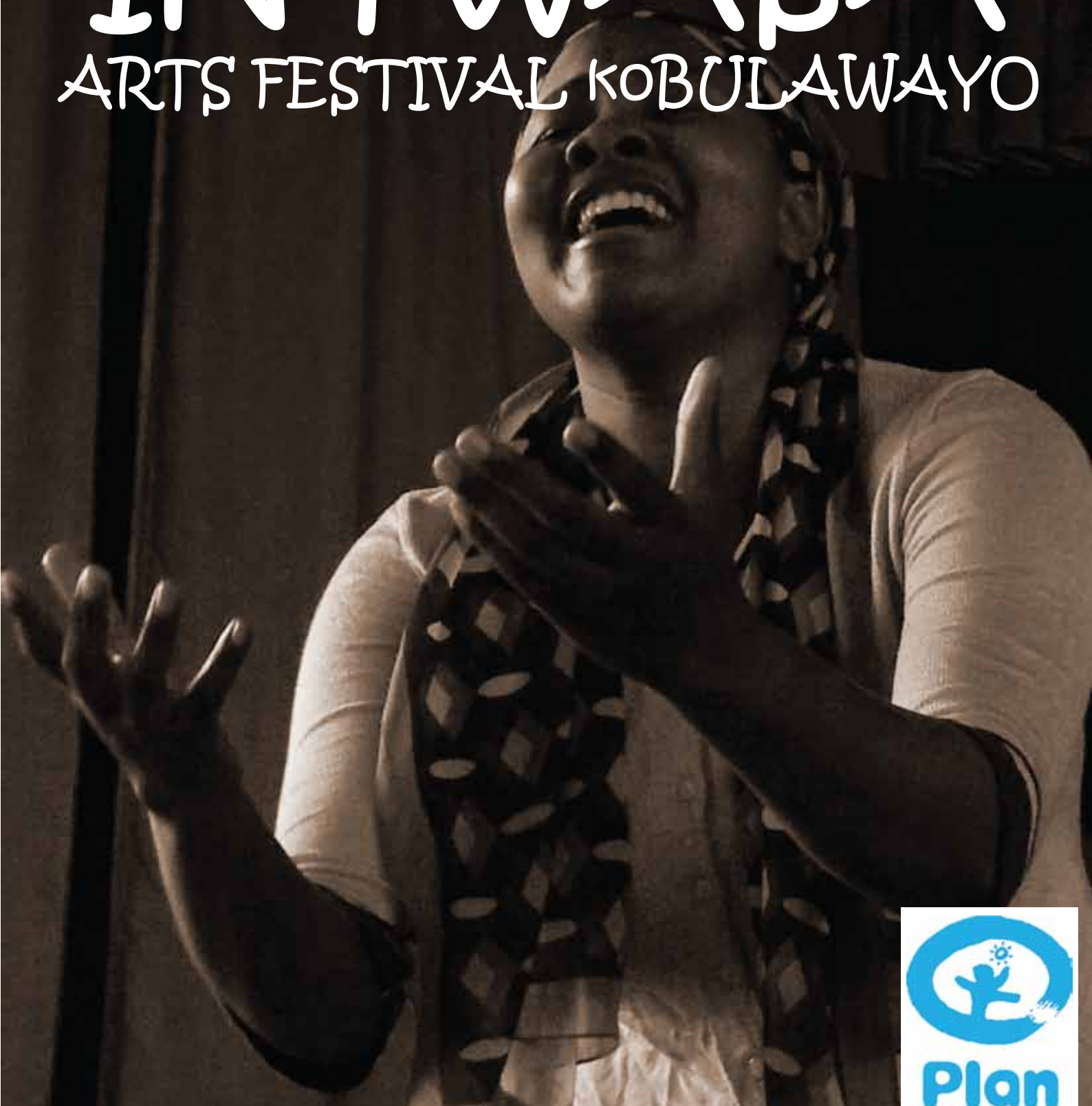


SPECIAL EDITION

AUGUST 2012

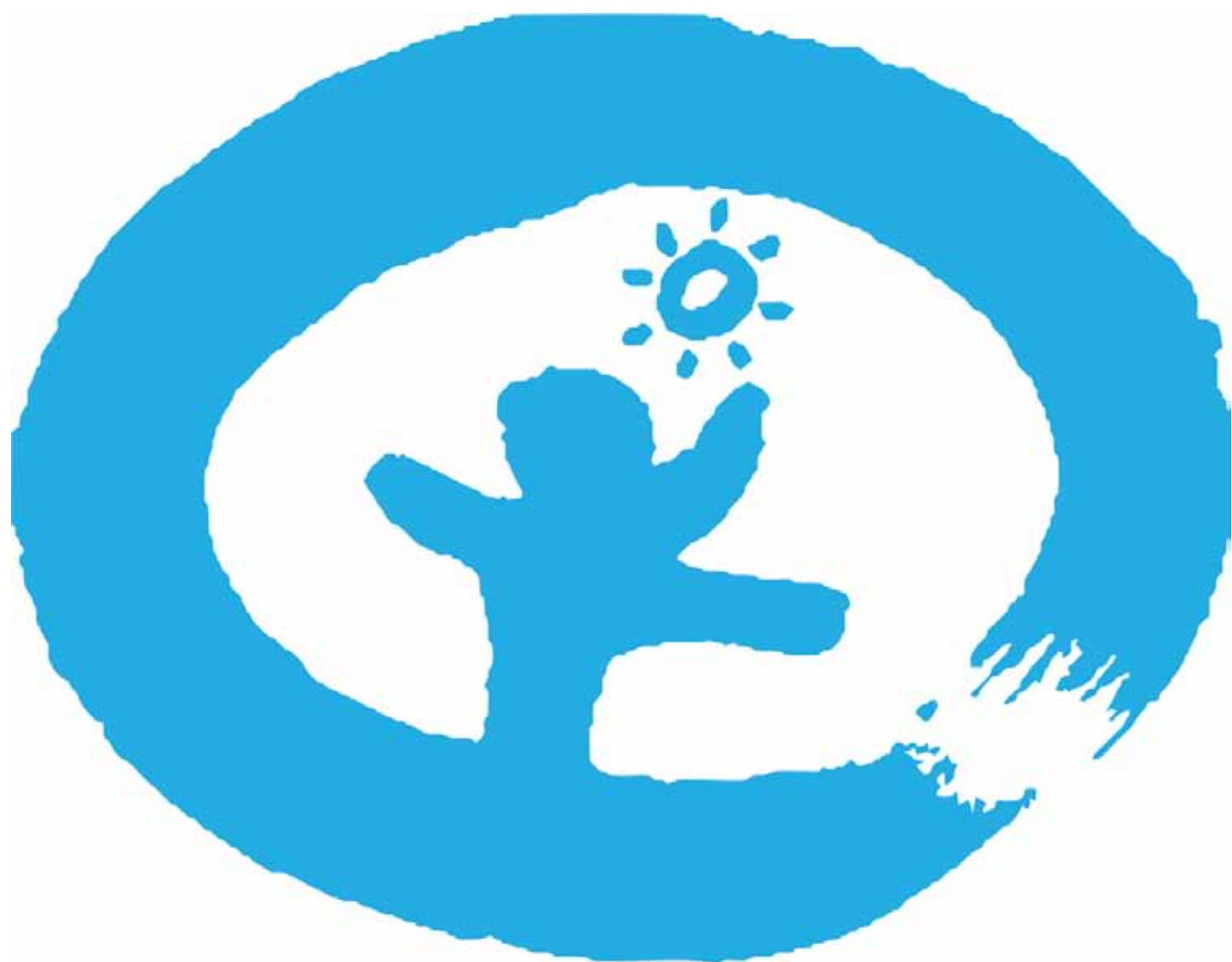
# INTWASA

## ARTS FESTIVAL KOBULAWAYO



THE PLAN HIGH SCHOOLS DRAMA COMPETITION

A platform for future stars



**Plan**



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## EDITORIAL

Drama in schools should not always be about competitions. All things being equal schools should be producing plays on a regular basis just for general consumption by students, parents and the immediate communities that feed into the schools. However, the reality on the ground is that the survival and the development of drama in schools has largely been a result of many competitions that have been taking place in schools.

