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National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa

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Newsletter

08

Edition 8, 2016

'Business on the Move': using a Living Labs approach

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'Business on the Move': using a Living Labs approach

Exploring the context and conditions of ICT use of very small to medium size (SMME) entrepreneurs, the MediaTech Project is a collaborative initiative between:
- The Western Cape e-Skills CoLab
- The University of the Western Cape (UWC)
- The Bandwidth Barn in Khayelitsha, a social enterprise
- The FutureMakers programme of Telkom

It looks at the business practices of micro and small business owners so as to develop a systemic approach to enhance mobile technology use. This is to improve their SMME businesses.

What is ICT?
ICT stands for information and communication technology.

What is an e-skill (digital skills)?
An e-skill is more than knowing the basics of how to use a computer (computer literacy). While it's essential to be computer literate, the important question is: what can you do with that? An e-skill means being able to use technology to add benefit to your life – to actively take part in the world and move ahead.

Critical role of SMMEs to grow the South African market
Latest statistics indicate that, in South Africa, there are 2 150 000 SMMEs. Small businesses make up 450 000 of these and 1 300 000 are micro businesses. (A small business is less than 50 employees, a very small business is less than 20 employees and a micro business is less than 5 employees.)

SMMEs account for around 47% of total paid employment. They can be very different in their 'nature', from high tech operations to a survivalist-type business. They are also very different in their use of digital technology, and in the capabilities of owners and workers to use technology.

With the significant impact that SMMEs have on the South African economy and its growth, this sector needs much more support. The meaningful use of ICTs can play a significant role in the growth and development of the SMME market. It can enable owners to improve their own efficiencies and productivity, as well as open up new opportunities in the local and global market – moving towards systemic entrepreneurship. However, for many SMMEs, the only technology available is their mobile device.

About the living labs methodology
Living labs can be seen as a set of methods and an environment for taking the best advantage of user-technology reactions and interactions in the innovation process.

It combines five basic elements:
- Active user involvement (ie empowering end users to have true impact on the innovation process)
- A real-life setting (ie testing and experimenting in the real world)
- Multi-stakeholder participation (ie the involvement of technology providers, service providers, relevant institutional actors, professional or residential end users)
- A multi-method approach (ie combining methods and tools from different fields eg psychology, sociology and strategic management)
- Co-creation (ie design cycles with different sets of stakeholders)

About the MediaTech Project
The aim of the MediaTech Project was to:
- Gain insight into the current business practices and ICT use of small and medium size business.
- The above was in view of contributing towards their enhanced use of ICTs for their benefit and business growth.

The MediaTech project occurred over a six-month period and involved 46 SMME participants from Khayelitsha. It consisted of the following elements:
- A literature scan on what is happening in other emerging countries regarding training in and use of ICTs for the growth of this market (desktop study).
- Pilot study – involving 12 SMMEs in Khayelitsha – during the first week of October 2015. This was to test the cognitive engagement methodology (a participatory research and training methodology).
- Research and training from 2-5 November 2015 – this was designed according to the principles of the Living Labs methodologies. Forty-five representatives from SMMEs participated. The process was highly experiential and enabled the team to gather research information, as well as do skills transfer in using mobile for business purposes. The cognitive engagement board (designed for the project)

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Article continued: 'Business on the Move': using a Living Labs approach

MediaTech Project participants at the Barn.

Participants working on the engagement board.

enabled the creating of a shared language and immersion in the participants' environment.
• Evaluation and feedback on 30 November and 1 December 2015 – this focused on what the SMME owners took away from the process and how they have incorporated it into their business practices.

The results were first presented to the FutureMakers programme of Telkom in February 2016. The CoLab team then discussed the methodological and research implications at the seminar, 'S-DIRECT: Social Digital Innovation Research to Empower Communities in Transition', on 8 March 2016.

Key points from literature on SMMEs
The literature scan showed that:
• There are large differences within the SMME category. One of the dangers is to regard and treat this group as a homogenous entity (all the same). The implication is that e-skills and development strategies and interventions should be diversified. They should be customised for the various sub-groupings within the SMME sector.
• In South Africa, there are only a few studies on micro SMMEs in their real contexts.
• e-Skills training needs to focus on enhancing the meaningful use of ICTs for specific purposes in a specific context – rather than training people to use digital tools.
• Group learning and peer group support seem to play a very important role in facilitating the use of ICTs.
• SMMEs, who adopted mobile for business purposes, show significant business growth.
• Design thinking-based approaches (such as Living Labs) provide optimal conditions for e-skills development and the co-creation of interventions, products and services that address real needs.

