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# Advancing SDG4 In South African Schools: Promises and Pragmatics of Technology-Enhanced Learning

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## Abstract

This desk study examines how Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) is being advanced in South African schools through technology-enhanced learning (TEL). It also discusses the promises and practicalities of achieving specific targets. SDG4 aims for inclusive, equitable, high-quality education and lifelong learning. In South Africa, TEL is viewed as a recovery mechanism following COVID-19 and a long-term strategy to promote equity, governance, and teacher preparedness. Recent policy updates (such as a Digital Education Strategy replacing the 2004 White Paper), quality assurance discussions on online and virtual schools, and connectivity initiatives (SA Connect, Giga partnerships) create a dynamic context for implementation research. This review synthesises evidence from 2019–2025 on school-sector TEL (Grades R-12), highlighting implementations that offer lessons for scaling up and advancing SDG4. This study follows PRISMA-style methods (rapid review). Sources include databases and repositories such as Scopus, ERIC, AJOL, Google Scholar, and organisational repositories (DBE, Umalusi, UNICEF/ITU-Giga, New Leaders Foundation). Searches are scheduled from September 2025 to December 2025. Inclusion criteria: Focus on Grades R-12 in South Africa; published between 2019 and 2025; empirical studies, evaluations, policy or quality assurance analyses, or high-quality implementation reports examining the use, quality, or outcomes of TEL; written in English. Exclusions: Studies solely related to higher education; purely conceptual works lacking relevance to SA schools; pre-2019 legacy projects unless directly informing 2019–2025 implementations.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development Goal 4; Technology-Enhanced Learning; Digital Strategy; PRISMA; Connectivity Initiatives