



ELECTION RAP: Mahlatini and the Mahotella Queens

Music to voters' ears

A REPORT by Idasa's media department to a recent trustees' meeting added an uncharacteristic beat to proceedings as the infectious rhythm of mbaqanga took over the meeting:

Now is the time for all to see

South Africans voting for democracy

The vote is for you, the vote's for me

Let's use it well so our land will be free

We have the chance to get it right

To choose our leaders without a fight

To end the violence, be safe at night

The new beginning is in sight ...

This extract from "Planting the Seed of Democracy" performed by Mahlatini and the Mahotella Queens, is only one aspect of the first burst of radio programming produced by Idasa's newly formed radio unit.

Up and running since mid-September, the programming produced so far takes a variety of formats and is targeted

at government organisations and the SABC to co-ordinate broadcast material for electoral education.

In addition, the radio unit has produced a number of educational announcements or adverts, each between 30 to 60 seconds long, in English, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana and Afrikaans. These cover basic aspects of voting such as the secrecy of the ballot, the importance of casting a vote and the right of citizens to vote freely without intimidation. The aim is to broadcast a variety of voter education messages via these short spots on different radio stations throughout the country.

Several radio dramas are also in production. They will run as mini-series within the weekly Afrikaans and Xhosa programmes while the others will be produced as single entities to be broadcast in Zulu over the holiday season.

By SUE VALENTINE

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