What are Living Labs?

A Living Lab is an environment where research and innovation are applied to developing new products, services and processes. This is done with real users in a real-life environment.

People are part of the entire development process as users and co-creators. The process recognises users' needs and the working conditions of service providers. The Living Lab environment is seen as an innovation system.

What is social innovation?

Social innovation is about new ideas (such as products and services) that meet social needs ie they are for the good of society.

Findings and feedback from the MediaTech Project
Following are some of the findings and feedback from the Living Labs approach (the MediaTech Project) for using mobile technology to support SMMEs:
• The SMMEs reported that they gained significantly from the participatory engagement process. They agreed that the integrated educational process (focus on business, technology and the social context) was the main reason for the positive impact.
• Their confidence grew in using and applying technology for and in their business as a result of the intervention.
• They valued the business relationships that were established as a result of the process. They also reinforced the importance of developing the ecosystem – as opposed to just presenting 'training' sessions.

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Article continued: 'Business on the Move': using a Living Labs approach

- Initially the concept of the 'digital economy' was regarded as foreign and reserved for big business only. However, as a result of the engagement process and especially the peer learning and interaction, the participants recognised that they need to position themselves as active participants in the digital economy. Otherwise their market will be taken away by other (international) role players. They expressed the need for regular sessions and discussions that can help them explore opportunities in this respect.
- It's clear that access and cost inhibits business growth. Participants said that they are reluctant to experiment with ICTs for fear of incurring costs.
- A clear digital divide can be seen – specifically around access, cost of data, fear of incurring cost and inaccessible applications.

Learning videos used for the MediaTech Project
Go to the link http://vimeo.com/channels/uwccolab to see some of the training videos used for SMMEs. Topics include:
- What is the internet?
- Making sense of the internet and the web
- Connecting to Wi-Fi hot spots and networks
- Managing data usage on a mobile device
- Applications, icons and application stores
- Managing contacts on my mobile device
- Installing Whatsapp on my mobile device
- Using Whatsapp on my mobile device

- There is a translation challenge when it comes to formal business language and developer/technology language compared to the local reality of SMMEs. ☺

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e-skills training

Smart centres for e-skills training on a community level

e-Skilling South Africa is a massive endeavour. For the e-skills agenda to be successful, government, business, education and civil society need to work together. NEMISA/INeSI has created a multi-stakeholder model that allows organisations to partner in an aligned approach to achieve the goal.

The model works on a national, provincial and local level. The e-skills CoLabs focus on the provincial level. However, they are also part of the initiative to create a national network of smart centres (community technology centres or e-intermediaries). These smart centres focus on the local community level. The emphasis is on empowering communities with e-skills. An important part of the strategy

is to create smart centres that also cater to business, especially small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

NC/SG e-Skills CoLab partners with Solar Capital Training Centre in De Aar
The Northern Cape/Southern Gauteng e-Skills CoLab is partnering with Solar Capital Training Centre, based in De Aar. The aim is to bring e-literacy training and opportunities to the communities.

Solar Capital recently launched the largest solar farm in Africa, the Southern Hemisphere and the Middle East. De Aar in the Northern Cape is host to this 175MW solar farm.

About Solar Capital
Solar Capital (Pty) Ltd is a South African subsidiary of the Phelan Energy Group. It is an independent power producer. It creates photovoltaic (PV) products and builds expertise in renewable energy. (PV is the name of a method of converting solar energy into direct current electricity.)

NC/SG CoLab representatives installing the e-literacy programme.

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Article continued: Smart centres for e-skills training on a community level

Solar Capital's community training centre

As a result of being part of the Department of Energy's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP), Solar Capital committed to economic development in the Emthanjeni Municipality. One of Solar Capital's socio-economic development commitments was to design, install and ensure the smooth running of a computer laboratory. This is for Solar Capital's Community Training Centre (CTC) in De Aar.

The computer lab has 13 stations with the up-to-date ICT and training software. There is also a Wi-Fi network. The CTC focused on a number of community training needs over the last year, including entrepreneurial development. It targets people from the Emthanjeni Municipal district.

Partnering for e-literacy training

The NC/SG e-Skills CoLab has installed the national e-literacy programme, and the centre is ready to start with community training. Two facilitators were trained and graduated on 21 April 2016.

