Training of School-based ICT Champions in KwaZulu-Natal

BID #: ZNB 0144 E2017/2018

Zululand District Report

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1. Introduction

As a non-profit digital education and training specialist since 1998, SchoolNet South Africa was awarded a tender by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZN DoE) to empower ICT Champions in public schools. KZN DoE requested SchoolNet SA to equip ICT Champions at KZN DOE Public schools with the necessary tools and foundational skills to provide crucial first-line IT support to teachers, learners, and the wider school community, thus fostering the importance of digital literacy.

This report will focus on the completed training for **744** ICT Champions in the **Zululand** District.

2. District Background

Zululand District Municipality is a Category C municipality situated in the north-eastern part of KwaZulu-Natal. It is the biggest district in the province, making up 16% of its geographical area. It comprises five local municipalities: Ulundi, Nongoma, uPhongolo, eDumbe and AbaQulusi.

3. Training Statistics

ICT Champion Professional Development sessions for the Zululand District took place in seven training venues, namely H. Mantshinga Primary School, Mbhasobheni Primary School, Lindizwe Primary School, Pioneer Hoerskool, Mbhekwa High School, Besterspruit Primary School, and Hlobane Primary School. A total of 597 teachers were in attendance.

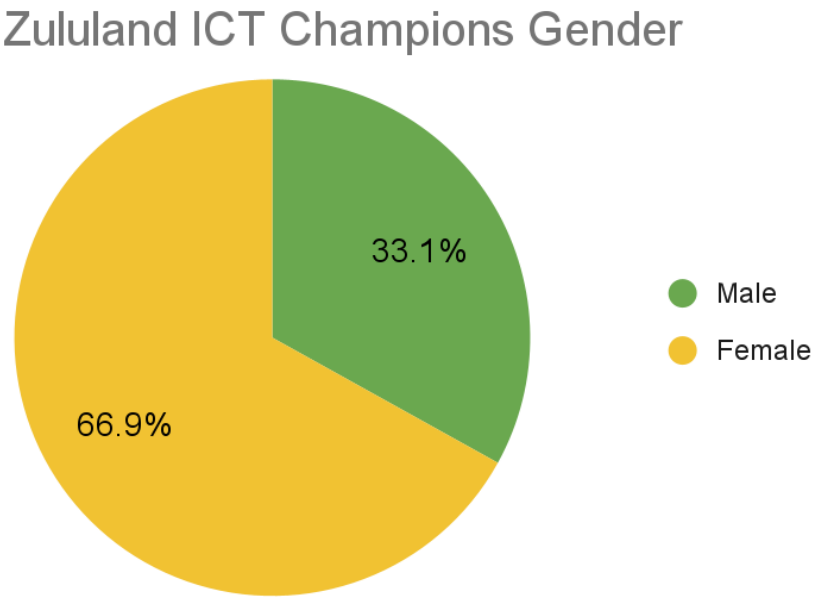
Venue	Dates	Expected Attendance	Attendance Day 1	Attendance Day 2	Male	Female
H. Mantshinga Primary	26 - 27 May 2025	58	41	41	14	27
Mbhasobheni Primary	26-27 May 2025	50	43	43	11	32
Lindizwe Primary	27 - 28 May 2025	58	47	47	21	26
Pioneer Hoerskool	27-28 May 2025	60	47	47	14	33
Mbhekwa High	27-28 May 2025	56	31	31	11	20
H. Mantshinga Primary	28-29 May 2025	58	26	26	7	19
Mbhasobheni Primary	2-3 June 2025	55	49	49	14	35
Mbhekwa High	2-3 June 2025	57	45	45	21	24
Besterspruit Primary	2-3 June 2025	60	39	37	15	24
Mbhasobheni Primary	4-5 June 2025	60	50	50	17	33
Hlobane Primary	4-5 June 2025	40	41	41	7	34
Lindizwe Primary	18-19 June 2025	30	28	28	6	22
Lindizwe Primary	23-24 June 2025	50	50	52	19	33
Lindizwe Primary	25-26 June 2025	52	60	50	21	39
Total		**744**	**597**	**587**	**198**	**401**

4. Project Planning

Training for 744 ICT Champions in the Zululand District was scheduled in the five local municipalities: Ulundi, Nongoma, uPhongolo, eDumbe and AbaQulusi with the help of district officials. Invitations to schools were provided via a circular to all schools. The number of ICT Champions was confirmed by District officials.

5. Scope and Demographics

Training for ICT Champions successfully reached 597 educators in the Zululand District. A total of 744 teachers were expected at the training sessions, and catering was provided for the maximum teachers. Although attendance was lower than expected, this is attributed to the union strike, as well as to exams currently underway at various schools. The pie chart below represents the distribution of participants by gender within the ICT Champion training cohort in the Zululand district. Female participants account for a significant majority of 66.9% of the total ICT Champions trained. Male participants comprise 33.1%. This breakdown indicates a strong and positive representation of female educators stepping into the role of ICT Champions in the Zululand region.