Of course some competitions have come and gone while others have stood the test of time. The Plan High Schools Drama Competition, organised by Intwasa Arts Festival koBulawayo with technical support from Plan Zimbabwe came into existence for several reasons. The major reason being to develop drama skills in schools both at teacher and student level. And at the same time the competition seeks to use drama as an advocacy tool to engage students and arm them with skills and knowledge to champion their own cause.

Since inception the competition has reached out to more than a 1000 students. These are students that have actively participated in workshops and in the creation and presentation of drama pieces during the two years of the competition. The created dramas have been watched by more than 3000 students to date. It is our hope that the competition grows with each edition. The dream is to make the competition a national event where all students from all corners of Zimbabwe will participate and share stories and experiences.

Judging by the quality of this year preliminaries in which more than 40 schools participated both Plan Zimbabwe and Intwasa are looking forward to an explosive and exciting final.

May the best school play win in September.

*Raisedon Baya*  
FESTIVAL DIRECTOR



# ABOUT THE DRAMA COMPETITION

The Plan High Schools Drama Competition is arguably one of the biggest drama competition for Secondary and High Schools in Zimbabwe. The competition seeks to identify and develop theatrical talent among secondary and high school students in Zimbabwe. The competition is funded by Plan Zimbabwe, an organisation keen on using drama as an advocacy tool for children's rights and their protection against abuse.

## THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE COMPETITION

- Student Participation
- Student Engagement
- Student Empowerment
- Student Protection
- Creating Stories or narratives relevant to children and young people.
- Creating space and time for play
- Protecting the child's rights to create and to participate in cultural activities.

## ABOUT THE THEME

### *Because I Am A Girl Campaign*

Discrimination against women and girls is one of the main underlying causes of child poverty. Both girls and boys have the same rights, but they face different challenges in accessing them. This lack of opportunity and care is unfair and unjust.

The campaign supports the girls to get knowledge and skills they need to earn a decent living to pull themselves and their families out of poverty.

## BARRIERS TO GIRLS EDUCATION

- *Child Marriages*
- *Adolescent Pregnancy*
- *Violence in the form of sexual, physical, emotional abuse in and around schools and homes.*
- *Burden of household chores robs of the time to study and play like others.*
- *Harmful cultural practices like Chiramu*

## HOW THE SCHOOLS TREATED THE THEME

The feeling among both adjudicators and organisers of the competition is that there is need for schools, especially those that have qualified for the finals, to revisit their presentations as most of them were found wanting in this area. The core theme was not adequately addressed. The bias should be towards the education of the girl child. Plots should explicitly address the barriers faced by the girl child as she tries to attain acceptable levels of education. Schools must also note that the campaign is not about girls fighting boys and men but rather a fight against social and cultural norms that relegate girls to second and third class citizens. An improved treatment of the theme is anticipated from all participating schools at the finals in September.

# ADJUDICATORS' DESK

For the second year running Plan Zimbabwe and Intwasa Arts Festival have partnered in presenting the High Schools Drama Competitions in Bulawayo and Kwewke. The campaign dubbed "Because I am Girl" initiated in 2011 is this year focusing on tackling the barriers affecting the girl child in the education sector.

All partners involved in this project should be commended for bringing forth issues that have discriminatory effects on the girl child. So far in Bulawayo three preliminaries were held. The finals will be in September during the festival. The event had more than thirty secondary schools taking part. In Bulawayo alone the participation rate was 80%, a significant achievement for the organisers and the participating schools. The participation rate was far much high compared to other secondary and high schools drama events.

All participating schools should be commended for the passion and commitment to the theatre arts exhibited in all pools. I should reckon to say that the standard of theatrical expression displayed by some of the schools left a number of professional theatre practitioners green with envy. On average the standard was a gear up when compared to the 2011 competitions.

