



## Media Release

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### DStv Elevates Schools' Netball To A Whole New Level

**Johannesburg, 11 May 2021** – MultiChoice today launched the DStv Schools Netball Challenge, an exciting sports initiative that will shine a spotlight on young female athletes aged between 16 – 19-years old who play netball at secondary schools across South Africa. The tournament will culminate in the national final matches to be broadcast on DStv.

“MultiChoice is extending its support of schools sport, following the launch of SuperSport Schools last month. Our focus is to develop raw talent through real action and contribute to the building of long-lasting sports careers. The DStv Schools Netball Challenge gives up-and-coming female sports stars a platform to shine and get noticed by sporting scouts. We are proud of the impact our sports development programmes have had on the country’s future soccer and rugby sports stars, and look forward to uplifting local netball stars,” said Joe Heshu, MultiChoice Group Executive for Corporate Affairs.

The tournament will be contested across all nine provinces, involving secondary schools in rural and urban areas. It aims to elevate South African Schools Netball (SASN) through increased exposure and greater support, which will be crucial in the lead up to the 2023 Netball World Cup, hosted in Cape Town.

“We are excited about this initiative taken by MultiChoice and Netball SA of ensuring that ahead of the 2023 Netball World Cup, we are indeed able to take South African Schools Netball to a whole new level, by creating a “Big-Event National Championship” which will assist in identifying the netball talent of tomorrow. When we won the rights to host the Netball World Cup back in 2019, as the Government we looked forward to living a legacy that will benefit a girl child and take Netball as a sport to another level,” said Deputy Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Ms Nocawe Noncedo Mafu.

The DStv Schools Netball Challenge will kick off from May with local inter-school leagues that will progress to district playoffs and then to regional, where teams will play in two separate streams to allow all teams an equal chance of reaching the finals. The Ubuntu Stream will focus on schools in rural areas and the Batho Stream for schools in urban areas. The tournament will then proceed to provincial playoffs and conclude with a national championship playoff in August.

Coaches and match officials will also receive skills development, as is the case with the DStv Diski Challenge and the DStv Rugby Challenge. Another similarity between these initiatives is the platform that young broadcasters will receive to develop their skills, which will see them involved in sports production when games are televised.

This is not the first time MultiChoice has partnered with Netball South Africa, as the Group previously created, funded, marketed and broadcast the Netball Premier League. The DStv Schools Netball Challenge however is a big step up and an important one at that, given that South Africa is fifth in the International Netball Federation World rankings.

“We are committed to investing in the development of sport across Africa. We invest billions in sports each year and produce some 700 live sports productions. This drives the African sports economy, which in turn enriches lives,” Heshu concluded.

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