Interview by Brown Maaba

**Dennis Maluleka** 

Facilitator: This is an interview with comrade Dennis Maluleka, we are in Durban the

date is 17 October 2012, interview is done by Brown Maaba. Thanks very much for

your time, you can speak in any language. Just kindly give me your background,

where do you come from and how you ended up in the world of trade unionism?

Respondent: Okay my name is Dennis Maluleka, I started working in the clothing

industry, employed as a mechanic when I started working, fixing the machines from

1985 until 1992. In July 1992 I was employed by the trade union SACTU to work as an

organiser. I started working in 1992 as a branch secretary of Durban North, I've also

worked as a branch secretary of Newcastle, I also worked as a branch secretary of

North Coast, secretary of Western Branch. I later became a regional organiser in

2003. In 2009 I was appointed as an acting regional secretary, in 2010 I was fully

appointed as regional secretary for KZN. That is how I was involved in the work of

the trade union. My full responsibility was to represent workers and negotiate wages

and conditions of employment on their behalf.

Facilitator: Your background, did you simply look for a job anywhere or you actually

specialised in mechanic?

Respondent: Actually after leaving school I was trained for a period of 2 years as a

mechanic

Facilitator: So that was your ambition to be a mechanic?

17 October 2012: Durban Page 1 of 26 Respondent: Yes that was my ambition when I started but when I worked as a mechanic, I was elected as a shop steward and they saw a potential in me and I became the branch organiser, that is where I started.

Facilitator: And your family did they manage to afford the fees, to pay for you to train as a mechanic? Did you come from a well to do family?

Respondent: Although it was the clothing sector, they afforded to pay for me.

Facilitator: Did you come from a big/small family?

Respondent: Fairly large family, not so big

Facilitator: And the parents could manage?

Respondent: We were poor but they managed partially and paid for my school fees

Facilitator: Where did you study?

Respondent: I studied to become a mechanic after school, after joining the trade union I studied economics and political science

Facilitator: Which institution?

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Respondent: Workers College

Facilitator: Why Political Science, why Economics, why not religion?

Respondent: To be in the trade union those are the issues that I actually deal with

Facilitator: So which firm did you join exactly, what is the name of the firm that you

joined as a mechanic?

Respondent: Durban Clothing Manufacturer

Facilitator: How big was the firm?

Respondent: During that time it was a big company, it employed almost about 1.8

workers but now it has closed down because of ...

Facilitator: Ja, the changing landscape. But you came there to work as a

mechanic, how were you introduced into unions then?

Respondent: When I was employed as a mechanic the trade union was SADTU,

used to represent workers in the clothing, it happened that I was elected as a shop

steward by the workers when the union officials came to do the election of the shop

steward, the workers trusted me and elected me as a shop steward I think from 1986

Facilitator: You joined them which year?

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Respondent: 1985

Facilitator: That was your first job?

Respondent: Ja

Facilitator: And your impression of this clothing industry, you came in just to fix the

machines and now you find yourself in this environment, full of women which is in

clothes, what was your take of the place?

Respondent: Actually when I first joined I thought I would be there for a short period

of time, I was going to look for another job. It happened that I then stayed for so

long, from 1985 to 1992, I was in the clothing sector and then decided to quit

because I saw no future in the clothing sector

Facilitator: Why did you stay for so long? Why did you want to leave, you obviously

had no intention to stay longer?

Respondent: The problem is I hate to do one job and wanted to venture into other

fields, I wanted to learn something else, be challenged. And then when the trade

union approached me, I noticed that on the way I will have challenges to deal with

workers, I will dealing with different types of people and that there will be

challenges.

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Facilitator: The working conditions as you were discovering the place, you came in

in 1985, 1986 you were elected as a shop steward, what were the pressing issues

then?

Respondent: During that time the clothing industry was booming and they were

employing a lot of people because the economy was fine at the time, the issue at

the time was the rates of pay in the clothing sector, it was a low paid industry.

Facilitator: Is it still a low paying industry even today?

