

## **T-Systems receives multiple honours at Gender Mainstreaming Awards**

Johannesburg, South Africa, 28 August 2014

T-Systems in South Africa has received multiple accolades at the Gender Mainstreaming Awards celebration. The awards aim to give public recognition to organisations for good practice and excellence in tackling various gender mainstreaming issues. T-Systems walked away with three first place awards, a second place award and the overall Gender Mainstreaming Champion Award. This highlights the company's success at embracing diversity and championing gender equality as part of its dedication to inclusive and sustainable transformation.

"As part of our Nation Building journey we want to create a culture that embraces all elements of diversity including, amongst others: race, gender, age, culture and religion. Embracing our differences will ultimately enable us to ignite innovation, strengthen the trust in relationships and result in a high performance culture and team. Gender diversity is a particular focus for us during August, as August is women's month. The recognition we achieved at these awards speaks to the commitment of the entire T-Systems organisation towards inclusivity and diversity," says Gert Schoonbee, Managing Director of T-Systems in South Africa.

After being shortlisted for four of the five categories the company entered, T-Systems was announced the winner of the Women on Boards, Investing in Young Women and Gender and Poverty Alleviation categories. The company also placed second in the Empowerment Initiatives category, and was awarded the overall Gender Mainstreaming Champion award as a result.

The Women on Boards award aims to recognise and acknowledge companies that have successfully transformed their boards whilst ensuring that aspiring female directors are judged on their corporate governance skills and experience, not their gender. As part of T-Systems' internal transformation process, bringing women onto the board was a deliberate decision. Since 1 February 2014 the five-member Board of T-Systems now includes three women: Mpho Letlape and Mardia van der Walt as Non-Executive Directors and Khangekile Simelane as Independent Non-Executive Director.

The Investing in Young Women award recognises and acknowledges organisations that have strategies in place to allow for future education of young women or have implemented initiatives with the objective of addressing social inequities by educating and empowering young women leaders from diverse economic backgrounds. T-Systems was recognised for its part in spearheading the ICT Academy in 2003, an initiative that has produced more than 1500 certified IT graduates, of which 44 percent were women.

The Gender and Poverty Alleviation Award recognises and acknowledges organisations that have implemented sustainable initiatives around poverty alleviation, which have enhanced skills and provided income opportunities that have positively impacted the lives of women and poor communities. As part of its commitment to skills development, T-Systems was instrumental in the creation of the Hazyview Digital Learning Centre (HDLC) in Mpumalanga, providing critical skills such as IT, Tourism and English to the community. Women make up 83 percent of all non-paying students and 80 percent of paying students at the HDCL. In addition, 75 percent of the permanent staff, 66 percent of the temporary staff and 100 percent of the consultants are women.

The Empowerment Initiatives award recognises and acknowledges organisations that have strategies in place to allow for future empowerment or self-reliance of women or that have successfully used skills development as a mechanism to empower them. Since 2006 T-Systems has offered an internship programme aimed at assisting graduates with real world work experience. The programme saw an intake of 135 interns for the 2014 program, with 45 percent of those interns being female.

“Achieving recognition in so many different categories is testament to the success of our transformation strategy across the board. We were also proud to receive the Gender Mainstreaming Champion award, a huge achievement considering the stiff competition we were up against. We look forward to continuing our efforts and achieving new levels of gender equality in anticipation of the 2015 awards,” Schoonbee concludes.