

ArcelorMittal sees skills development as crucial to business in SA

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‘Our commitment to the world around us extends beyond the bottom line to include the people we employ and in whom we invest, the communities we support and on whom our business impacts, and the world in which we operate,” says Kesebone Maema, corporate communications manager of ArcelorMittal SA.

“Together with job creation, skills development helps to foster a more stable political environment, which is also good for business.”

ArcelorMittal SA’s core business relies heavily on being able to access skilled people in the scientific, engineering and technological fields.

Improving maths and science performances at schools in the communities around the company’s areas of operation provides a sustainable resource for ArcelorMittal SA.

Improved maths and science performances also work towards alleviating the national skills crisis.

“The skills crisis continues to present our company with a serious challenge,” says Maema.

“As a result, targeted skills development programmes, career development initiatives and leadership training form essential parts of our skills development strategy ensuring that we foster talent from within and outside our operations.

“World-class employee training and development are crucial to the company’s success.

“Training needs are determined through an annual skills audit for all categories and this information is then incorporated into a workplace skills plan.”

Under government’s Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition programme, ArcelorMittal SA has further committed itself to producing more artisans than it needs for its own businesses.

In a shared quest to empower the communities of the Vaal Triangle region, ArcelorMittal SA and the Vaal Triangle Campus of North-West University joined forces recently.

The ArcelorMittal Sustainability Accelerator Training Programme was launched amid great excitement.

It was welcomed by the collaborative partners, the beneficiaries of the programme and representatives from several non-governmental organisations.

The programme is the first of its kind in South Africa.

During a six-month training programme, participants will receive interactive and practical learning that will enable them to manage their businesses, acquire and develop sustainable community development projects, attract and retain large corporate funders and manage impact-driven projects.

A cash injection of R200 000 by ArcelorMittal SA will secure the training from the Centre for Continuing Professional Development on the Vaal Triangle Campus.

Apart from the set curriculum, each participant will be assigned a personal and professional mentor in the form of a qualified and registered industrial psychologist from the humanities faculty.

The company’s multimillion-rand investment strategy has been successful and has led to ArcelorMittal SA being recognised as a corporate leader in the field of skills development and training.

“We are represented in the Technical Business Skills Partnership, a national initiative by six leading South African companies, that have committed to training more than 5 400 artisans over the next three years,” says Maema.

“Through the College Industry Partnerships programme, we interact with further education and training colleges to advance an industry-specific agenda.

“We sit on various university advisory committees that advise on the content of the curriculum for the engineering and related sciences,” she adds.