Respondent: Well currently they are still being classified as the lowest paid because

the machinist, which is the bulk of the people that are working in the clothing

industry, they are been paid about R788 per week currently, from this month it will be

about R833 now after the increase

Facilitator: It's still low, that's per week

Respondent: It's still low, that's per week

Facilitator: I know my mother used to complain a lot. I am talking about the figure

which is a bit higher in terms of the grades because the bulk of the people in the

clothing industry are machinist, there's some general workers who are actually

earning a little bit less than this

Facilitator: And thee union at that time was it called SACTU or what was it called?

17 October 2012: Durban Page 5 of 26 Respondent: During that time the union was .., there were two unions, it was GAWU during that time and we decided to change and join ACTUSA because of the conflict between GAWU and ACTUSA, the two unions ended up merging in 1989 to became SACTU

Facilitator: What was the issue between GAWU and ACTUSA, what was the bone of contention?

Respondent: It was the issue ..., ACTUSA was politically minded, was dealing with political issues and GAWU was dealing about issue of representing workers, that is how the conflict started, they were not dealing with worker issues, or the day to day politics of the workers.

Facilitator: Were they both affiliates of COSATU?

Respondent: ACTUSA was an affiliate of SACTU, ACTUSA was an affiliate of COSATU, GAWU was not affiliated to any union, that's where the conflict started. And during the time GAWU was a trade union which was ..., most workers under GAWU were from the Indian community, there were very few blacks. Towards the end of 1989 there were a lot of blacks who joined the clothing industry then they started to say we have to come to ACTUSA ..., because of the conflict between the two unions, they eventually merged and became SACTU

Facilitator: Any battle for positions during this merger, between GAWU and ACTUSA?

Respondent: Well there was but the person that was the general secretary for ACTUSA during the time was Mr John Koplin who was advised that he should allow them to take all the key positions and he would like them to have a president who

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was going to be in charge for everything, all those who were elected during the time were under guard, within a period of three years they decided to quit.

Facilitator: They just gave up on it, no frustration?

Respondent: They were actually frustrated

Facilitator: But did SACTU over time then to be a strong union?

Respondent: From 1989 it started to belong to be a strong trade union

Facilitator: And you were still at Durban Clothing?

Respondent: Ja until 1992

Facilitator: And the employers, how did they view the whole issue of the union, Durban Clothing, were they accommodative, did they sign the Recognition Agreement?

Respondent: Actually the cause of the merger that was between GAWU and ACTUSA was caused by the dispute that was raised by ACTUSA at DCM, they were making a lot of conflict, then the employers realised that Durban Clothing was not workable. When we were pushing for a merger then we were supported because they knew that they were going to deal with one trade union because in the past it was their way of dealing with trade unions, instead of having two trade unions in one plant

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Facilitator: So they were more or less happy with that arrangement?

Respondent: Yes

Facilitator: And the working conditions at Durban Clothing?

Respondent: I can fully say that working conditions were fine, they were up to standard, although were bad but not as in other smaller companies, we were

supplied with everything in that particular company, it was well established.

Facilitator: And the benefits, did the workers have benefits?

Respondent: Yes workers had benefits like the issue of provident fund. But the issue at the time was that the clothing industry was the lowest paid industry although they had benefits like provident fund and sick fund, their contribution was so low because of their rate of pay. They couldn't negotiate a big percentage, it was very hard to

ask for 10% to a person who is earning less wages. Now it is fine.

Facilitator: Clothing industries are family dominant. What about issues around

maternity leave and so on? Was Durban Clothing accommodative in terms of that?

Respondent: Ja in terms of the Industrial Council Main Agreement, workers were

allowed to take three months maternity leave and come back and carry on as if

they still working without breaking their service.

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Facilitator: Health and Safety issues?

Respondent: We were fully covered.

Facilitator: So you had no job as a shop steward then, it seems everything was

running smooth at the time?

Respondent: Well as I've told you that it was a company with about 1.8 employees,

we would have those cases of unfair dismissals, bad treatment that we dealt with on

daily basis

Facilitator: Why were the workers unfairly dismissed, was it anything on the side of

the management?

