

Inter-provincial Outreach and Heritage Awareness Project.

Kindly be informed that the following provinces: Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northwest prompted by SAHRA's vision to 'provide for the identification, conservation, protection and awareness of our heritage resources for the present and future generations' have decided to undertake [collectively] an '**Outreach and Heritage Awareness Programme**' with various schools from their respective provinces, with the aim of achieving some of the aims and objectives of SAHRA as mandated by the NHRA of 1999.

The above mentioned program entails SAHRA staff members to visit the selected schools to make presentations about, amongst other things, how heritage can be used in celebrating achievements (as a nation) and how it contributes in redressing past inequalities; how it can deepen our understanding of society and encourages us to sympathise with experience of others, and how it can facilitate healing through material and symbolic restitution by promoting new and previously neglected research into our rich oral traditions and customs.

We have noted as SAHRA that there are other heritage institutions with the same mandate as us and as such decided to approach them with the sole intention of forging a partnership with them through which we shall share both human and financial resources to enable us to promote good management of the national estate, and to enable and encourage communities to nurture and conserve their legacy so that it may be bequeathed to future generations.

As such we held a meeting on the 1st of February 2008 to map the way forward and it was agreed that each participating province will randomly select four schools and four lessons will be presented on the following themes: Heritage sectors, Liberation struggle, Heritage Resources management and on Grading and Declaration processes.

We are also going to embark on heritage sites visits [archaeological sites, sacred sites and natural sites]. In June 2008, the participating learners will be requested to engage the elders on various passages of rituals and also document different traditional dances [why, when and how] and all these will be captured electronically and would be displayed in SAHRA stalls during events like the Rand show, Mangaung Cultural Festivals, etc. The theme of the month is '**Youth in Dialogue.**'

In September [Heritage Month] the learners will present a brochure/booklet on Heritage and its Social responsibility. Here the learners will be requested to do a research on African traditional and customary practices, amongst others: virginity testing, reed dances, initiation schools, the Domba [python dance], etc. They have to check if all these practices have changed over the years or we are moving away from them. The purpose is to check if the restoration or sustainability of these practices could have a positive contribution in curbing the spread of HIV & AIDS.

Just like last year in Gauteng where this project was piloted, the learners will be taken to some World Heritage Sites in which they would present their projects. This will include the submission of nomination forms for potential national heritage sites. The forms will be submitted to our Grading and Declaration unit-row as presented by the learners. This year we have earmarked either Ukhahlamba or St. Lucia Wetlands. The winning team will then be announced at Thulamela [Kruger National Park].

NB: Kindly be informed that we have, so far, secured both human and financial resources from other external stakeholders like the National Heritage Council, Sedibeng District municipality, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan municipality. Other provinces are in the process of approaching their local authorities for assistance.

At the end of the project, the learners will be familiar with both their national and provincial heritage resources; they would take ownership of their heritage [promotion and protection for future generations]; the identified and nominated heritage sites during this project will be listed on the SAHRA Inventory, etc.

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