6. Overview Training

6.1. H. Mantshinga Primary School (Group 1)

The first group of training was completed on the 26th and 27th May 2025 at the H Mantshinga Primary School. The training started on time, with fully prepared ICT champions ready to take on the day. Approximately 80% of the educators were computer literate, while 20% required full support from the facilitator. The trainer started the day with a quick tutorial on how to use QR codes for those who were new to them.

Day one of the training resumed with Module 1: Introduction to Computer Architecture, where educators demonstrated familiarity with hardware, software, and fundamental concepts like input, output, and operating systems. This initial engagement facilitated a smooth transition into

Module 2: Troubleshooting and Safe Use, as participants readily grasped the concepts and steps for resolving technical challenges, drawing on their school and personal experiences. Following this, Module 3: Communication in a Technical Environment equipped educators with vital skills for asset management, including compiling asset registers and securely sharing documents via shortened links. The session elaborated on the ICT Champion's role in managing school WhatsApp groups, Microsoft Teams, and Outlook, alongside utilising fault reporting tools like Microsoft Forms, Google Forms, and MS Word. The afternoon transitioned smoothly into Module 4: Introduction to Microsoft 365. Educators enthusiastically created Microsoft Office accounts, customised their profiles, and navigated various M365 tools. A highlight was creating and sharing a Fault Reporting Form using Microsoft Forms. Participants also explored Microsoft OneDrive, successfully creating folders, uploading files, and sharing links, and thereby appreciating its secure and reliable "tertiary storage" capabilities. The day concluded with an exciting practical session on Microsoft Teams, where educators created teams, set up online classes, scheduled meetings, shared screens, and explored app integrations. The ability to create registration forms for school use and share links with parents generated considerable excitement. Day one concluded on a high note, with all educators completing an end-of-day survey.

Day two commenced with enthusiastic participants eager to continue with development activities after practising Day one’s learnings at home. A productive recap solidified their understanding before diving into Module 5: Basics of Internet Connectivity. This module resonated strongly as it covered everyday activities, emphasising wired and wireless connections, mobile hotspots, and various internet benefits like communication and online services. Participants explored offline document sharing via Bluetooth and the LAN network. Practical exercises included internet speed testing and an awareness of historical context from 1G to 5G technologies. Module 6: IT Security Best Practices focused on cybersecurity, hackers, antivirus software, strong passwords, and safe online habits. A discussion about SMADAV versus other antivirus options clarified the need for comprehensive protection. The final module, POPI and PAI Acts, made participants aware of the data protection laws, highlighting the critical responsibility of ICT Champions and the teaching corps in safeguarding sensitive learner and staff

information within SA-SAMS, and the necessity of implementing clear data management policies. The day concluded with participants completing an end-of-day survey, demonstrating their 100% readiness to implement their newly acquired skills.

6.2. Mbhasobheni Primary School (Group 1)


The training started on 26 May 2025 with some initial organisational and group flow challenges; however, it quickly gained momentum as participants acclimated and grasped the workshop's core objectives. Module 1: Introduction to Computer Architecture was thoroughly unpacked, laying a strong foundation that seamlessly facilitated understanding of the subsequent modules. This foundational knowledge ensured Module 2: Troubleshooting and Safe Use was particularly exciting, as participants discovered they had unknowingly been performing troubleshooting on their own devices. They readily embraced the systematic approach, promising to implement these newfound skills back at their schools. Module 3: Communication in a Technical Environment shifted focus to modern asset management, teaching educators to digitise asset registers and utilise digital forms for reporting, with practical phone-based activities greatly appreciated by the champions. The day saw strong engagement, especially during Module 2 presentations, where champions applied troubleshooting steps to scenarios. Despite some initial hurdles, Day 1 proved highly productive. Module 4: Introduction to Microsoft 365 presented initial challenges due to varying software installations, but solutions were found to ensure all participants could create accounts and master essential functions. The excitement was noticeable as champions successfully created forms and learned to share links via OneDrive, recognising the immense utility of cloud storage. Participants actively shared their learnings and confirmed the program's usefulness, which was further affirmed by the presence and monitoring by circuit managers.