However, there is still a visible gap on the level of plot development, acting, and directing among the schools. A number of schools presentations were mediocre. The factors contributing to these poor presentations varied from one school to another. While on one hand a particular school would struggle with the plot another would be let down by poor characterisation. In Pool A held at Mpopoma High most schools had good plots but the developments of the plots were rather too slow. Actors wasted a lot of time on scenes that did not contribute to the development of the plot. When you have only twenty minutes to tell a story do not waste time as every second counts in determining the pace, conflict build up and the resolution of the story. The dramatic engine needs to be kept alive all the time.

A significant number of schools displayed good acting skills and techniques. Students were able to manipulate their bodies in interpreting different characters. A number of them were however made to play adult characters which is usually too demanding for the children. As a result over acting was visibly in some of the plays.

In Pool B which was at Gifford High School the standard was a bit lower than that exhibited at Mpopoma. Poor blocking was the order of the day with most plays. Students were not adequately trained in stage movement and management, voice projection and variation. Diction seemed to be asking too much from the kids. Play directors lost it in setting their stage too deep and allowing much of the action to happen at the centre back stage as opposed to the hot spot. The fusion of different art forms was in most cases out of context with regards to plot. Every art form one so decides to use in a particular play should help in moving the plot forward. However, good dancing skills and melodious music was noted among the students.

Of all the pools the Townsend Girls High preliminaries were lukewarm. Most of the schools lacked in putting up convincing presentations. Most of the plots lacked direction, characters were exaggerated, and the theme not well interpreted, save for one or two schools. Some of the presentations were disjointed and lacked the edutainment value. I reckon that even if you took the world's greatest actors and gave them a mediocre plot, the outcome would be disaster.

A lot of work still needs to be done in schools in the area of skills training and development. Schools need to seek assistance from tried and tested theatre practitioners. The talent is abundant in kids. The passion for theatre and commitment to its development is very much alive in schools. With willing partners such as Plan Zimbabwe and Intwasa Arts Festival koBulawayo the theatre void that was slowly creeping into the country can be eliminated. Zimbabwe can claim back its status of being a theatre power.



**Nelson Mapako**  
(Senior Adjudicator)



**F**rom the early days of indulging in the arts for arts' sake to the current times of theatre for development drama has and continues to play a crucial role in our lives. The bug of partaking in the arts caught yours truly at a very tender age and it is no wonder when PLAN in association with Intwasa Arts Festival koBulawayo invited the office on a journey around schools in Bulawayo for a schools drama competition that I gladly took up the offer without any hesitation. The road in Bulawayo began at Mpopoma High School on Monday 30 July 2012 where the host along with nine other schools showcased their drama presentations focusing on the campaign theme – "Because I am a Girl". The plays on show were of such good quality that one could be forgiven for thinking these were works from professional artists.

The next day schools congregated at Gifford High. The spirit among students was high and as competitive as ever. The last day saw proceedings taking place at Townsend Girls High. It was clear from the three day excursion that the arts are now taken seriously in schools. We welcome the fresh breath and impetus from the Ministry of Education through its Sports, Arts and Culture portfolio that is pushing for the arts to be fully embraced in schools.

