



Phase 1 of the Dikuno Trust Wi-Fi Connectivity and ICT Programme Goes Live

The Beneficiary Communities of the Dikuno Community Development Trust Benefit from the Dikuno Trust Wi-Fi-Internet Connectivity and ICT Integration Community Development Programmes

July 2022: Dikuno Tsa Sechaba Community Development Trust, or 'Dikuno', officially launched phase one of the Dikuno Trust Wi-Fi-Internet Connectivity and ICT Integration programmes respectively (As per Figure 1 below), at Northam Comprehensive School in Northam town (in the Thabazimbi Local Municipality, Limpopo Province).

The Wi-Fi Network is intended to enable the communities in the Benefit Area to connect to the digital world so that when connected. The community can have access to development tools and/or other resources in different sectors such as Education, Health, and Commerce.

As at the date of the Launch, some 34 public areas (schools, clinics, community halls and others) in various communities in the Benefit Area are connected to the Wi-Fi Network with 20 more scheduled for completion by the end of the 2022 calendar year.

In education, for example, learners are enabled by the Dikuno Wi-Fi Network to conduct research for school assignments online. In addition, some of the schools are already participating in meetings of the Department of Basic Education virtually – using the Dikuno Wi-Fi Network, combining that with the Microsoft Teams Department of Basic Education license(s).

The goal of the ICT Programme is to make the use of Information and Communication Technologies in the various areas of the life of the community, such as Education, Health, and Business (among others), a lived reality – not just a theoretical thing.

The successfully developed ICT Centre launched is to be used to offer accredited ICT skills development programmes. The first of such programmes, that the Dikuno and Department of Basic Education Partnership is already bringing towards implementation is a computer literacy skills development programme.

This computer literacy training programme will benefit Learners, Educators and Community Members – community members which include Youth Groups or Formations, Women Groups or Forums and others.



Furthermore, the computer literacy programme will also be a base to identify those with the interest and potential to move into more specialized streams of Information and Communication Technology fields such as Software Development and Network Engineering through various Partnerships.

A Network Operating Centre from which the network is monitored was also established and it is intended to train and employ local Operators and Technicians.

Some of the distinguished guests who attended the Launch include Trustees of the Board of Dikuno Community Development Trust as well as Kgosi JEM Ramokoka of the Baphalane Community, Kgosi Ramono Pilane Lenchwe of the Bakgatla Ba Kgafela Community, Ms SJ Madela - District Director of Waterberg District, Limpopo Department of Basic Education, Dr Elias Tsakane Ngobeni - Dwaalboom Circuit Manager in the Limpopo Department of Basic Education (Waterberg), Mr Lucky Ditsele - Director in the District Office of Basic Education (Bojanala, Northwest), Ms NS Masipa from the Moses Kotane Local Municipality, Ms Nana Magomola - Chairperson of the Lefa La Rona Trust, Ms Nthabiseng Matsobane - Chairperson of the Rustenburg Community Development Trust, and Ms Nkaro Mateta - Chairperson of the Ditholwana Community Development Trust.

Mr Justice Mogale, Trustee of the Dikuno Board of Trustees explained that the Launch of the Wi-Fi Network and ICT Centre infrastructure mark and celebrate the successful achievement of Phase 1 of the project. He acknowledged that partnership with relevant stakeholders is key to ensuring the sustainability of such projects and he encouraged stakeholders to get involved in similar community development programmes.

Chairperson of the Dikuno Board of Trustees, Mr Harry Monye explained that at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic the learners in disadvantaged communities struggled to keep up to date with their studies due to a lack of resources. He indicated that this was one of the reasons why this project was borne. He emphasised that he would like the learners from the Benefit Area to be computer literate so that when they move to institutions of higher learning, they are able to complete their assignments on a computer with ease.

Ms SJ Madela, District Director – Waterberg District, Limpopo Department of Education, applauded Dikuno for this initiative, saying as a district they take education very seriously and that they always want to see their learners' progress. She confirmed that the Dikuno infrastructure will be put to good use and definitely not collect dust as the Waterberg district has already trained more than 250 teachers on how to use computers. She invited more stakeholders to participate in such initiatives.

Mr Peter Letsholo, the Principal of Northam Comprehensive School which also stands to benefit from this project could not contain his excitement when he explained the opportunities that this infrastructure will bring to his learners and educators alike.



He said this would not have come at a more opportune time because his school has applied to the Department of Education to introduce (Computer Applications Technology) CAT as a subject. He affirmed that this infrastructure would enable his learners to be on par with those from affluent schools.