Day two kicked off with a successful recap of the previous day, where champions confidently presented their learnings, which immediately led to practical troubleshooting as minor laptop issues emerged and were resolved collaboratively. Following this, Module 5: Basics of Internet Connectivity delved into wired and wireless connections, emphasising the everyday relevance of Wi-Fi, hotspots, and cellular networks. Participants, many of whom were new to understanding internet speed, enthusiastically learned how to test connection speeds and explored the evolution of mobile technology from 1G to 5G. This paved the way for Module 6: IT Security Best Practices, a particularly eye-opening session that raised awareness about scams, viruses, and the crucial need for antivirus software, strong passwords, and safe online habits, with the dangers of phishing and pharming being clearly explained. Finally, Module 7 clarified the distinctions between the Protection of Personal Information Act and Promotion of Access to Information Act, educating champions on their vital role in protecting sensitive learner and staff information within schools and the real-world implications of these laws. Their active participation, including valuable insights and practical demonstrations, underscored the profound impact of the training, which was also monitored by a visiting district official, leaving champions feeling well-equipped and ready to implement their new knowledge.

6.3. Lindizwe Primary School (Group 1)

The two-day ICT Champion training that occurred on the 27th and 28th May 2025 at Lindizwe Primary Schools proved highly effective, engaging participants from educators in a comprehensive exploration of digital literacy and support.

Day one began with Computer Architecture, where foundational concepts of hardware and software were demystified, clarifying the information processing cycle and addressing specific queries, such as the distinction between a CPU and motherboard and how to assess RAM needs. This led into a highly interactive Troubleshooting session where teachers shared real-world school IT problems, practising clear communication for reporting issues. The day concluded with Microsoft 365, introducing tools like Word, Excel, Teams, OneDrive, and Outlook, and fostering collaborative practices, including practising scheduling and joining Teams meetings, a first for many.

Day two built on this foundation, starting with a successful recap before diving into Internet Connectivity. Discussions highlighted the challenges in rural areas, with participants sharing diverse connection methods, including satellite internet. The crucial Cybersecurity Practices module then equipped teachers to safeguard systems from viruses and hackers, emphasising antivirus software, strong passwords, and safe online habits. This segment included practical demonstrations of internet speed and password strength checks. The training concluded with an essential overview of the POPI and PAI Acts, ensuring participants understood their legal responsibilities in protecting personal information and obtaining consent for data collection. Throughout the sessions, participants were exceptionally enthusiastic and actively engaged, asking thoughtful questions, supporting each other, and showing immense eagerness to apply their new skills as ICT Champions, not just as fixers, but as vital educators in safe and responsible technology use.

6.4. Pioneer Hoerskool

The first day of training, which took place on 27 May 2025, focused on the foundational understanding of computer systems. Participants delved into Basic PC Hardware, covering the

core components of computers, software, peripheral devices, and school network architecture. This hands-on module emphasised identifying and understanding the physical aspects of technology. Building on this, the training moved to Troubleshooting and Safe Use, teaching practical strategies for diagnosing and resolving common IT issues, alongside critical safe-use procedures. The day concluded with Effective Communication in a Technical Environment, where participants learned to establish basic help desk functions, manage asset registers, and implement efficient fault reporting systems within their schools.

Day two on the 28th May 2025 advanced to software applications and digital citizenship. The session introduced Microsoft 365 (M365) applications, enabling participants to navigate tools, create fault reporting forms, and practice file sharing and collaboration using OneDrive and Microsoft Teams. Following this, the Basics of Internet Connectivity covered defining internet types, connecting devices, and testing internet speeds. The crucial module on IT Security Best Practices raised awareness about cybersecurity threats like scams and viruses, emphasising strong password creation and identifying system weaknesses. Finally, participants gained an understanding of the POPI and PAI Acts, clarifying their responsibilities as ICT Champions regarding personal information and data governance within their schools.

6.5. Mbhekwa High School (Group 1)

Training on the 27th May 2025 began with Module 1: Computer Architecture, a foundational and intensive segment that ensured participants gained a solid understanding of computer components and functions. This thorough grounding proved critical, as it made the transition to

Module 2: Troubleshooting and Safe Use much smoother, with educators readily engaging in solving practical IT problems.

Day one progressed to Module 3: Communication in a Technical Environment, where participants learned to digitise asset management and fault reporting, enthusiastically embracing new methods like cellphone-based activities. Module 4: Introduction to Microsoft 365 followed, requiring adaptability from the trainer to address diverse access to software. Regardless, participants successfully created email accounts, navigated M365 tools, and mastered creating forms and sharing links via OneDrive, expressing great excitement for these practical skills. Across both training instances, circuit managers observed the sessions, affirming their productivity.

Day two kicked off with a thorough recap, reinforcing the vital troubleshooting skills and emphasising effective communication. The curriculum then moved to Module 5: Basics of Internet Connectivity, where participants explored wired and wireless connections and conducted internet speed tests, a new and valuable skill for many. Module 6: IT Security Best Practices raised critical awareness about cyber threats, antivirus software, and strong passwords. Finally, Module 7 clarified the POPIA and PAIA Acts, educating champions on data protection responsibilities.