Respondent: You know the issue of scores, that they have to produce scores and

some workers come drunk .., those were the main issues.

Facilitator: So these issues were varied?

Respondent: Yes

Facilitator: But the cases of unfair dismissals were they winnable?

Respondent: Some were and some were not, well the company followed proper

procedures.

17 October 2012: Durban Page **9** of **26**  Facilitator: And the background of most of the women who worked for Durban clothing where did they come from, did they come from poor backgrounds or they were just Matriculants who had no jobs?

Respondent: Their background was from poor families, and some were from the bundus, looking for a job, the clothing industry is the easiest job to learn. It takes you almost about 18 months to be a qualified machinist, it's the easiest job and to be a general worker it takes about six months to learn how to clean things, those were the easiest jobs at the time.

Facilitator: And the women there, were they willing to take leadership roles, I mean you are a man, being a shop steward I'm sure there was like thousand?

Respondent: During the time there were women who stayed in the township like Lamontville who understood the struggle, they were willing to take positions, although not all but some did show some interest, they were brave enough to take up leadership to an extent that one was a senior shop steward in our plant and she was active. She came from Lamontville, Gloria Koloko if I recall well. She was strong, very powerful woman who was actually working with us.

Facilitator: And the others, why were they doubtful, why were they not willing to step forward and take positions of power?

Respondent: You know during that time, you must know that the issue of politics was not so much prominent, only those people who lived in active locations understood their rights, they participated in ANC structures but you know here in KZN most of the people were not so much active on politics. Only a few participated.

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Facilitator: For wages, did you have to go on strike for wages at Durban Clothing or

everything was okay in terms of wages?

Respondent: As I indicated to you, the issue of wages, when I first joined that

company the issue of wages we never went on strike, it was due to the fact that

there was this culture that GAWU was a trade union that was formed by the Indian

community, they were being told that we have negotiated 4 or 5%, take it or leave

it, there were no negotiations, no report back as to how much was demanded, this

is how much we were finally offered. We were just being told that the increase for

this year is x amount of money, no negotiations until 1989 when there was a merger

between ACTUSA and SACTU where we started negotiating ..., where we started

getting the feeling of negotiating wages and conditions of employment.

Facilitator: How did this happen, how did GAWU become an Indian based union

and then ACTUSA a black based union, how did that division happen?

Respondent: GAWU as I told you during the 1970s in the clothing industry it was

dominated by Indians, it was a job done by Indians. Only later in the 1980s a few

Africans started to join the clothing industry, that's how it came about.

Facilitator: So that was more like their space there?

Respondent: No it was a job that was run by Indians but as time went on Africans

started getting into the industry

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Facilitator: And the relationship between blacks and Indians in the workplace

because it seems they were divided along racial lines, GAWU this side, Indians then,

ACTUSA blacks this side. How was the relationship then?

Respondent: The relationship was fine although there was that undermining that

Indians were classifying themselves as a better race, there was that to an extent that

.., I will make an example. I can have a qualification of running this machine but as

soon as there's an Indian that is being employed, that one will come and .., it will

reflect like a person who is in charge in this department whereas he is just an

ordinary worker because they will be telling you what to do. You know as Africans

we have that respect, I think that was all because of that – Africans generally

respected other races.

Facilitator: So that never caused tension, such situations?

Respondent: No there was no tension, there was no friction but there was that

attitude.

Facilitator: And in terms of promotions in the workplace?

Respondent: During that time it was only Indians who were promoted I must say it

started in the early 1990s when we saw Africans being appointed as supervisors. In

the past the issue of supervisors/line managers was for Indians only. Africans just had

to work.

Facilitator: No matter how good you were?

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Respondent: No matter what

Facilitator: But the union never took that thing up?

Respondent: No, no it was dominated, you know it was a union dominated by

Indians, even the structures were being dominated by Indians.

Facilitator: So there was both GAWU and ACTUSA in this same workplace?

Respondent: ACTUSA came at a later stage, after I think 1988

Facilitator: 1988 all along it was just GAWU?

