

Future women leaders meet

By ZIPO-ZENKOSI NCOKAZI

THIS weekend chairwomen from all 300 Rise Young Women's Clubs (RYWC) across the province will meet for the first time at the inaugural Rise Congress being held in East London.

Last year the Soul City Institute (SCI) launched the RYWC programme with the aim of reducing new HIV infections among young women.

The programme targets girls aged between 15 and 24 and is implemented in six

provinces.

Thoko Budaza, the provincial manager of the Soul City Institute, said the purpose of the congress was to create an environment for the young women to share, engage and discuss ways of addressing issues perpetuating HIV risks in their respective communities.

"We want to create a space for them to have real conversations and real support and take real action on these issues," she said.

Zikhona Mbutye, 23, who is the Mthatha chairwoman

and is currently unemployed, said she wished that RYWC was launched when she was still in school as she might have done better with her life.

"I did not finish my matric because I was busy playing around and now I really regret all the time I wasted but I am planning on going back to school and I am hoping that by being part of this congress I will get a chance to learn about myself and my role in uplifting not only my community but myself also," said

Mbutye.

Anelisa Sauli, 22, King William's Town chairwoman, is a final-year BCom student at the University of Fort Hare said the club was important because it helps young women tackle issues that affect them, which in turn will benefit them and their communities.

"We are the future leaders as young people and this programme teaches us about our roles as women, which will then build my confidence and sense of self."

