

Ministerial support for mobile-enabled writing competition

Mxit Reach iBaliLami (My Story) is a national competition aimed at Grade 8-12 learners and is designed to encourage young people to develop their writing skills.

It has received support from the Deputy Minister of Communications, Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, who recently visited the offices to register herself on the social network and discuss national opportunities for collaboration.



Dream big

Learners are asked to write a short story of up to 300 words on their mobile phones in which they imagine themselves as 25-year olds. "We want learners to dream big and imagine the new South Africa of their generation," says Andrew Rudge, CEO of Mxit Reach. "In doing so, they are taking the first steps in mapping out their futures and unlocking their potential."

As stories are published, there will be various rounds of closed and public voting, from the classroom to a national level, which will further demonstrate the power of the democratic process to the youth.

Learners are encouraged to write in their home language and in the final stages of the competition, at a provincial level, stories will be translated into at least three other South African languages for broader public participation and voting. "It is a national movement from the classroom up, with prizes of more than R250,000," adds Rudge.

Giving young people a voice

The competition, which is run in partnership with UNICEF and Fundza, was launched on the 29 April and will run over a two-month period culminating in the announcement of the national winners on Youth Day, 16 June 2014.

"The bright future that most children will envisage for themselves, in their entries to the competition, is the equitable future we are working to secure for them," said Thierry Delvigne-Jean, UNICEF chief of communication. "Ensuring that children's rights are fulfilled today is crucial to building a tomorrow that holds promise, prosperity and dignity. This competition speaks to every child's right to be heard, and gives young people a voice in which to express their hopes and vision for the future."

"Our role as the Department of Communications is to create policies and an enabling environment for ICTs to reach every corner of the country. Mxit specifically provides an affordable platform for the youth to engage, learn and share experiences. We are particularly pleased with the maths and science content as it plays a role in ensuring that we harness crucial skills which will enable our future leaders to meaningfully participate in the job market and economy," says Ndabeni-Abrahams.

For more information about the competition, download the Mxit Reach app on Mxit and add iBaliLami.