Mr Abner Wagenaar, Local Economic Development Manager of Solar Capital, said that teaching e-literacy to the community is an ongoing project: "This government initiative, aligned to the country's National Development Plan, will not only include computer skills, but individuals will gain the appropriate knowledge to use technology in a smart way that betters the lives of the community."

Ms Antoinette Lombard, Director of the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab, said that e-skills are the start of the digital skills learning ladder: "Community centres, such as the one in De Aar, operate as a technology learning hub for the community. At a basic level, people need to be taught e-literacy. The centres can then go on to offer much more – especially in terms of supporting digital skills for entrepreneurs and SMMEs." ☺

Notes from the address by Dr Siyabonga Cwele, DTPS Minister, at the South Region Fair of the Small Business Indaba on 15 April 2016

In his address, Minister Cwele noted that the development of the small business sector has been prioritised by the South African government. This sector has the potential to assist with poverty reduction, employment creation, economic empowerment and innovation. Small businesses currently contribute 35% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). They also contribute 54% to formal private sector employment.

The Minister positioned the ICT sector as fertile ground for small business incubation, development and promotion. This included earmarking small businesses as part of the broadband project – in particular, opportunities for small businesses in the services market.

Part of the programme of action is developing a comprehensive Digital Entrepreneurship programme. It is aimed at supporting all businesses to embrace digital technologies and exploit social media, big data, cloud and mobile. Small businesses need to adopt the use of ICTs to improve their business operations.

In terms of support for innovation, the minister noted that the government will continue to facilitate the deployment of enabling infrastructures such as Community IT centres. "Such centres must facilitate access to finance and market opportunities for innovators. These centres must also be catalysts in improving cohesion between innovators in the formal and informal sectors."

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e-skills awareness

Promoting e-skills and the e-skills agenda at the Eastern Cape Imbizo

What happened? On 8 April 2016 Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services (DTPS), attended an Imbizo in Mdantsane in the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality.

The event took place at Masixole High School. It was part of a number of DTPS imbizos. (The Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality lies on the east coast of Eastern Cape Province.)

Deputy Minister Mkhize was the main speaker at the event that marked the opening of the Masixole High School Lab. Vodacom sponsored tablets and an interactive white board for the lab.

The audience: The event was attended by, among others, the school principal, pupils, teachers, school governing body members, parents, community members, municipal councillors, and officials from the Department of Basic Education.

EC CoLab's involvement: Ms Lorna van der Merwe, Acting Coordinator for the Eastern Cape e-Skills CoLab, gave a message of support.
- She explained how NEMISA/INeSI focuses on giving people the capacity to use ICT to improve their lives and that of their communities. Her awareness message explained what the CoLabs do and how their activities take place within a framework of multi-stakeholder collaboration and aggregation. (This is to increase impact and reduce duplication.)
- Ms van der Merwe also spoke about the EC e-Skills CoLab's focus – ICT for rural development. This is about how ICT can be used to impact positively on the development of information-poor rural, peri-urban and remote areas. It is also about expanding the power of ICT to connect these areas with the information society and knowledge economy and to break down barriers to knowledge and information exchange. This is particularly relevant in a predominantly rural province where challenges – like high youth unemployment – compound the digital divide.
- She explained how NEMISA/INeSI's work aligns with government policy, such as the broadband policy (SA Connect). The EC CoLab also works with government (such as the Provincial Broadband Committee) to share information and programmes, thus reducing duplication and allowing for more effective planning and use of resources.
- She informed the audience about scheduled initiatives for the year and work that has been done. She brought along participants from previous CoLab projects to engage with the audience later in the day: The group included a WSU Education

Faculty lecturer from the social media workshops, participants from the 'programming for schools' workshop (including a WSU IT department lecturer and two school pupils), and young people who participated in the pilot e-literacy roll-out and went on to become facilitators for the roll-out to SMMEs and community members. To further inspire the learners, there was a young Eastern Cape man who previously studied programming at WSU and NMMU and is now pursuing a highly successful career with a multinational company in East London.

EC CoLab comment: "It was a very joyous occasion. I was especially taken with the proud pupils. They had entertainment by current and past school students. One of the most popular items was a song dedicated to celebrating the arrival of technology!" ☺

(L) DTPS Minister, Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize, and (R) Ms Lorna van der Merwe, EC CoLab Director, with her workshop participants.

DTPS Deputy Minster's speech at the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality Imbizo
Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize's focus was on creating an interest among the youth in the ICT sector and how ICT can be a part of existing industries in the area, as well as creating new initiatives. She also discussed the need for broadband connectivity in rural areas. The initial broadband rollout targets are in mostly rural district municipalities, including OR Tambo municipality, Eastern Cape.