A significant highlight is the remarkable shift in participants' attitudes towards ICT. By the end, they expressed a strong sense of empowerment and a genuine desire to become effective ICT champions. This training successfully transformed individuals who were initially ICT illiterate into digitally literate and confident educators. The comprehensive coverage of all seven modules was deemed highly fruitful, earning appreciation from both district officials and the participants themselves. The facilitator's work was made easier by the increasing ICT literacy within the groups. Notably, Mr. Rahim and Mr. Rassack became cornerstones of the training, fully engaged and even able to present on topics like fault reporting Form creation and computer architecture. This demonstrated the depth of learning and the potential for these champions to become

valuable "backup" resources in the district, assisting their peers within their circuits and ensuring the ongoing smooth integration of technology.

6.6. H. Mantshinga Primary School (Group 2)

This two-day ICT Champion training, which took place on the 28th and 29th May 2025, began by emphasising the critical role of champions in bridging the ICT support gap within schools. Day one immersed participants into computer fundamentals, covering hardware, software, and their interplay, with a video explaining components and a lively discussion on solid state drives (SSDs) versus hard disk drives (HDDs), significantly enriched by the expertise of Computer Application Technology teachers. The session on troubleshooting and safety became highly interactive, where teachers shared real-world computer and printer issues, actively practising diagnostic steps using the 'C.H.E.C.K.' acronym, and discussing essential hardware and software safety. Following this, the module on effective technical communication taught participants how to clearly explain IT problems, with practice in writing concise fault reports and understanding the value of visual aids like photos. The day concluded with an introduction to Microsoft 365, where teachers explored applications like Word, Excel, Teams, and OneDrive, learning about real-time collaboration and basic meeting setup.

Day two of the training commenced with a productive recap of Day one's content, confirming participants' solid grasp of foundational concepts, which seamlessly paved the way forward. The session then moved to Internet Connectivity, where teachers explored how computers and mobile devices connect to the internet, discussing Wi-Fi, mobile networks, and modems, along with practical tips for data saving and mobile hotspots, particularly relevant given many schools' limited internet access. Following this, IT Security Best Practices (Module 6) covered crucial topics like antivirus software, strong passwords, firewalls, software updates, and online and email safety.

A teacher's query about SMARTDAV provided an opportunity to clarify the differences in antivirus protection. Educators also practically demonstrated checking password strength and internet speed using the Ookla app. The final module introduced the POPI Act and Access to Information Act (Module 7), highlighting the importance of obtaining consent for personal data collection and ensuring legal information sharing. A participant's question regarding consent for ID numbers for events was addressed by emphasising the need for clear consent forms or privacy notices. While a debate arose about learners with barriers, it was skillfully redirected to stay within the training's scope.

The day concluded with enthusiastic feedback, notably from Mr. Zwane, who was keen to apply new Microsoft 365 features for learner records, and Miss Ndlovu, who made her first Microsoft account and joined a Teams meeting. Many teachers expressed their intention to train colleagues using the new skills and provided handouts, underscoring the immediate and cascading impact of the training.

6.7. Mbhasobheni Primary School (Group 2)

Day one at Mbhasobheni Primary Smart School on the 2nd June 2025, commenced with Basic PC Hardware, Troubleshooting, and Safety, aiming to develop foundational knowledge of hardware components, basic troubleshooting, and maintenance skills. This module empowered participants to support ICT use in the classroom and contribute to peer development, while also instilling essential digital safety awareness. Following this, the Communicating Effectively in a Technical Environment module focused on cultivating strong communication skills for the digital realm, equipping participants to serve as effective IT champions within their schools, fostering leadership in digital transformation, and providing tools for peer training and support. The day concluded with an Introduction to Microsoft 365 (M365), enabling participants to understand and integrate key M365 applications like OneDrive, Outlook, and Forms into their daily teaching practices, supporting peer collaboration, and building a collective digital culture within their schools.

Day two began by addressing internet connectivity, noting that many schools rely on mobile data, and covered Wi-Fi, mobile networks, modems, and practical tips like speed testing. This led to IT Security Best Practices, a highly informative session where participants learned to safeguard devices and information through strong passwords, software updates, and identifying phishing scams, sparking important discussions about personal data security. The training concluded with an exploration of the POPIA and PAIA laws, emphasising the importance of consent for collecting personal information and understanding legal obligations regarding data sharing. Throughout both days, participants were highly engaged, asking insightful questions and sharing their own experiences, contributing to an excellent and welcoming atmosphere. The presence of principals and departmental heads, along with the enthusiasm of younger teachers and standout participants, highlighted the broad appreciation and immediate relevance of the training.