## *"The future of the arts is in schools "*

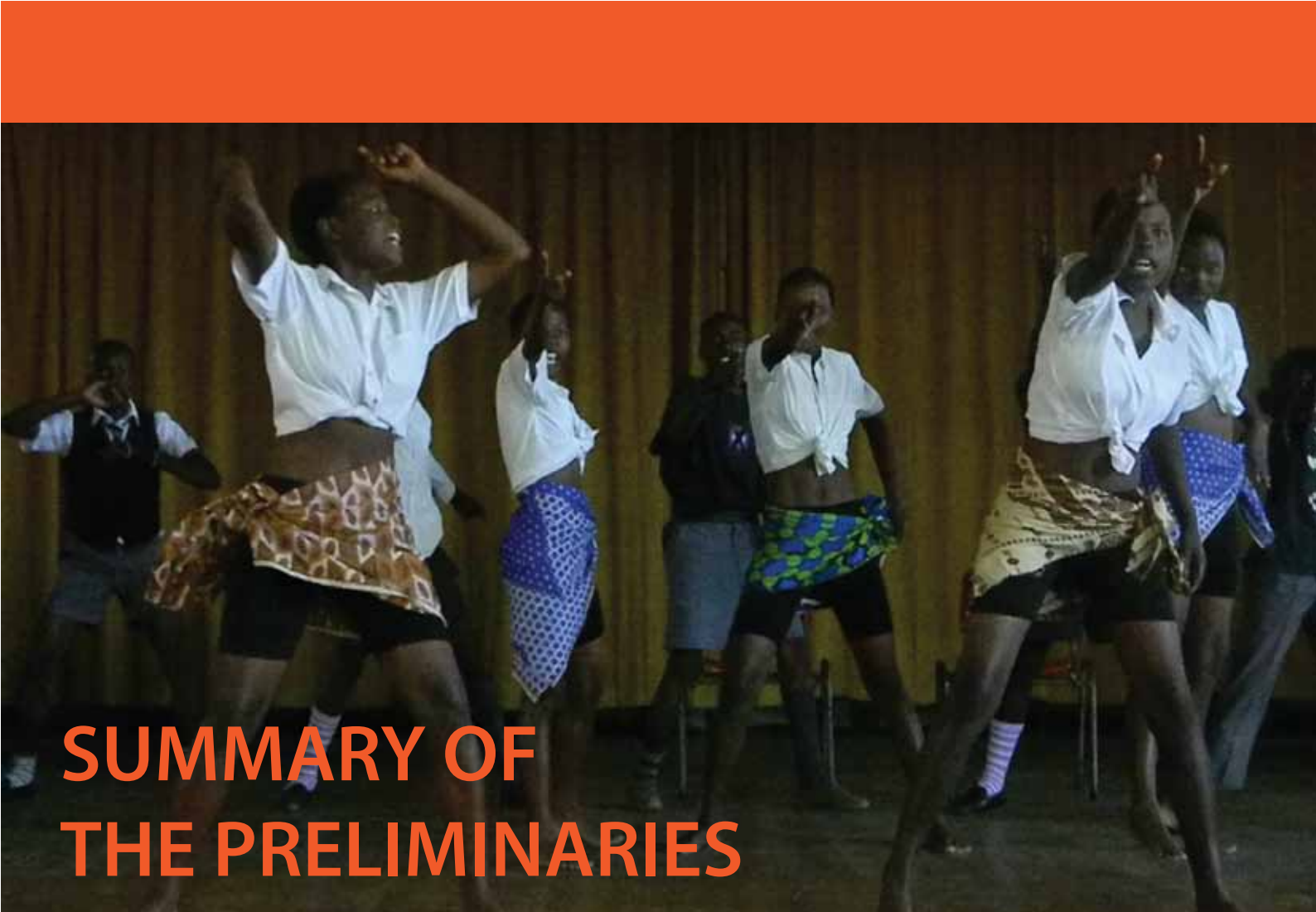
The future of the arts is in schools and it is with this encouraging perspective that there is an emerging talent base cropping up in terms of playwrights, directors and of course actors. The picture painted is that of artists that have been practicing and participating in schools arts programmes and therefore will obviously take arts seriously when they leave school. For those that will make career choices slanted towards the arts we shall all know their choices are not desperate acts but well planned and calculated career choices. The plays presented articulated mostly the disadvantage of families opting to educate the boy child ahead of the girl child, various tiring house and family chores, forced early marriages to pay off debts or an alternative to a better economic welfare for the girl child (to a wealthy man).

The standard of acting and directing especially on the first two days was excellent and need to be encouraged further. An area that probably needs to be worked on is playwriting; for one could see potential storylines and plot points created and not being pursued. Schools chose to scream the campaign theme instead of building a story that would show or articulate some of the impediments towards the development of the girl child's education and future.

Overall, it was an eye opening experience of how much work is in and has gone into schools in terms of participation, consumption and value addition to the development of the arts. The future of the arts looks bright and this schools drama competition alongside other schools programmes such as the Jikinya Traditional Dance Festival will go a long way in promoting the appreciation of the arts in schools and beyond.