Prof Mkhize noted how IT is changing the world. She highlighted the need for investing in e-skills training and education so that people have the skills to make the most of ICTs and new technologies. Connectivity is not just for its own sake, people need to be able to benefit from it. She noted that the work of NEMISA/INeSI, the EC e-Skills CoLab and others to provide communities with ICT skills.

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e-skills training

Creative new media e-skills boot camp

What happened? The Gauteng e-Skills CoLab ran an eight-week boot camp in Gauteng from 22 February to 15 April 2016. It was composed of 10 unit standards (66 credits) from the Level 4 Film and TV Productions and Operations qualification SAQA 61450. The boot camp is a start to finishing the complete qualification.

? What is creative new media?

The creative industries include everything from craft, art and design to architecture, film and music. Creative new media means the new creative fields that have come about from technology.

Participants: There were 11 learners from TV workplaces in Gauteng. The learners are doing in-service training after completing Matric. Workplaces include The President Church, Fresh TV, Midrand Tembisa TV / MTTV and Mindset Network.

Boot camp content: Learners were divided into three production teams. The aim was to produce news and current affairs inserts on social issues. Their topics were about water, freedom and rape. The participants covered the following areas:

- Identifying expertise and resources in the industry
- Developing a schedule for effective project execution
- Preparing a project cost budget and controlling actual cost against budget
- Writing and presenting texts for various communicative contexts
- Digitising picture and sound for non-linear editing
- Mounting and moving cameras

- Pre-production planning
- Assembling pictures and sound to specification
- Rigging and de-rigging cameras for television
- Rigging lighting for film and television productions

Assessments were conducted, as well as moderation.

Feedback: The training was well received. Following are some comments.

- "I have been out of school for a while. This skills programme has helped me to be more organised as I learned about productions phases and what makes a good producer." Dimakatso Langa
- "I can see where my life and career goes after being exposed to producing News and Current Affairs inserts. I now know about the hard work that is behind a successful production." Nkosinathi Kunene ☺

What happened next?

Dimakatso Langa, a learner who participated in the boot camp, has been appointed to direct a film called Nyiko (The Gift). This will be broadcast on DSTV. It's produced by Maxisky Media.

Participants at the eight-week creative new media boot camp.

The provincial e-skills CoLabs

The provincial e-skills CoLabs are based at universities. Each has a focus on a specific area in e-skills:

- **Western Cape e-Skills CoLab:** e-Inclusion and Social Innovation, based at the University of the Western Cape
- **KwaZulu-Natal e-Skills CoLab:** e-Enablement for Effective Service Delivery, based at Durban University of Technology
- **Eastern Cape e-Skills CoLab:** ICT for Rural Development, based at Walter Sisulu University
- **Gauteng e-Skills CoLab:** Creative New Media Industries, based at the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA)
- **Limpopo e-Skills CoLab:** Connected Health, based at the University of Limpopo
- **Northern Cape/Southern Gauteng e-Skills CoLab:** e-Literacy and e-Business (knowledge economy and e-social astuteness), based at the Vaal University of Technology
- **North West e-Skills CoLab:** e-Agro-tourism, based at the University of the North West

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e-skills research

Ensuring e-skills research reaches policymakers

Research is an essential part of providing data for informed decision making in government. This applies to a national, provincial and local government level. Part of the equation is to create frameworks that allow research to filter through to the relevant people and organisations. As part of a multi-stakeholder collaborative framework, NEMISA/INeSI continues to enable research feedback.

What happened? The Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE)

and eThekwini municipality hosted the eThekwini-University Research Symposium from 5-6 April 2016. This was held in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The theme was 'Durban, A city in transformation: Towards an Effective, Inclusive and Sustainable Socio-Economic Outcome'.

Purpose of the event: The event involved research-aligned partners. The aim was to provide a shared platform for city practitioners and research organisations to engage with evidence-based research outputs for policy making.

KZN e-Skills CoLab participation: Dr Surendra Thakur, Director of the KZN e-Skills CoLab based at the Durban University of Technology, was part of the panel that looked at 'Transforming local government through e-government, electronic and engineering solutions'. ☺

In the news

Impacting on students to improve science and technology in SA
Two students from the MMI programme received awards for their Matric results from their school, Asoka Secondary School. Karissa Govender received six distinctions, including maths. Simphiwe Mcoyi received four distinctions, including maths. It was reported in the local newspaper, the Rising Sun, on 29 March 2016.

