

# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL RESEARCH PROJECT



**Date started: August 2009 Date finished: October 2009**

**Partners:** South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL), Western Cape Department of Education, Western Cape Directorate Road safety Management, seven secondary schools in the Delft and Belhar communities in the City of Cape Town.

**Cost/time/resources:** ZAR 250,000

**Main result so far: Good partnership project with schools actively engaged in road safety activities**



GRSP South Africa partner SANRAL engaged learners grades 10 and 11 from seven secondary schools in a research project to identify the most hazardous locations on the routes to their schools.

The research teams presented their research results to a panel of adjudicators. The road safety understanding and the creativity to find (viable) solutions from the learners went way above expectations. The panel was also very impressed with the presentations, which included the creation of street-scape models and verbal presentations.

## Summary project sheet.

### **Objectives and scope**

In order to stimulate interest in the engineering profession and to teach learners the basic principles of conducting research and finding solutions to challenges, SANRAL implemented a “Safe Routes to School” project in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area.

### **Activities**

The learners had to apply new knowledge by identifying the most hazardous locations on their routes to school and selecting a solution to the problem. They had to document their methodology and findings, then build a scale model of the proposed intervention. Finally, they made a presentation on how they came to their conclusions to a panel of adjudicators (mostly traffic engineers).

Through the implementation, the project aimed to:

- Equip learners and facilitators with practical research skills
- Encourage learners to be aware of road safety issues/problems
- Teach learners to take responsibility for road safety issues that affect them and their community
- Develop and enhance learner’s presentation skills by means of a practical presentation session
- Promote teamwork and participatory learning
- Instil and interest in young people in the engineering profession

All the models and posters were displayed during a PIARC Seminar in Cape Town during October 2009. The teams of the four best projects were invited to attend the Seminar during which the best project was announced. SANRAL undertook to fund the implementation of the recommendations from the winning school.

### **Conclusion and main lessons learnt**

The adjudicators found the learners had gone to the extreme to do a good performance. The winning school excelled by not only doing the prescribed activities, but went further by making a video recording of the real-life traffic situation at the hazardous location and by writing a song and performing it to the adjudicators. The students showed critical awareness of road safety issues in their community and understood and applied processes to find solutions that were practical. The project allowed them to develop their presentation skills too. The initiative, creativity and innovation potential of learners in this age group must not be underestimated. The schools are all situated in one of the poorest communities in Cape Town, and the project created an opportunity for the learners to be exposed to opportunities outside their normal environment. The project also created a general awareness regarding road safety amongst the rest of the community who also were part of the process.