North West, Limpopo teachers trained by ISPA

A firm understanding of information and communications technology (ICT) is essential in the modern world. However, it is impossible for teachers to develop such knowledge in learners if they themselves have no real grasp of ICT.

This is why the Internet Service Providers' Association of SA (ISPA) is continuing its 'Train the Teacher' initiative in the North West and Limpopo Provinces between 31 March and 4 April 2012.

The project, run in conjunction with CoZa Cares, with training delivered by Avuxeni Computer Academy and SchoolNet SA, has already provided ICT skills training to more than 2 000 teachers across South Africa. A large part of the initiative targets schools in under-resourced and rural areas and is set to deliver beginner and intermediate level courses at a total of 25 schools in the North West Province.

Some 250 teachers from schools in Lichtenburg, Leeudoringstad, Vryburg, Sannieshof, Klerksdorp and Ga-Rankuwa will benefit from these courses. Says Fiona Wallace, chairperson of the ISPA Teacher Training Working Group: "The courses aim to equip teachers with practical computer skills. This will enable them to use technology to produce learning materials, subject plans, assessments and marks records, as well as to complete administrative tasks more efficiently."

Technology is a valuable teaching aid

In addition, a specially selected group of more advanced teachers are receiving training in project-based use of the ICT environment to improve classroom teaching. "ISPA has long recognised the growing need for ICT training in previously disadvantaged communities," states Wallace.

"In an ideal world, every teacher would have access to thorough, practical training in the integration of technology into the classroom. ISPA realises the importance of this if these teachers are to help children prepare to take their rightful place in a connected world. By providing teachers with a proper understanding of technology, they are then able to utilise it as a valuable teaching aid. Moreover, because it can help teachers to complete routine administrative tasks more efficiently, it means they have more time to focus on quality teaching."

"Not only do these courses have a positive impact on the teachers' performance in the classroom, but the teachers also pass their IT skills on to learners and other members of their community. Therefore, the 'Train the Teacher' initiative is helping to seed computer literacy in many of our nation's under-resourced communities," concludes Wallace.