6.8. Mbhekwa High School (Group 2)


Day one of the training, on the 2nd June 2025, went smoothly, even though some groups took a little longer to get settled. As everyone got used to the training, things flowed well. It ensured that everyone understood Computer Architecture, as this key module helped make the latter ones easier to follow. Teaching Troubleshooting and Safe Use was easy because participants already knew a lot about computers after Module 1. They were excited to learn how to fix common laptop problems, especially since some had issues during the training and realised they were doing "troubleshooting" without knowing it. They promised to use these new skills back at school.

They then moved to Communication in a Technical Environment. This module focused on digital asset management, teaching educators how to use computers, like spreadsheets, for tasks they usually do by hand. They learned to create digital forms for reporting instead of writing manual reports. Participants were excited to do activities on their cellphones, a new experience for many. We also had presentations, especially for Module 2, where champions shared how to troubleshoot. Introduction to Microsoft 365 was a bit challenging because some participants didn't have the software on their laptops. However, we found ways to ensure everyone could create email accounts using Outlook and make forms by following the guide. Participants were very excited when they successfully created their first forms. We also learned how to use OneDrive to share links, which many had seen but didn't know how to create. Participants felt the workshop was very useful, gaining many new skills. Circuit managers also visited and observed the training. Day one ended on a very productive note.


Day two, which took place on the 3rd June 2025, began with a valuable recap of the previous day's work, a session designed to assess recall and reinforce understanding. Participants actively engaged, associating the foundational modules with their duties as ICT champions and recognising that the seven key troubleshooting skills are essential for effectiveness in both computer and network architectures. The emphasis on effective communication as vital for productivity was also reiterated.

The main focus of the day then shifted to Modules 4, 5, 6, and 7. Before delving into Microsoft 365 (M365) directly, Mr. Ntshangase, an ICT teacher whose expertise was well-known to the facilitator, led an introductory session on form creation using Microsoft Forms, a crucial step given that many participants' laptops lacked M365 installations. This collaborative approach ensured practical understanding, with Google Docs used as a sample for activities. The module highlighted the benefits of M365, particularly OneDrive for submissions, a feature the KZN DBE strongly favours. District officials were notably impressed by the M365 training, acknowledging its critical importance as many had previously struggled with the package, viewing it as a "fruitless expenditure" before this session. Mr. Ntshangase's presence was invaluable in clarifying how schools and educators could activate M365 using their KZN email addresses.

Following this, the Basics of Internet Connectivity explored wired and wireless connections, emphasising the practical application of everyday internet use. Participants learned about the evolution of mobile technology and conducted internet speed tests, a new and important skill

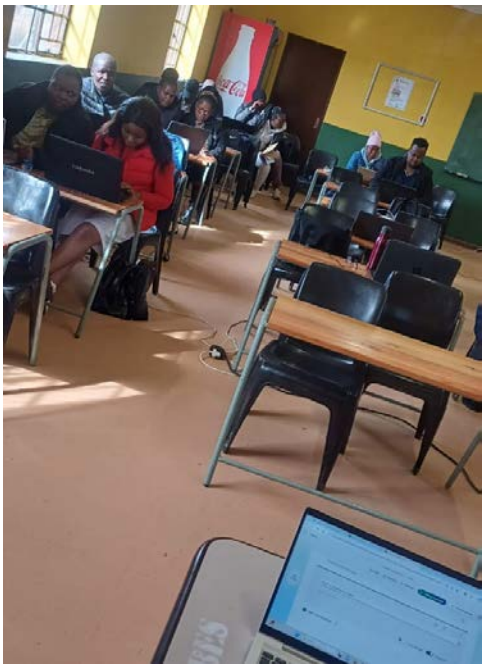
for many. IT Security Best Practices addressed vital cyber safety concerns, including scams, viruses, and the importance of antivirus software, strong passwords, and avoiding public Wi-Fi. Participants were made acutely aware of hacking and phishing risks, underscoring their responsibility for securing school devices and networks. Lastly, Module 7 focused on the POPI and PAI Acts. Participants engaged in deep discussions on information transparency and protection, understanding their responsibility to safeguard sensitive data, such as learner marks, and the necessity of implementing school policies.

Overall, the participants were exceptionally engaging and actively involved, making the training a dynamic, two-way exchange, a positive contrast to more passive previous sessions. The active participation, particularly from the Indian and Coloured communities, was noteworthy. The positive feedback from the school principal of Estcourt Secondary School, who recognised the training's profound value, further validated its impact and demonstrated that the skills imparted were indeed vital and applicable.

6.9. Besterspruit Primary School

Day one, on the 2nd of June 2025, of the training commenced with an introduction to SchoolNet's mission and the workshop's purpose. An initial screening during registration assessed participants' digital literacy, revealing challenges for some in basic tasks like scanning QR codes and navigating URLs. The Introduction to Computer Architecture module was then delivered with a strong practical focus, utilising physical hardware to demonstrate components and their functions. Participants were guided through identifying faulty devices with tangible examples, such as troubleshooting a non-displaying computer by resetting RAM and the CMOS battery, and identifying faulty hard drives.