**William Nyandoro**

Programmes Officer – National Arts Council of Zimbabwe (Bulawayo Province)



# SUMMARY OF THE PRELIMINARIES

This year the competition started on a very high note. Four High Schools converged in Kwekwe on the 25th of July and presented well thought-out and very entertaining pieces of drama depicting mainly the challenges faced by the girl child as she tries to get an education. The four schools had emerged winners from their districts. The four were Rujeko High, St Judes High, Leroto High, and Fatima High Schools. Out of this pool only two schools, Fatima High and St Judes, managed to progress to the finals.

In Bulawayo Pool A saw 10 schools, clashing at Mpopoma High on the 30th of July. The schools were Founders High, Gloag High, Njube High, Lobengula Secondary, Msiteli High, Eveline Girls High, Emganwini Secondary, Mpopoma High, Magwegwe and Skhulile High. Again the level of competition was high. Obviously the presentations had improved from last year's edition – clear evidence that the several workshops and training sessions held in the first part of the year had worked. Mpopoma High, Eveline Girls High, and Gloag High progressed to the finals.

In Pool B, which was held at Gifford Boys three schools came tops. These were Nkulumane High, Foundation Technical College and Sizane High. Pool C had Mzilikazi High, Townsend Girls High and Gifford Boys High progressing to the finals.

A total eleven (11) schools will meet in finals during Intwasa Arts Festival koBulawayo 2012.

## THE WINNING PLAYS – SHORT SYNOPSISSES

St Judes  
Gloag High  
Mpopoma High  
Sizane High  
Nkulumane High  
Foundation Technical College  
Fatima High  
Eveline High  
Gifford Boys High  
Mzilikazi High  
Townsend Girls High



## THE LION & THE JEWEL AT INTWASA

The Centre for Talent Development (CTD), a theatre training project established in 2011 will be presenting Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and The Jewel* at Intwasa. With a cast of eight vibrant and ambitious actors drawn from different secondary schools within Bulawayo CTD hopes to thrill its young audiences with this brilliant and intelligent stage interpretation of the O'level literature setbook.

The Centre for Talent Development is one of the festival's schools project designed to cultivate both young theatre talent and audiences in schools. The project has a unique scope and specifications that seek to achieve educational benefits for cast members as well their peers in secondary schools. The vision of the project is to use drama to support educators across the country by developing live dramatizations of literature texts studied in the classroom. The simple objective is to provide high quality and well researched performances that satisfy educators' and students' needs within the classroom.

*The Lion and the Jewel* is one of Soyinka's best known plays that uses an interesting fusion of traditional and modern imagery with Soyinka artistically revealing the interesting and yet controversial conflict between tradition and modernisation. It is a classic story which tells how Baroka, the village chief, outpaces the modernist Lakunle in the quest to get the hand of the village belle Sidi. *The Lion and The Jewel* has two performances on the 18th of September at Bulawayo Theatre.



## INTWASA TO HOST TWO PERFORMANCES OF A DOLL'S HOUSE

Henrick Ibsen's *Doll's House* will be at Intwasa 2012 as part of the festival's arts in education program targeting school audiences, particularly literature students studying the book in the classroom. *A Doll's House* is an A level set book.

Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian Playwright, is regarded as one of Europe's theatre god-fathers and in this play deals with the age old theme of women emancipation. *A Doll's House* is one the earliest plays to trigger the women's liberation movement.