Respondent: We were the minority, we couldn't because the wages was negotiated at the Bargaining Council, although we were in the union we were not

allowed to negotiate wages and conditions of employment - we were under the

majority during that time

Facilitator: But you were, most of you were members of GAWU?

Respondent: Ja, most of them we were members of GAWU then, some of us, about

30% became members of ACTUSA

Facilitator: So ACTUSA came in 1988 at Durban Clothing?

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Respondent: ja

Facilitator: How did it come about, who introduced it, what were the dynamics?

Respondent: The dynamics is that there was .., now there was a fight now between

Indians and blacks as to who has to run what and we realised that the friction was

going to cause a lot of damage because Indians are soft people and blacks are

rough people. That is why the leadership negotiated the merger, we became one

trade union which will represent the interest of all the working class in the clothing

industry.

Facilitator: And GAWU was it just a provincial thing or a national thing?

Respondent: It was provincial

Facilitator: And in other provinces?

Respondent: There was one in Cape Town, I forget the name, it was just a trade

union in the area of Cape Town, and Jo'burg too, there was I cannot recall it. It was

not GAWU but it was just a small trade union, I can't remember the name.

Facilitator: And you were there from 1985 to 1992, why did you leave Durban

Clothing?

Respondent: Actually I was approached by the Regional Secretary of SACTU Elias

Banda who recruited me to come and work for the trade because he had realised

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potential in me because I was able to negotiate wages and recruited workers in the

clothing industry.

Facilitator: And were there challenges in doing this kind of job now, working as a

branch organiser?

Respondent: Well it was a big challenge to me because I was meeting different

types of employers with different attitudes and it was a big challenge. I actually

learnt a lot out of the process.

Facilitator: But still the same sector at least, of clothing

Respondent: Actually when I started working for SACTU, I was actually focussing on

the clothing because we had textile that is covered under this thing, where I was

exposed to another type of people, the textile people are the people making textile

land the people that are sewing are the ones that are sewing the material are

called clothing.

Facilitator: And the working conditions within textile because this was now a new

angle for you, you came from the clothing background?

Respondent: There was a lot of challenge in the area of textile, workers were getting

sick because they were inhaling a lot of dust.

Facilitator: Dust from where?

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Respondent: Dust from .., you know the machines have a lot of dust stuck on the

machines and you will find a lot of them have TB now, those were the challenges

that we were actually facing under the textile sector.

Facilitator: So there was no protective clothing?

Respondent: There was but not enough because some of them were not given a

mask to wear when they are working in the dusty area and other things was caused

by the workers, the workers would sometimes not wear the mask because of the

heat, those were the challenges we were faced with in textile factories. Some of the

workers were actually refusing to wear mask which would have prevented them

from inhaling the dust. The other challenge was that in the textile they were using

big machines, they had to wear some protective around their ears, because if they

didn't their ears would be damaged.

Facilitator: But were these ever made an issue by the union, SACTU?

Respondent: They made it an issue but the employer responded by saying

protective clothing was provided the workers were not interested to wear them, it is

their responsibility to wear them if they were working in certain areas.

Facilitator: So the employers had a case?

Respondent: Ja the employer had a case.

Facilitator: So those particular workers who were affected are just like doomed?

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Respondent: Ja that's what I can say

Facilitator: And where the changes in the clothing and textile industry after 1990, I'm

now thinking about the release of Mandela towards 1994? How was the

environment in this workspace?

Respondent: The environment was still fine it's only that after 1994 we all know that

the politics of the country changed, workers at large ..., the issue of trade unionism

was not at a level of the previous years. After 1994 people felt that the country is

free, everything is free. You can check this by the attendance of meetings the

number of meetings dropped. Workers stopped attending meetings generally in

numbers after 1994.

Facilitator: What happened, what went wrong?

Respondent: People believed that they have taken over the country and that

everything belongs to them, they lost that.

Facilitator: And in the workplace did they become free after 1994, were there

changes on the ground or the changes were just in their heads?

