated that “I hope the introduction to the creation of a learning object with the associated information gathering and simple research concepts would go a long way to influence how they integrate ICT in their practice.”

Bopedi Bapedi Secondary School

The trainer who conducted ICT Skills training at this school reported that the majority of the teachers had never used computers before but after a three day session all of them gained confidence in the training program, and some of them were very helpful in assisting the trainer. This is echoed in the feedback from teachers, one of whom remarked: *“The training was very informative and it succeeded in introducing me to the basic skills which will make it possible for me to make my teaching a bit simpler. Though at the beginning I felt hopeless, I gradually gained confidence and intend to pass information to others. I have learned various things and with the help of the trainer and other learners I’ll make use of the basic skills that I have acquired”.*

Instead of conducting three days of initial training followed by two days of follow up training, this course was run over five continuous days. This meant that teachers did not have time to practice their skills in between training sessions although they would be able to practice their computer skills

after completing the course. The five days of intensive training did have some benefits though in that it built up confidence quickly – without allowing time for teachers to forget what they had learnt.

The One Step Further course for Bopedi Bapedi Secondary School was held six months after the ICT Skills for Teachers course. The trainer noted that all the teachers were using the Microsoft OneNote Application for the first time. Despite this, they found OneNote fascinating and enjoyed the training a lot. He noted that whilst most teachers struggled a bit in the beginning after a few hours they finally saw the light and they openly said that it was an interesting programme.

Pictured here is the Science teacher who is also the deputy principal. The trainer said that she was very inspiring as despite being close to retirement she embraced the course and was encouraged young staff members to work hard. Pictured with her is a teacher who the trainer described as “bright” and “innovative”. He noted that this teacher used MS PowerPoint to present some of her lessons and that her discussions in the class are brilliant.



Below are selected comments from the participant feedback forms:

“The course was fruitful, and I personally learned many things from OneNote programme. I can now manage my work properly with one note. I wish to have more of this type of programmes in future.”

“We are very thankful to Multi-Choice for the workshops which empowered us on ICT skills and the computers which enhance teaching and learning at our institution.”

“The facilitation was much satisfactory and enjoyable. I learnt a lot from this programme. I expect a lot of improvement in classroom.”

1.3 INSPIRE -Tswala Phahla Training

The Limpopo Office of the Premier and Provincial Information Society Strategy Development Programme in the Republic of South Africa (INSPIRE) in collaboration with the Limpopo Department of Education wished to establish an information society strategy and model. As part of this strategy, SchoolNet was commissioned to run INSPIRE -Tswala Phahla Training which was funded by the Finnish and South African governments. The intention of the training programme was to offer training to one pilot district of Limpopo and to train district personnel as trainers with a view to replicating the model in other districts, other provinces and ultimately in other SADC countries.

This project aimed to build capacity of department officials to enhance the support provided to schools and teachers. Ten project schools were selected to participate in this pilot to evaluate whether the project could be duplicated in other districts and provinces. The project proposal outlined an implementation plan based on the Teacher Framework Guidelines for Professional Development. The implementation plan was divided into three phases. Each phase comprised training courses as listed below.

First Phase of Training

- Subject Advisors Participation in ICT Skills for Teachers
- Principals & Teachers Participation in ICT Skills
- Subject advisors Participation in ICT Leadership
- Senior Management Team (SMT) Participation in ICT Leadership

Second Phase of training

- Training of Trainers ICT Leadership for Education Managers
- Training of trainers ICT Skills for Teachers
- Quality Assurance of ICT Skills Practice
- Teacher/ Student Participation in Student Help Desk Solutions



Third Phase of training

- Training of Trainers in One Step Further
- Quality Assurance of One Step Further Training in Schools
- Training of Trainers in WebQuests
- Train of Trainers in Peer Coaching

SchoolNet proposed that subject advisors and members of the project school management teams first participate in the ICT Skills for Teachers and ICT for Education Managers courses. This training provided entry level and some adoption level skills to both subject advisors and project schools SMT/Principals. In addition to ensuring basic computer literacy before embarking on the more advanced courses, the first courses also gave an indication of which participants could potentially be trained as trainers and who would be well placed to attend the more advanced courses.

A detailed report describing each of these sessions in detail is available, however in essence the participants all indicated that the courses which they received were provided worthwhile skills and content and they expressed that they had benefited immensely from this learning experience. One of the greatest successes was that most of the new trainers grasped the essentials of the philosophy behind the instructional design and learning approach of the courses.

Although this project was successful in its broader objectives of developing capacity amongst district personnel and to enable them to provide professional development to teachers in project schools, a number of factors prevented this project from being a complete success. In many cases infrastructure proved lacking with ill-equipped centres being selected as venues, and project schools with no connectivity; nonfunctioning networks; and no required software being selected for participation in the project. Some training candidates and potential trainers were poorly selected - especially in the case of subject advisors who often lacked basic ICT skills and an interest in becoming ICT champions. Communication also proved challenging as there were instances when the district personnel were not fully aware of what was happening in the district leading to conflicting dates and a lack of advance notice being given to schools. The tight time frames of this project were

also not conducive to participants being able to master sufficiently the skills needed to complete the learning pathway.

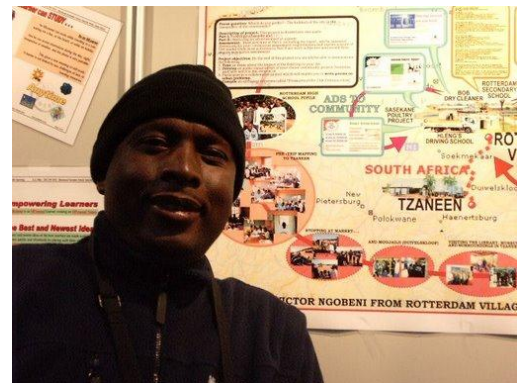
Despite the many successes, communication and attendance proved problematic. It is hoped that as the project continues that communication will improve as this will assist both stakeholders and participants' understanding of the programme and how this project can be a catalyst for change in the teaching practice of teachers which will lead to improved ICT integration and ultimately to improved learning.

