

February 19, 2007

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**DOCUMENTARY: BONGANI UMAMA**  
**Director: Liza Aziz**  
**Producers: Liza Aziz and Piwe Mkhize**

Women have been called mothers of the nation but they are nation builders themselves. Through the personal narratives/journeys of two women building and repairing the nation's roads, this documentary celebrates the contribution and courage of women in South Africa.

**Bongani Umama is a 48 min documentary to be broadcast on Thursday, 22 February 2007 on SABC 2 at 21h00.**

It is a remarkable story of two women who maintain and build South Africa's roads. They are the beneficiaries of the innovative and pioneering programmes and projects initiated and implemented by the KwaZulu Natal Department of Transport.

Doris Zethu Sikhakhane is one of 39000 women currently contracted by The Department of Transport's Zibambeke Programme. She is the sole supporter of the Sikhakhane household. After her husband died in 1999, Doris was forced to support and sustain her five children. She does this by maintaining a length of road close to her homestead: digging, cleaning and picking up stones on the long stretch of road in Denny Dalton, a rural village in northern KwaZulu Natal. Her life is one of survival and courage against almost overwhelming odds.

Thatheni Dulcie Zondi is slowly building her own empire. She has been contracted by the KZN's Department of Transport Vukuzakhe Programme to build a bridge in Newcastle. The documentary follows this fifty year old traditional woman's trials and tribulations on site in Newcastle at the Mbabane Bridge.

The film traverses between the lives of Doris Sikhakhane and Thatheni Zondi and explores the problems and challenges they encounter in their day to day lives. It is a story about real and resilient women, a tribute to our unsung heroes – *Bongani Umama* is a unique and reverent look into one of the most marginalized groups of people in South Africa. The film is underscored with original music by Sazi Dlamini.

Aziz's documentary credits include the nationally acclaimed *Women on the Beat* (an expose' on women working in the South African Police Service). This was broadcast on e-TV. She has also produced a documentary for SABC 1 for their Ten Years of Freedom project - *Ikhaya (Home)* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival 2004 and was subsequently chosen for 8 other film

festivals including the Berlinale Film Festival 2004. Aziz was also associate producer for the documentary *Trancing in Dreamtime* (SABC 1).

Mkhize, an emerging film-maker who facilitated the project with Aziz, is a Communications Assistant Manager with the KZN Department of Transport and a media Masters student with the UKZN's Pietermaritzburg campus. His Masters project is making a film on the challenges besetting the taxi recapitalization process.

For more information about the documentary *BONGANI UMAMA* please contact:

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