Respondent: There was some change but no so much, it was just change in their

heads I can say so because there's a lot of things that we still need to fight for to

date in these companies

Facilitator: Things like what?

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Respondent: For instance I am talking about the issue of wages, we still need to fight

for wages, working conditions, representing workers because not much has

changed. The other thing which I've seen now is that the workers that were there

prior to 1994 some of them have retired, actually that was the cause of this thing,

people who understood the struggle are retired .., and I've noticed that a lot of new

employees have joined the industry .., some of them joined because they don't

have money, they would work for a period of three years, collect some money, go

and study and move forward. Things are not like before where they were employed

in the clothing industry, they would take the workplace as their home by working

there until they die. People work to get something and move to other jobs – as a

result we do not have continuous service in the textile and clothing industry.

Facilitator: Your workers within clothing and textile do they have pension funds or

pension schemes?

Respondent: That has been negotiated, we do have provident fund and pension

scheme which is well managed

Facilitator: And medical aid benefits?

Respondent: Some have others don't

Facilitator: What criteria is used, to give some and not give the others?

Respondent: Well medical aid forms part of a package when we are negotiating

wages, we take it out of the package given by the employer (cost to company).

For instance the clothing industry has a sick fund which they contribute 1.5% of their

salary and the employer contribute, and we have clinics that they can visit when

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they are sick and they are being treated, I am referring to the clothing industry. As a

trade union we have other mechanisms to look after our members, for instance the

issue of HIV Aids has affected a lot of our members, we have a clinic across the road

where we are providing all the necessary assistance to affected members free of

charge.

Facilitator: What kind of help, giving them advice or is it medical help?

Respondent: Everything, we provide them with tablets, advice and every assistance

they might need.

Facilitator: But then after 1994 what happened because it seems to me the

numbers in this field declined, you had 1800 workers at Durban..

Respondent: I am just referring to one company which had 1800, after I left there

the number dropped to 1500 then 1000, then 800 up to the stage where in 2010 it

was closed completely .., this was because of the illegal imports that are affecting

the country's economy. They found it difficult to compete with our neighbouring

countries because of the Chinese goods that are all over the place. The companies

decided to close down and paid all the workers severance pay, they are now not in

operation.

Facilitator: So that is the main factor that has killed the industry?

Respondent: Ja that is the main issue

Facilitator: Any other issue that killed the industry?

17 October 2012: Durban Page 19 of 26 Respondent: I can say that is the main issue and competition around the world is also killing them because in the clothing industry, it's only those big companies that get big orders from companies like Mr Price, Woolworths and so forth, under them there are these small companies referred to as CMT's which are doing cut and trim – if you are a big company you can ask the company to make a t-shirt for you, it will cost you for instance R35, then you will get more orders, if you do not have enough workers to produce the order you will go to the CMT and pay about R8/9 per t-shirt. The CMT will take the order from you because you do not have a job. What happens is the CMT will not afford to pay for water/electricity and the workers out of the R8/9. We found out in 1995 that there were some employers who were actually not paying the rate of the clothing industry, they were not paying according to the gazetted rate of the industry.

Facilitator: So your numbers of subscribers as the union as SACTU has dropped I assume after 1994, nationally, provincially?

Respondent: Ja it has dropped

Facilitator: How do you survive then as the union because these industries keep on closing all of them?

Respondent: They keep on closing, the thing is during rainy days we have been able to collect and we are fully secured, we have invested a certain amount of money. I think SACTU now we have almost about 85 000 members nationally, we still have money even if membership can drop to 5000 we can still survive for the next 30 years

17 October 2012: Durban Page 20 of 26 Facilitator: So the number dropped from which number, you have 85 000 at the

moment?

Respondent: In 1989 we were about 239 000 and with retrenchments, closures of

companies we have come to 85 000 and we might be going lower as time goes on,

there are a lot of challenges facing us. There's an organisation like COFESA who

were saying that the employers must not pay what has been negotiated at the

clothing industry, they must classify their employees as not working, they must

convert their workers to be co-operative so that they are not covered by the

Clothing Council Main Agreement.