The Troubleshooting session engaged participants with common school-based problems, including non-functional printers, detailing checks like cable connections and control panel verification. However, a significant observation was the sentiment expressed by some older participants who felt the training was not relevant to their roles, perceiving IT problem-solving as an "admin clerk's" responsibility. This feedback indicated a misalignment in perceived roles and available school ICT resources. Consequently, the Communication in a Technical Environment module, which presumed existing ICT resources, was deemed less relevant by attendees and was briefly covered. In response, the training was adapted to extend the practical troubleshooting segment, incorporating essential topics such as MS Office installation and activation, and guiding participants on how to check their computer's specifications (RAM, processor, operating system), addressing common real-world school needs. The Microsoft 365 module was strategically moved to Day 2 to allow for the pre-activation of participants' school accounts, ensuring a more hands-on and impactful experience.

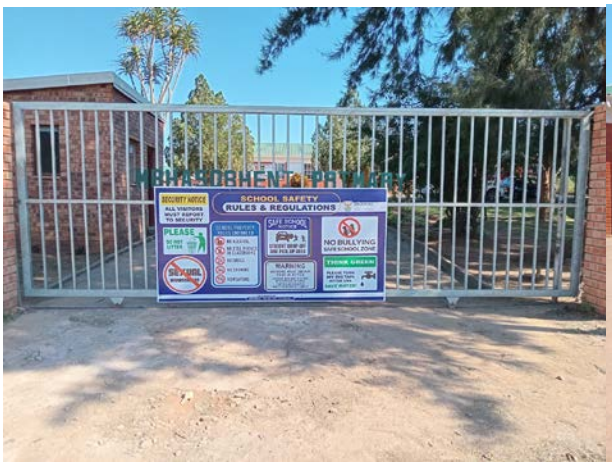


Day two of the training commenced with a review of Day 1's content, followed by the distribution of Office 365 credentials. The login process required patience, as many accounts needed principal verification, but participants were assisted in setting up the Outlook App for notifications. The training then delved into Microsoft Forms, where a practical "Learner Online Application Form" example proved to be of great interest to participants due to its real-world context. This was followed by an exploration of OneDrive, emphasising cloud storage benefits and demonstrating both online and offline saving with synchronisation. Participants then moved to Microsoft Teams, learning to sign in, schedule meetings, share invites, and utilise in-meeting functions, making the collaborative potential tangible.

The session continued with Module 5: Internet Connectivity, covering various connection types and troubleshooting common issues. While comprehensive, it was noted that integrating this module more directly with networking concepts (like switches and access points) could further enhance understanding for expanding Wi-Fi coverage. Teachers expressed a desire for more hands-on experience with networking to implement solutions in their schools, highlighting a key area for future practical application. Module 6: Cyber Security Best Practices raised crucial awareness about online safety. Discussions focused on avoiding scams, identifying fake website URLs, and the importance of strong passwords and regular antivirus updates. Participants were particularly engaged, acknowledging how simple it was to check their laptop's security status.

The final module, the POPI Act and PAI Act, introduced critical data protection laws. While some participants initially debated their direct responsibility for sensitive data, the facilitator clarified that even learner marks are highly confidential, emphasising the importance of correctly managing all school data within systems like SA-SAMS. By the end, most participants recognised the familiarity and importance of these practices in their daily roles. Overall, the training's highlight was the profound sense of empowerment among participants, who realised that many issues previously requiring external assistance were now simple enough to troubleshoot themselves, instilling confidence and a clear starting point for addressing future challenges.

6.10. Mbhasobheni Primary School (Group 3)



Day one, which took place on the 2nd June 2025, started with an introduction to the purpose of the workshop. The day started with a practical focus on Module One, aligning it to utilising physical hardware components and their functions. There was a Black Screen device during the session, which lead to using it as an example for troubleshooting.

The laptop troubleshooting section introduced Module Two, which had a focus on troubleshooting everyday issues an ICT champion can face at schools. This includes how to troubleshoot printers, scanners, detailed checking of cable connections and how to use the computer's control panel to assist in the process. Module three introduced the need to effectively communicate when experiencing a technical problem or escalating the issue to the IT department. It had elements of Microsoft 365 through designing an Asset Management Tool for monitoring the digital devices that the schools have. Adding on to Module four, there was a special focus on the use of Microsoft 365 for designing fault reporting forms that teachers and learners can use to report issues, using Microsoft Teams to communicate with the department and as well as the school, for virtual meetings. There was a special segment focused on how to troubleshoot virtual sessions during school hours. The ICT champions also learned the need to keep all documentation on the cloud using OneDrive.