The scribe of the Northam Community School Governing Body (SGB) and community member Mr Jafta Suthse narrated the school's long-standing relationship with Dikuno and expressed with excitement that their school and community will benefit greatly from this programme. He ascertained that they would ensure the infrastructure is well taken care of to ensure it serves the community well.

Kgosi JEM Ramokoka of the Baphalane Community applauded Dikuno for the erection of the infrastructure citing that when Dikuno tsa Sechaba Trust started, he thought it was just another window dressing project aimed at keeping the community busy while the commodity was being taken away. He confirmed that this perception has changed, and he acknowledges Dikuno as a partner in the development of communities, adding that Dikuno is really meant to address social challenges as their process to request assistance is simple while they also respond timeously. Kgosi Ramokoka urged the members of the SGB to make learners and their parents aware that the infrastructure brought to them by Dikuno belongs to the entire community, affirming that Dikuno is giving them a head start into 4IR.

Kgosi of the Bakgatla ba Kgafela, Ramono Pilane Lenchwe also thanked Dikuno for the infrastructure, stating that he was from the era of using telegrams to communicate while today's children use the internet. He indicated that connectivity and Wi-Fi are a priority in his community's social labour plans, with the aim of connecting 32 communities and all the schools in the area. He ascertained that he would continue to work with Dikuno to ensure all Kgatleng schools have internet connectivity as he wants all learners in the community to be computer literate when they reach tertiary institutions. He confirmed that meetings will be scheduled with Dikuno to discuss the work that still needs to be done in the education space, with the intent to complete this programme in the next two years.

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Issued on behalf of Dikuno Tsa Sechaba Community Development Trust

For further information, please contact:

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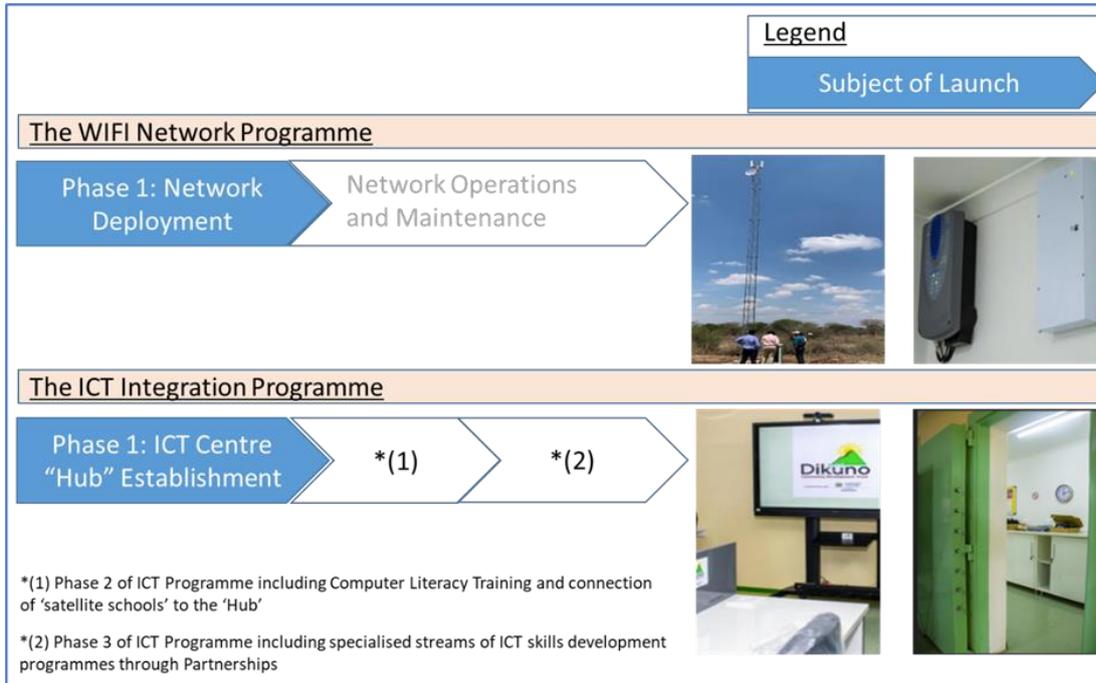


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NOTE TO THE EDITORS:

Figure 1: Launch and Rollout Planning Framework of the two programmes



Addendum:

Dikuno tsa Sechaba Community Trust Wi-Fi and ICT Centre Technical Information