2 Partners in Learning Training Sponsored by Microsoft

2.1 *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. Over the years we have seen some strong entries coming out of Limpopo province, and Microsoft has also ensured that every year at least one Innovation Workshop takes place in the province to help foster innovation amongst Limpopo teachers.

In 2007, Victor Ngobeni of Rotterdam Secondary School of Limpopo was one of two winners at the South African Microsoft Partners in Learning Innovative Teachers Forum and he represented South African at the Worldwide Innovative Teachers Forum held in Helsinki, Finland. In May 2008, he once again represented South Africa at the first Microsoft Pan African Innovative Teachers Forum which was in Accra, Ghana from 26 – 28 May 2008. At this event, Victor's project called "Bright Lights or Dust Bowl: Multiple intelligences and multimedia for a school field trip" was the runner up in the Innovation in Collaboration category. Victor now works for Microsoft as the manager of the Africa School Technology and Innovation Centre however he is still passionate about improving education in Limpopo and has returned to the province various times to run workshops.



In 2008, Mmipe Mokgehle of Toronto Primary School won the Educator's Choice award at the Microsoft Innovative Teachers Forum, after his fellow finalists judged his "Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Biodiversity Conservation" project to be the most innovative. In 2011 Mmipe was asked to run an Innovation Workshop for other teachers in his province. This provided an opportunity for him to share ideas around using technology in exciting ways in the classroom and it also allowed him to serve as a role model to others.

The 2011 Innovation Course from Limpopo was sponsored by Vodacom Foundation and an effort was made to promote the course to teachers who are part of the Vodacom project. In addition to the teachers at Vodacom schools, the workshop was also offered to teachers who had received

Partners in Learning and Intel training through other projects that SchoolNet SA has been involved in, and the facilitator, Mmipe Mokgehle himself was able to encourage a number of his colleagues to attend. In total 24 people attend the workshop and they were described as “active and motivated” by the facilitator.

K.B. Raseboya, one of the participating teachers noted: “Every part of this workshop was motivating. All participants participated actively in the workshop. All parts of the workshop were beneficial.” Another of the, M.J. Nokeri noted “The workshop was an eye opener. I always thought that technology was for young people. To engage the learners... technology is the only way.”

2.2 One Step Further Clustered Training for Tzaneen

In the June 2009 school holidays, 20 teachers from the Tzaneen area who had received prior Partners in Learning training were invited to participate in the One Step Further course at Merensky High School. Some of the teachers remarked that it was “a privilege to be chosen to attend the training” and expressed a desire for their colleagues to attend a similar course. The teachers reported enjoyed seeing “how Encarta makes it easy for us to access and prepare lessons using learning objects” and making resources that would help a “learner to visualize what you will be teaching”. Others found it exciting to be able to use a range of applications at the same time to for example, copy and paste pictures from Encarta into One Note and to integrate PowerPoint. Whilst some teachers were unable to access the internet from their computers, and others complained that the course was “too short”, generally the course was very well received and teachers left the training empowered to begin integrating ICT into their lessons.

2.3 ICT Skills for Teachers training for Classmate PC Recipients

Two rounds of ICT Skills for Teachers training were held for teachers from schools that 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.

The first round of training took place at Mang Le Mang school in Limpopo province in June 2009 and involved teachers from six schools in the Sekhuhkune District. The training got off to a bad start when participants arrived for training in the morning, despite the training only scheduled to begin in the afternoon. Despite this, once the training began it was well received with the trainer reporting that the teachers followed the demonstration scenario closely. By the second day the more confident participants were able to work on scenarios of their own choice and less confident participants were paired together.

The trainer concluded that “All participants made good comments about the training and indicated that they are going to practice more and will be ready for the follow up after two weeks. All participants agreed that the training was a success.”

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."

2.1 ICT Skills for Teachers training for Vele School



The Oprah Angels Network has equipped Vele Secondary School in Limpopo with a computer lab and to help support this initiative Microsoft agreed to offer teachers at the school the ICT Skills for Teachers course. The initial training took place in June 2011 and the follow up training will take place in August 2011.

The trainer remarked that attendance was good and teachers were punctual. In addition to the 26 teachers from Vele and other local schools who attended the training, seven curriculum advisors for the Vhembe district also attended. The trainer said that Vhembe District did well to include Curriculum Advisors in the list of trainees as some of these had participated in the ICT Skills for Teachers course before and were able to help other participants. He also noted that some of those present were responsible for CAT and IT in their district and had good computer skills and were able to help those who needed support.

The Partners in Learning CD had been installed prior to training however Microsoft Office had not been installed. To overcome this, the Office 2010 Trial Version was installed, although it is suggested that the complete version of Office be installed as soon as possible.

The training began with the trainer going through two scenarios with the group using a data-projector and explaining the role of Tip Sheets. The trainer then grouped the teachers so that they could work on scenarios that were appropriate to their skill sets.

In conclusion the trainer noted that Vele school is situated deep the Rural Area and is difficult access it using private car with low vertical clearance. Because of this lack of access he said that it would be advisable is one or two teachers from the school receive basic training on Help Desk Course to help keep the brand new computers in good working order without the need to call out a technical support company.



Conclusion and Recommendations

SchoolNet SA is proud of the training that we have offered to teachers in Limpopo 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 Limpopo.

Megan Rademeyer

Programmes Manager

SchoolNet SA – July 2011