Day two kicked off with a recap of day one content, a quick reminder of how to access their Microsoft account. The session then continued to discuss module five, internet connectivity and understanding different networking concepts such as switches, routers and access points to expand WIFI coverage in schools. Module six covered the important need to be safe while on the internet or connected to the internet. This spoke to understanding how to avoid scams, hackers, fake websites and the strong need for strong passwords that are not easily cracked. This was such an engaging session as participants appreciated how easy it is to find passwords in this day and age.

This session ended on a high note, with a focus on Policies that protect Personal Information that ICT champions may come across when accessing digital devices. This looked into the Protection of Personal Information Act and Promotion of Access to Information Act. There was a serious discussion on who and why the SA-SAMS, which has a lot of information about the school operations. They appreciated the knowledge shared on policies and the legal consequences that come with it.

6.11. Hlobane - Vaalbank Primary School

Day one of the training on the 4th of June 2025 began with an Introduction to Computer Architecture, and participants were responsive. Physical hardware was available to help them visualise components and understand their functions. As future ICT champions, it's crucial for them to identify and describe faulty devices. There was a discussion and demonstration on common issues, like a computer powering on but with no display, showing how to safely reset RAM or the CMOS battery to reset the BIOS. The trainer also covered identifying and resolving issues with faulty hard drives.

In the Troubleshooting session, real-world examples and additional common school problems, such as a non-working printer, proved to be very engaging. The facilitator discussed practical steps such as checking cables, swapping connections, and verifying printer status in the Control Panel. A challenge arose as some older attendees voiced their frustration, feeling they shouldn't be responsible for computer problems and suggesting that "admin clerks" should have attended instead.

This feedback highlighted a key issue: participants felt the Communication in a Technical Environment module was irrelevant, as their schools had very few ICT resources (e.g. one to three laptops, one printer, no projectors). With little to communicate about digital access, the trainer moved on to the next module. To better serve their immediate needs, training was adapted to extend the troubleshooting segment to include MS Office installation and activation, a frequent complaint from schools. An exploration ensued on how to check computer specifications like RAM, processor, and operating system, as many were unfamiliar with these details on their own devices. Microsoft Office 365 was strategically moved to Day two to allow for prior activation of their school accounts, ensuring a more hands-on experience.


Day two training at Hlobane Primary School on the 5th of June 2025, started promptly, with enthusiastic educators. After a productive recap session, which included active participation and insightful questions, attendance was taken via a scan of a QR code.

Module 5, Basics of Internet Connectivity, proved highly engaging, covering both wired and wireless connections. Participants, already familiar with Wi-Fi, mobile hotspots, and cellular networks, explored the benefits of internet access for communication, online services, and banking. We also demonstrated offline file sharing via Bluetooth and local networks, with successful practical exercises. An online quiz reinforced their learning, followed by an overview of mobile internet generations (1G to 5G) and practical internet speed tests.

Next, Module 6 IT Security Best Practices addressed crucial cyber safety topics, including the threat of hackers, the importance of antivirus software, regular updates, avoiding public Wi-Fi, and creating strong, unique passwords. Educators completed a portfolio activity on key IT security practices.

The day concluded with Module 7: POPIA and PAIA, which clarified these critical data protection laws. We discussed their importance in safeguarding the personal data of learners, parents, and staff, especially information stored in systems like SA-SAMS. The session emphasised the ICT Champion's role in handling sensitive data and the necessity of implementing strong data protection policies.

6.12. Lindizwe Primary School (Group 2)

Initial training at Lindizwe Primary School, scheduled for 5-6 June 2025 was disturbed by the Union Strike and cancelled. This session resumed on the 18th -19th June 2025.


Day one on the 18th of June 2025 started with a basic understanding of hardware and software, such as the distinction between a CPU and a motherboard and how to assess RAM needs. This continued to a session on how to troubleshoot situations that happen on school grounds. This

led to the need for understanding the communication of reporting issues between the ICT champion and teachers or learners. Communication then moved to Microsoft 365 with understanding fault reporting through Microsoft Forms and clear communication with Microsoft Teams and the need to save-keep documents on OneDrive.

Day two, which happened on the 19th of June 2025, had a recap on day 1's understanding of concepts, then moved to understanding internet connectivity within the school yard, which led to understanding how to troubleshoot any internet connection, whether wired or wireless. This also led to a discussion around rural areas not having the best internet connection. When speaking on internet connection, this started a discussion on safety and best security practices on safekeeping computers from viruses and hackers. This segment included practical demonstrations of internet speed and password strength checks. The training ended with an understanding of the POPI and PAI Act in order for participants to understand the need to protect any personal information they come across while working on the devices. Always ask for consent when dealing with such data, and also understand the legal consequences of not following the ACTs.

6.13. Lindizwe Primary School (Group 3)

The initial training at Lindizwe Primary School, scheduled for 11-12 June 2025, was disrupted by the Union Strike and subsequently cancelled. This session resumed on 23-24 June 2025.