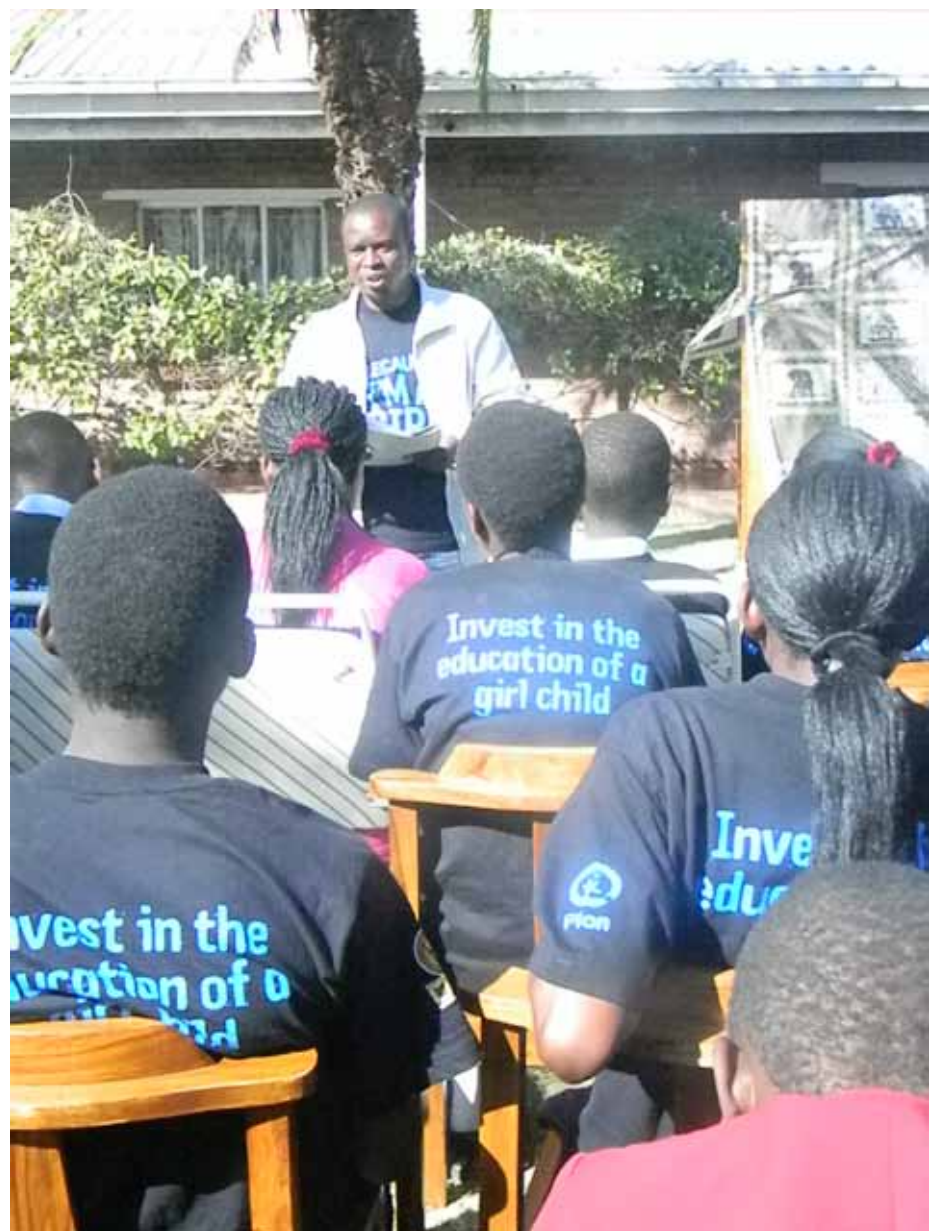
The play is directed by Raisedon Baya and features a young and very enthusiastic cast. The production introduces Nokwanda Sibanda as Nora Helmer, Trevor Siyani as Torvald Helmer, Faith Moyo taking up the role of Mrs Linden, Kevin Bhuru as Nils Krogstad, Lesley Masuku as Dr. Rank and Ophelia Phiri as the maid Ellen. *A Doll's House* has two performances on the 20th of September at Bulawayo Theatre.

### ARTS AND CULTURE WORKSHOP FOR TEACHERS.

Historian and Cultural expert Phathisa Nyathi will facilitate a workshop on cultural villages and centres during the festival. The workshop is targeting arts and culture departments within schools, both primary and secondary schools. The workshop is being organised in conjunction with Amagugu Cultural Village Trust. It seeks to capacitate teachers in ways of using cultural villages as resource tools for teaching purposes. An interdisciplinary approach will be used. Participants can register with Intwasa or phone 09-63928. **Registration is \$10**

# THE COMPETITION IN PHOTOS







**Eita!**



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