Asoka Secondary School principal, Mr R Hakiman congratulates Karissa Govender, while Simphiwe Mcoyi is congratulated by deputy principal, Mrs A Nelcker.

They are in the 2015 group that was taught science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) as part of the MMI programme. The KZN e-Skills CoLab has an ongoing partnership with MMI Holdings Ltd to train grade 12 learners in Maths, English and Physical Science. The KZN e-Skills CoLab uses this initiative to introduce technology to the learners.

e-skills training

e-Literacy course facilitator training in Upington

What happened? The Northern Cape/Southern Gauteng e-Skills CoLab hosted an e-literacy facilitator workshop at the Technology, Transfer and Innovation Centre (TTI) CoLab centre in Upington on 22 April 2016. The newly qualified facilitators received training from the CoLab Director and Mr Lund from Active Digital Education.

Delegates? There were 21 facilitators from:
- The TTI centre in Upington
- Karstens Farm
- SKA Centre from Carnarvon
- Solar Capital from de Aar
- Nama-eskills centre from Nababeep

e-Literacy facilitator workshop in Upington.

Article continued: e-Literacy course facilitator training in Upington

Course content: The delegates covered various aspects including the following:
- The use of the e-literacy software with tips and tricks
- The assessment programme, including candidate registration, assigning assessments and results reporting
- The use of TeamViewer to better assist when the centre has technical needs

- Incorporating additional exercises and assignments to better prepare students for the exam

Feedback? Ms Antoinette Lombard, Director of the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab, noted that the delegates found the workshop very valuable: "They are now well prepared to go full steam with the training." ☺

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e-skills graduation

e-Skills graduation ceremony for Northern Cape delegates

e-Skills graduates at the Vaal University of Technology ceremony.

On 22 April 2016, the Northern Cape/Southern Gauteng e-Skills CoLab hosted their first formal e-skills graduation for Northern Cape delegates. The e-skills certificate ceremony was combined with the formal Vaal University of Technology (VUT) graduations. The CoLab is based at VUT.

The delegates had completed either the e-skills programme or the e-skills facilitator programme. They included students and facilitators from community training centres (e-intermediaries) in the Northern Cape:
- De Aar
- Nababeep
- Carnarvon
- Karstens Farm in Pella
- VUT Technology Station in Upington

Message from the NC/SG CoLab Director
"We believe that with these basic skills, people from our communities in urban, peri-urban, rural and deep rural areas will be able to help themselves – to uplift their own lives, as well as their communities. We all have to invest in the youth of our country and through the e-skills programme we are changing lives," said Ms Antoinette Lombard, Director of the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab.

Ms Lombard said that it has been a long journey with planning and getting everything in place – even before actual implementation. "Now that it's happening, it is absolutely amazing to see the difference it makes in the lives of people at the different community centres," she said. In almost all cases, the youth that trained are unemployed.

Ms Lombard noted that completing the e-literacy course and receiving an accredited certificate opens up opportunities the participants never had before.

"I can see how students grow during the course and become more self-reliant and more self-confident. That's an important aspect of the training. It is not just about learning functions and programmes, but also personal development," she concluded.

Delegate comments
- "I am very happy that I now have a certificate to show that I am good at computer applications. I gained practical skills that will assist me in the work place in future." Keegan Langfred from Morning Glory Area, Upington, is one of the graduates from the TTI centre. He completed the e-literacy programme.
- "It's a great accomplishment to receive my certificate from a well-known institution like VUT. I feel honoured that I'm now able to teach other people to acquire computer skills." Prudence Moos, a facilitator at Carnarvon Computer Centre. This centre is sponsored by the SKA (Square Kilometre Array). She is now fully qualified as a facilitator and will be running the e-literacy programme at the centre. ☺

> **About the e-literacy course**
> The focus of the training is on community development in the areas of internet, e-mail, basic computer skills and mobile skills. These skills are commonly referred to as e-literacy skills.

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e-skills awareness

e-Skills highlighted at the Polokwane DTPS Imbizo

What happened? On 8 April 2016, Dr Siyabonga Cwele, the Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services, held an Imbizo in Polokwane. The event took place at the Seshigo High School in Moletjie, Polokwane.

The initiative involved community engagement, an Information and Career Expo, and the handover of 60 digital tablets sponsored by Broadband Infraco. (The sponsorship is part of a collaboration, over the past three years, between Broadband Infraco, the Limpopo Department of Basic Education and other stakeholders.)

