



**30 Years of Impact:
Transforming Narratives,
Championing
Feminist Futures**

This project is funded by UK International Development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 27 August 2025

Soul City Returns to TV with Powerful New Programme: Shayi'ndlela Combines Edutainment and Community Mobilisation

Johannesburg — The Soul City Institute for Social Justice is thrilled to announce its return to television through its groundbreaking new programme, Shayi'ndlela (Turn the Tide), funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) under the What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale (What Works II) Programme.

Shayi'ndlela is a comprehensive gender-based violence (GBV) prevention programme that blends edutainment with community mobilisation to challenge harmful gender norms and promote social behavioural change to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG). The intervention is already underway and will launch in schools across Ekurhuleni in September 2025, in partnership with the Gauteng Department of Education. The programme is rooted in social norm change, ensuring that personal transformation is matched by broader community and institutional shifts.

“This is more than just a return to edutainment for Soul City, it’s the beginning of a movement to shift the culture of violence in South Africa,” said **Phinah Kodisang**, CEO of Soul City Institute. “With the generous support of FCDO through the *What Works II* Programme, we are able to bring *Shayi'ndlela* to life not just on screen, but in classrooms, communities, and homes. This initiative will challenge harmful gender norms, support parents, empower girls through Rise Clubs, and work with boys to build a safer, more just society for all. We are proud to be part of a global movement rooted in evidence, activism, and the belief that change is possible.”

What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale is the UK’s flagship global programme to end VAWG. Now in its second phase, it funds evidence-based solutions across the Global South to tackle the root causes of VAWG. Soul City’s Shayi'ndlela programme is one of several interventions supported under *What Works II* and stands out for its integration of popular media and grassroots organising to catalyse change across generations.



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Anne Gathumbi, Managing Director of the What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale (What Works II) Programme said: What Works II is the UK's flagship global programme to end violence against women and girls (VAWG). We are proud to partner with Soul City, enabling the delivery of this innovative project. A life free of violence and discrimination is the right of every woman and girl. Soul City is a key partner in generating the evidence we need to build a violence-free future for women and girls, and we look forward to continuing this important work together.'

Multi-Pronged Approach to Ending Gender-Based Violence

Rooted in decades of evidence and Soul City Institute's rich history of storytelling, Shayi'ndlela includes:

- A **13-part television drama series**, set to launch in 2026, designed to spark national conversations around gender, power and violence.
- **Parenting mentoring and training**, to equip caregivers with skills to raise children in non-violent and gender equitable households.
- **Rise Clubs in schools**, to build confidence, leadership, self-efficacy and feminist thinking among girls.
- **Engagement with boys** to shift attitudes and promote gender-equitable masculinities.
- A **rigorous research component**, led by the Wits School of Public Health and Research and Training for Health and Development (RTHD) to generate evidence on what works and why.

For more information, media inquiries or interview requests, please contact:

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Notes to editors

About What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale (What Works II)

What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale is the UK's flagship global initiative to end violence against women and girls (VAWG), funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

Delivered by a consortium led by the International Rescue Committee UK (IRC UK) with Raising Voices, Social Development Direct, CARE International UK, Breakthrough and Samya, the Programme brings together global leaders in ending violence against women and girls — united by world-class expertise and shared feminist values.

A core focus of the Programme is working with Grantee Partners to create and scale innovative, evidence-based approaches to prevent VAWG. In its first phase, What Works reduced violence by up to 50% in just 2-3 years, proving that VAWG is preventable. Now in phase two, the Programme funds 14 Grantee Partners in 12 countries across Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia and is on track to reach over one million women and children by 2028.

Through its global Evidence Hub, What Works II shares proven solutions, insights, and innovations, expanding the evidence base, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, and inspiring action to end violence in our lifetime.

Current Programme countries include: South Africa, Eswatini, Madagascar, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Malawi.

<https://ww2preventvawg.org/>

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OPEN CALL AUDITIONS FOR NEW TV DRAMA SERIES

**In celebration of Women's Month,
we are holding open auditions for our powerful
new edutainment drama. We are looking for
young, Black, female aspiring actresses who:**

- **Are between 17 and 24 years old
and look like they could be in high school**
- **Speak isiZulu, Sesotho or Tshivenda**
- **Are based in Gauteng**

DATES: 5 and 6 September 2025

VENUE: Market Theatre, Johannesburg

TIME: 09h00-16h00

**See the link below to access character
descriptions and audition scenes, which
must be prepared ahead of your audition:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1STo38cxOo1Oh96vO0p-iaXg1pk6uvcAA?usp=sharing>

DISCLAIMER:

*Depending on turnout, there may be a cut-off time or a limit
to how many attendees are auditioned each day.*

WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU THERE!

