

Girls - Maths, Science & Technology can be fun

Matome Maila

IN A BID to make Maths, Science and Technology popular amongst girls from formerly disadvantaged rural schools, the Giyani Education Multi-Purpose Centre (GEMPC) hosted a Science Fair last Friday.

About 47 girls from rural high schools around Giyani participated in this project sponsored by the well-known funding agency in science education and innovation, The Shuttleworth Foundation.

According to the project coordinator, ms Elmary Buis, the project is aimed at improving the maths, science and technology abilities of girls from village high schools, and to encourage them to participate in Science Expos and Olympiads.

This pilot project ran on the basis of two weekend sessions per term, for three terms. Training was also provided to the science and maths teachers from these schools.

Buis said the girls who participated in the Science Fair worked on the projects for the last two months and topics

ranged from the use of fruits as conductors of electricity to investigating the impact of tuberculosis in the Mopani district and what traditional healers can do in this regard.

She said the Science Fair was the culmination of a series of weekend sessions which started in May last year.

She said research done in 2002, highlighted the need for the project. "There is a steady decrease in the number of girls doing science subjects from grade 10 to 12 and the tendency is for them to switch to standard grade when they reach matric," said Buis.

She said that at the open Science Expo held in Giyani last year, less than five percent of the learners participating were girls.

"This innovative programme not only focussed on improving performance in Maths, Science and Biology, but the girls were also exposed to a multi-disciplinary programme including life skills, communication, problem solving, career guidance, computer literacy, electronics and technology," said Buis.

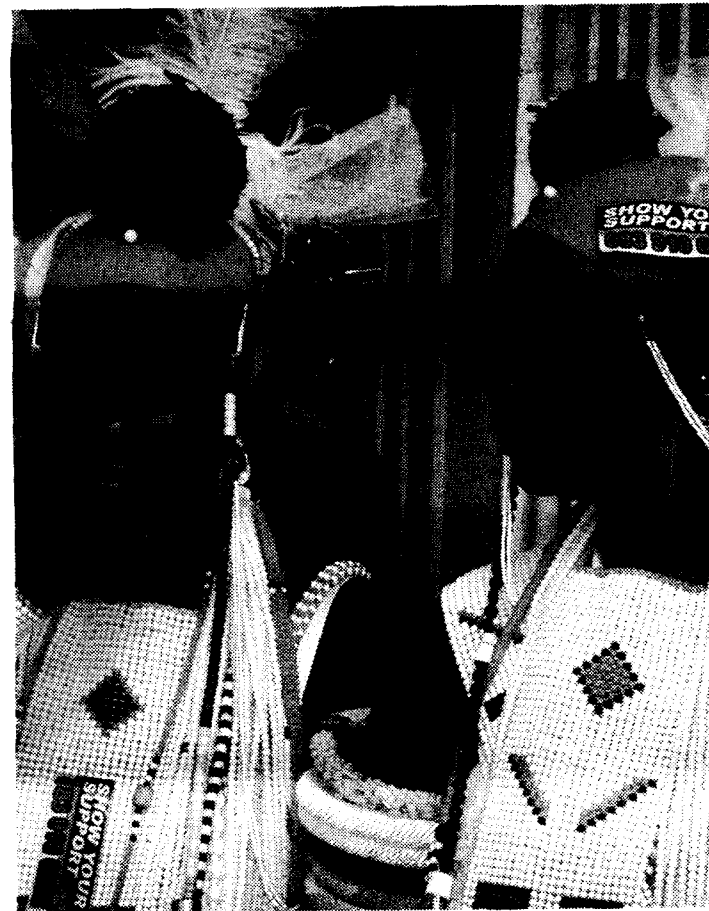


Photo: Mpho Dube

Local women dressed in the fascinating traditional attire of the Bapedi tribe, at the University of the North during the siyaqoba rally on Saturday.