Audience? The event focused on learners at Seshigo High School, particularly those doing Mathematics and Physical Science. This is a historically disadvantaged high school, with over 1 200 learners.

Minister's speech: The DTPS Minister noted that the initiative was in line with government's bigger project to deliver broadband access to 100% of schools by 2030. He also noted that "modern ICT technologies are a big part of our everyday lives and we can no longer afford to separate them from anything we do". This is part of the National Development Plan which "envisions that ICTs have the power to transform South Africa into an information society and a vibrant knowledge economy that is both prosperous and inclusive".

Dr Cwele also mentioned the Ikamva National e-Skills Institute (INeSI) in relation to ICT skills development opportunities and that the Limpopo e-Skills CoLab is based at the University of Limpopo.

Limpopo e-Skills CoLab involvement: The CoLab took part in the expo and presented on the importance of e-skills (digital literacy) and how the Limpopo e-Skills CoLab works with schools. This included:

- The future of learning
- The mismatch between student skills and what is needed by business
- How ICT and the youth interact (ie digital natives) and view technology as a natural part of life
- The nature of collaborative learning and the need to move from passive to active learning

This led to further involvement with the school. Dr Farivar Rahimi, CoLab Director, was also given the details on available hardware, software, connectivity and trainers.

There was a visit to the school on 25 April 2016 to present to representatives of the School Governing Body (SGB). ☺

Dr Siyabonga Cwele, DTPS Minister, at the Polokwane Imbizo.

e-skills training

Digital literacy training to empower South Africans

Digital literacy training at (L) Lusikisiki, Eastern Cape, and (R) Colesberg, Northern Cape.

During April, NEMISA continued with its digital literacy (e-skills) training for the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services (DTPS). The five-day course was given in two different provinces: the Northern and Eastern Cape.

The initiative involves the following stakeholders:
- DTPS
- NEMISA
- The University of Pretoria's African Centre of Excellence for Information Ethics

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Article continued: e-Literacy course facilitator training in Upington

- The Pixley ka Seme Municipal District (for the Northern Cape)
- The OR Tambo Municipal District (for the Eastern Cape)

Training focus

The University of Pretoria conducted Information Ethics training on the first day. This section looked at information ethics and digital citizenship, as well as cyber (online) security, safety and crime.

The remaining four days focused on digital literacy training

What is information ethics?

Information ethics looks at the ethical standards and moral codes governing information. This includes the use of information. It has become even more important with the sharing of electronic information, such as on the internet and in emails.

What is digital citizenship?

A digital citizen usually means a person who regularly and effectively uses ICT and the internet. Digital citizenship can be defined as the norms of appropriate, responsible behaviour when using technology.

by NEMISA. This included an introduction to:

- Using Microsoft Office Suite (emails, documents, spreadsheets and presentations) – focusing on participants creating CVs and print adverts for local SMMEs like a local hair salon, barbershop or spaza shop. MS Excel training helped participants to create a monthly budget.
- The internet and how to use internet applications such as cloud storage (Dropbox), as well as social media and blogging. This focus is for participants to create accounts in Facebook, LinkedIn and Gmail, as well as how to email and attach files.

About the delegates

The delegates were unemployed youth, with an emphasis on women. They came from the partner district and were chosen by the district.

The training

- Colesberg, Northern Cape: Digital literacy training ran from 11-15 April 2016. There were 32 participants. The training took place in the Pixley ka Seme Municipal District. The feedback was positive, with delegates saying they had learnt a lot.
- Lusikisiki, Eastern Cape: Digital literacy training ran from 18-22 April 2016. There were 17 participants, 70% female and 30% male. They came from Port St Johns and Lusikisiki. The training took place in the OR Tambo Municipal District. The participants showed a huge thirst for knowledge, going out of their way to make sure they could attend the training. 😊

From the speech by Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize, DTPS Deputy Minister, at the Black It Forum Stakeholder Event on 13 April 2016

Deputy Minister Mkhize spoke about: "The importance of connecting the Eastern Cape municipalities and the opportunities brought by broadband and Wi-Fi with focus on township connectivity and the role of women within the ICT industry"

She noted that a 2013 gap analysis study done by CSIR (Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research) concluded that broadband connectivity was concentrated in urban areas and sparse in rural areas. It led to feedback on the first phase of the broadband rollout. This is where government is connecting offices in eight district municipalities, mostly rural and impoverished.