The training on 23rd of June 2025 started with Computer Basics. Everyone learned about computer parts and how they work, mainly referencing the distinction between a CPU and a motherboard and how to assess RAM. This helped ICT champions have a better conceptual understanding of Troubleshooting, where ICT teachers found it easy to learn new ways to solve computer issues, even on their laptops.

Module 3 covered Communication, where ICT champion teachers learned to use computers to keep track of school devices and make digital forms for reporting. This showed them how to design Microsoft Forms to create the forms and use their mobile devices to create such. Module 4 focused on Microsoft 365; some teachers did not have the Microsoft software, however used Microsoft online to create accounts and learn to make forms and share links using OneDrive.

Day two on the 24th started with a recap of day one. This moved to Module 5 Internet Connectivity, which focused on understanding and troubleshooting wired and wireless internet and how to check the internet speed. This led to Module 6 Online Safety, which taught them how to protect computers from viruses and scams and why strong passwords are important. Finally, Module 7 explained the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) and Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA), showing how to protect personal information and the legal consequences of not protecting the data.

6.14. Lindizwe Primary School (Group 4)

Initial training at Lindizwe Primary School, was scheduled for 17-18 June 2025, and was disturbed by the Union Strike and cancelled. This session resumed on the 25th -26th June 2025.


This two-day training, held from 25-26 June 2025, successfully engaged participants, fostering their understanding and practical application of essential ICT skills. Day one commenced with introductions from the district representative, who emphasised the importance of the training. After assessing participants' pre-knowledge and expectations, the session delved into Module one, which introduced Computer Architecture. This module provided a comprehensive understanding of computer basics, hardware, software, peripheral devices, and network architecture, utilising visuals and hands-on demonstrations of stripped computer components. The day worked through all modules, which included being able to Communicate Effectively in a Technical Environment, the Basics of Internet Connectivity (Computers & Mobile Devices), and an Introduction to Microsoft 365. Participants actively engaged in practical exercises for applications like MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and forms, showcasing strong responsiveness.

Day two began with a recap of the content, ensuring all participants were aligned before proceeding. The training then continued with IT Security Best Practices, where participants engaged in group discussions on security scenarios and learned about cybersecurity threats and strong password creation. This was followed by Troubleshooting and Safety, focusing on problem-solving strategies and safe computing practices through interactive group work and presentations. The final module involved understanding the POPI and PAI Acts, which clarified the importance of data protection and participants' responsibilities as ICT Champions in promoting these acts and accessing relevant documents.

7. Challenges

Time: Participants arrived late and as some schools were a distance from the selected venues.

Connectivity: Participants were expected to bring their connectivity; however, most did not have access to the internet. The school provided some connectivity; however, it was too slow for everyone in the session. This ultimately required the participants to transfer files using a USB, which was time-consuming.

Attendance: The short time frame for circulars, this being the examination period at school and union strike action contributed to lowered attendance.

Union Strike: Scheduled training sessions were cancelled when they were about to begin. A teacher's union (SADTU/NATU) strike caused delays and reduced participant numbers.

Varying Digital Literacy Levels: A significant number of older attendees lacked foundational computer knowledge and expressed disinterest, feeling the training was not relevant to their roles, as they believed "admin clerks" should handle IT problems.

Participant Selection: Some non-educator staff (e.g., "admin clerks") attended instead of teachers, suggesting a mismatch in participant selection by schools.

8. Recommendations

Venue: Prioritise securing a training venue that is conducive to learning and fully equipped to support the program's needs.

Time management: Communicate and reinforce the importance of punctuality and adherence to the schedule from the outset of the training. Our experience showed that emphasising this on day one significantly assisted with punctuality on day two.

Content Pacing: Many ICT Champions were novices and therefore required more time to engage with the content, and two days was not sufficient with the amount of content for this course.

Microsoft365: ICT Champions indicated that they needed more assistance with M365 to better understand how to implement it at the school level and to optimise its use.

9. Conclusion

The training achieved significant success, with strong participant engagement in both content and pedagogical strategies. Participants found the content to be very important for their ICT journey. The ICT Champions reported that they were eager to start implementing what they had learnt at their respective schools.

10. Annexure A: Proof of Performance

Workshop	Attendance Registers	Photos/Videos
H. Mantshinga Primary School (2 Groups)	Registers	https://tinyurl.com/bdj7hmr7
Mbhasobheni Primary School (3 Groups)	Registers	
Pioneer Hoerskool (1 Group)	Registers	
Mbhekwa High School (2 Groups)	Registers	
Besterspruit Primary School (1 Group)	Registers	
Hlobani Primary School (1 Group)	Registers	
Lindizwe Primary School (4 Groups)	Registers	

June 2025

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