

# Mapping Community Heritage

Mapping Community Heritage is a research project led by seven young people from rural communities bordering South Africa's Kruger national park in collaboration with the University of Sheffield, University of Pretoria and Pala Forerunners. The young researchers conducted qualitative interviews to preserve the narratives of the Utha community and to record the lived experiences of the older generations who were forcibly removed from their land.

For young researcher Suggest, the process was not without its challenges: "the first thing they (participants) want to know is if they are going to say something that might backfire. You had to make them feel comfortable in giving you this information." The research team developed their own techniques to put participants at ease and extract knowledge of culturally and historically sensitive information, conducting a total of one hundred qualitative interviews with older community members.

The young researchers are now experts in their community's heritage. For researcher Iris this has been one of the highlights of the project; "as a young person there are a lot of things I've learnt about my community. There were a lot of things I didn't know and now I understand how knowledge of the past can be used to resolve present day problems."

Building on the research, the team curated a museum exhibition in their local library to present their findings and intend to publish a book, a community identified goal. The research has appealed to local schools who have expressed an interest in integrating community heritage and identity into the local curriculum.



**CHANGING  
THE STORY**

Mapping Community Heritage is funded by the AHRC GCRF project **Changing the Story**, a participatory action research project that asks how the arts can support youth-centred approaches to civil society building in post-conflict settings across the world.

Stay up to date with the latest project news via [changingthestory.ac.uk/mapping\\_community\\_heritage\\_sa/](https://changingthestory.ac.uk/mapping_community_heritage_sa/) and [@Changing\\_Story](https://twitter.com/Changing_Story)

Credit: Prudence Nkomo