Regarding the rollout of broadband and initiatives around this, the Deputy Minister spoke about the Ikamva National e-Skills Institute (INeSI)/NEMISA. This was in relation to realising the youth's potential and being able to compete successfully in a fiercely competitive global economic environment – "[creating] a highly skilled and educated workforce with aptitude and skills in the application of information and communication technologies in everyday life will be essential".

She noted that INeSI will stimulate demand through the e-readiness programmes in schools and clinics, formal skills development curricula, general awareness and e-literacy campaigns.

Moving towards iNeSI

Block continued: From the speech by DTPS Deputy Minister at the Black It Forum Stakeholder Event

INeSI "is a partnership between government, the private sector and the community. INeSI is one of the interventions aimed at the development of local e-skills that are required by the sector and the user skills necessary for social and economic inclusion to secure and create jobs."

"INeSI is a multi-stakeholder collaborative network. Through collaboration, INeSI is e-skilling the nation for equitable prosperity and global competitiveness. The focus is primarily on four components: evidence-based research, teaching and learning, innovation, and monitoring and evaluation framework."

She noted that the multi-stakeholder collaborative network allows for the massification of e-skills delivery at all levels in society – thought leaders, ICT practitioners, ICT users and the ICT illiterate. The network consists of:

- Institutions
- Universities
- FET colleges and civil society
- Corporate partners/business

She explained how INeSI/NEMISA works: "These networks support government's e-skills agenda offering their development training with the intention of contextualising it within the South African and African environment." They do this by:
- Assisting with research, promoting the innovation application factories and assisting with which local apps will work.
- Global development partners and agencies
- Drawing on their experience, architecture and framework, and ensuring their network is channelled through INeSI.

All about the Northern Cape/Southern Gauteng e-Skills CoLab: knowledge-based economy and e-social astuteness (e-literacy)

e-Skills CoLab profile

Collaboration to create an e-literate society
South Africa's National Development Plan outlines an e-literate society by 2030. For this to happen, government, business, education and civil society need to work together. This is not something that can be done alone.

e-Skills are more than computer literacy
Part of creating an e-literate society is empowering people with e-skills (digital literacy). An e-skill is not just about how to use a computer (computer literacy). It's about being able to use technology to add benefit to your life and to your community – to actively take part in the world and move ahead.

Ms Antoinette Lombard, NC/SG e-Skills CoLab Director, at the delegate information session: e-literacy training for 50 service workers.

Four pillars of SA Connect, the country's broadband plan
An e-literate society is more than having access to infrastructure. South Africa's broadband policy, SA Connect, recognises this. There are four pillars outlined – these are the foundation for creating an e-literate society:

Digital Readiness: This looks at how to make the country ready for broadband. It covers areas such as policies and regulations.

Digital Development: This looks at how to develop the broadband network. One of the priorities is to provide free public Wi-Fi networks to schools and clinics. These will be points of connection for citizens to access e-government and other services.

Digital Future: This looks at how to develop broadband into the future. It focuses on making broadband affordable and easy to access.

Article continued: All about the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab

> **Digital Opportunity:** This looks at the opportunities that exist because of broadband. It focuses on how to make sure people, organisations and businesses make use of the opportunities.

What is broadband?

Broadband means fast, always-on access to the internet.

Having e-skills creates a demand for broadband

Digital Opportunity focuses on creating the demand for broadband. It includes developing user skills (e-skills) in a number of areas:

- For entrepreneurs and in business
- Within the health sector
- As part of the learning curriculum
- So citizens can use e-government services
- Within areas that require high-level e-skills such as programming

What is e-government?

e-Government is the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve government services. It's sometimes called a 'connected government'.

How is NEMISA/INeSI part of e-skilling South Africa?

NEMISA is in the process of becoming the Ikamva National e-Skills Institute (INeSI). Its aim is to e-skill South Africa but it cannot do this alone. It is part of a larger framework of collaboration and partnership.

Why is multi-stakeholder collaboration essential?

e-Skilling South Africa is an immense undertaking. It is only with partnerships and collaboration that we can create an e-literate society. However, it is more than that:

- **Working together will reduce duplication.** There are numerous individual e-skilling efforts and often these duplicate each other.
- **Working together will create a bigger impact.** It is easier to increase impact when there is collaboration.
- **Working together aligns e-skilling initiatives.** Working within a framework means that initiatives are aligned to government policy, working to have a greater impact on the country as a whole.

NEMISA/INeSI has a countrywide framework

NEMISA/INeSI works on a national, provincial and local level. Its CoLabs focus on e-skilling on a provincial level. Each CoLab has its own focus area. The aim is that the provincial e-skilling interventions and the CoLab focus area are developed so that they can be scaled nationally to cover the whole of South Africa.

