

Acclaimed edu-series back on TV

THE 11th series of the critically acclaimed, award-winning edutainment drama *Soul City* will premiere on SABC1 at 8.30 pm tomorrow.

Among those starring in the 13-part series, which is spearheaded by the Soul City Institute, are Fana Mokoena, Leleti Khumalo, Harriet Manamela, Dumisani Mbebe, Florence Masebe, Samukelo Ndlovu, Robert Mpisi and Siyanda Sesimani.

A central part of the institute's ongoing OneLove Campaign, a social change campaign that focuses on preventing HIV, the series is set in an underdeveloped community where services are poor.

Sis Noni (Masebe), a community health campaigner, is the thorn in the side of local councillor Philani (Mokoena). She is always demanding improvements, so when her dilapidated clinic burns down, tensions rise.

Smokin Joe's, the local boxing gym owned by Sis Noni's husband, Malusi (Mbebe), becomes the venue for a temporary clinic. Here Sis Noni can continue with the important work of preventing mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT).

Her parent support group will introduce viewers to parents who are fighting the gallant battle against stigma and ignorance. The PMTCT theme portrays the complexities of HIV and Aids and the questions of stigma and silence that are often underlying.

Sis Noni's other passion is encouraging young men to undergo male medical circumcision (MMC) to protect them from getting HIV. Here she runs into a wall as her husband insists that their two sons, Mandla (Sesimani) and Sam (Mpisi) undergo traditional circumcision instead.

The series also deals with the issue of understanding and managing personal finance — a theme which is carried by Grace (Khumalo) and her daughter Nkosazana (Ndlovu) who have fled from their home to escape debt collectors; and with mobilising communities and building community organisations in a positive way in order to protect rights and challenge unfair, corrupt or discriminatory practices. — Mediaweb.