Following is a focus on the Northern Cape/Southern Gauteng e-Skills CoLab.

The Northern Cape/Southern Gauteng e-Skills CoLab: knowledge-based economy and e-social astuteness (e-literacy)

Like other CoLabs, the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab activities focus on the following:

- e-Skills training, such as e-literacy training
- Curriculum and course development
- Knowledge for Innovation – this means activities such as commissioning and presenting research reports, hosting colloquiums, thought leadership engagement and product development (apps, videos etc)

To find out more, we asked Ms Antoinette Lombard, CoLab

First 2015 group of workers participating in the e-literacy course.

e-Literacy training facilitators with Antoinette Lombard, Director of the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab.

VUT 2015 group 1 service workers in training.

e-skilling the nation

NeMISA NPC
National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa

Article continued: All about the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab

Director, about the NC/SG e-Skills CoLab and her work there. The CoLab is based at the Vaal University of Technology (VUT).

Q Explain the CoLab focus?

The CoLab is responsible for providing basic e-literacy training to the nation. Basic e-literacy includes computer literacy, mobile literacy plus internet and e-mail.

Due to the e-readiness rankings of South Africa, which dropped drastically over the last few years, this programme becomes an important tool to uplift this ranking and give citizens the skills to participate in the knowledge economy of South Africa.

? What is a knowledge economy?
This is an economy where growth depends on the amount and quality of available information and access to it. This is in contrast to an economy that depends on production (such as coal).

Q Besides e-literacy training, what else is happening?

The CoLab is also establishing e-centres throughout the Northern Cape and Southern Gauteng. These e-centres work on a local community level. Currently there are centres in:
- Upington at the VUT Technology Transfer and Innovation (TTI) centre
- Nababeep (Springbok) with the Nama-e-skills centre
- Carnarvon with the Square Kilometre Array
- De Aar with Solar Capital
- VUT CoLab Centre for Southern Gauteng (Sebokeng) at the Science and Technology Park
- Pofadder with KHI Solar 1

There is another e-centre opening soon in Louisvale, Upington with KHI Solar 1. We are also doing training on Karstens Farm and have several other training projects running in the Free State.

Q Talk about the work with unemployed youth?

The CoLab is establishing a learning path for unemployed youth. This is to empower them to either find work or provide for themselves. The learning path covers aspects such as Basic e-Literacy, Conversational English, Entrepreneurship and Finding Work courses.

Q Tell us about the Learner Registration System?

The CoLab is responsible for the development of the Nationwide Learner Registration system. It runs through a portal that was developed for NEMISA/INeSI. On this portal,

learners will be able to:
- Register for courses
- See what courses are available
- Get more information on different institutions and training centres offering programmes

Q What are the CoLab plans for the next financial year?

The main focus for 2016/2017 will be:
- Further development of the Learner Registration System with additional functionalities
- Development of a basic level e-entrepreneurship course
- Training of around 1700 learners in the e-literacy programme and additional programs offered by the CoLab
- Setting up additional training e-centres to broaden access to rural communities.

Q What is your background?

I first graduated with a Diploma: Financial Information Systems from Vaal Triangle Technicon. Then I completed my Baccalaurees Technologia Information Technologia (BTech) Financial Information Systems and Magister Technologia (MTech) Information Technology from VUT. I am currently enrolled for a DTech IT.

Q What work do you do now?

I was the VUT Head of Department: ICT from 2005 until 2015. During this time, I was involved in establishing the CoLab at VUT. In March 2016, I was appointed the Director: e-Skills at VUT. I am responsible for the national e-skills project at VUT, rolling out e-skills to the nation and institutionalising e-skills at VUT. I am a board member of HEICTA (Higher Education Information and Communication Technology Association) of South Africa and an active member of various South African Technology Network (SATN) committees. Curriculum Development, Teaching and Learning Technologies, Quality Management and e-Skills are among my specialities. ☺

NC/SG e-Skills CoLab Message
The CoLab has a focus on training basic e-literacy for the masses – the NEMISA/INeSI mandate is to train 10 million people over a five-year period. The aim is empowerment through learning into a job or self-employment. The need for basic learning in subjects (such as Computers, Entrepreneurship and English) is immense and people in rural areas are desperate. Initial investment has shown bountiful rewards. Our mandate is achievable through active participation and investment by government.

Moving towards **iNeSI**
Ikamva National eSkills Institute