Facilitator: And the Department of Labour, has it come to the party? Do you guys

feel it's presence?

Respondent: Ja the Department of Labour, we have invited them to discuss all the

challenges, they met with us but the problem with the clothing industry is no longer

honest (industrial tsotsi), that is the problem.

Facilitator: Who is the tsotsi?

Respondent: The employer is the tsotsi. You know I am just making an example, I

have employed ten workers, the Bargaining Council sends an inspector to come

and check me whether I'm paying the gazetted rate of pay, I know that I cannot

afford to pay the gazetted rate of pay. They will give me a certain period to sort

that out. By the time they come back they will find I am no longer here, I've closed,

I will close here and open it down there. You know the problem with the workers is,

some of the workers will be scared to say ..., maybe they will close for two or three

days, then I will call them because they won't be able to report me anywhere that

I'm still in operation. To date I am asking myself how the clothing employers run their

17 October 2012: Durban Page 21 of 26 business, they do not sign any lease agreements. I do not know how they operate because they are able to close if you put more pressure on them. Sometimes they will change the company to the wife's name although they are still operating, they just change the name. The registration now changes to the wife's name, with time the name changes to the son's name, that is the challenge.

Facilitator: So there's nothing that the government can do about that to legislate that process? Are they aware of this?

Respondent: They are well aware of it, the government is also tsotsi, they protect the employers, they will sort things if it suits them. They are getting rebates in the clothing industry, the rebates are not as big as those in the motor industry etc. Because they are getting so little, we will report but they do nothing about it.

Facilitator: So nothing is done. But have workers lost their benefits because of the name changes of companies, closing here and opening here the next day?

Respondent: Some have lost some not in a sense that in the clothing industry, we have got some law which states that if you are employed by company A and you are dismissed by company A you go and work for company B, you are still going to contribute, the money is still coming to the Bargaining Council, it means that you won't be able to get your money unless you have been dismissed from company A and you have left the industry, but if they discovered you on the system that you are still working here you won't be able to get your money back. So your money will be kept because the provident fund money is being put away for retirement or death. You can only get your money when you stop working for the industry, for instance you got a job in the motor industry, then they will release it to you after 6 months, not when you move from one company to another in the same sector.

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Facilitator: But the Bargaining Council is it of any good use in this sector?

Respondent: It's sort of a good use because it regulates the rate of pay so that if

there's one employer who's coming from outside he must know that when he opens

a company here he has to pay the gazetted rate of pay, he has to pay for

provident fund, sick fund, all those things before opening the company. He must

get advice from the Bargaining Council what needs to be paid.

Facilitator: And the Labour Council that combines business, labour and government

do you think it has paid a significant role in some ways in the life of the workers of the

unions?

Respondent: It has but not to such an extent?

Facilitator: What were you expecting as workers?

Respondent: The Department of Labour, we have been reporting quite a number of

companies that are not registered under the Bargaining Council, which means the

company is operating without paying any UIF, it is the responsibility of the

Department of Labour to do the inspection whether they are paying the UIF on

behalf of those workers to them.

Facilitator: What could save the textile and clothing from shutting down ultimately

because the numbers you referred to, from 230 000 sitting at 85 000 national, I'm sure

in a few years to come could drop further? Is there something that could be done

to revive this industry?

17 October 2012: Durban Page 23 of 26 Respondent: Something can be done which has happening in the past, is that the retailers must buy at least probably 75% of the job that is done locally in order to keep jobs in South Africa because you cannot say that they must buy 100% of the job that is being manufactured here in South Africa. But now, companies ..., retailers like Woolworths are no longer investing in South African products, they order their goods from China to come and sell it here. If you go to Woolworths, you will buy stuff made from China. When you ask them they say they are buying 25% of local products which is not true, when you check the stock at Woolworths most of the goods are from China, to an extent Woolworths is crooking the system. They order the golf shirts in China and outsource it to me to take the labels out and put the South African label so that the consumer thinks it's from South Africa. Only when you wash the product will you realise it's from China. That is how they are operating. Sometimes the golf shirt is too cheap for Woolworths. That is the name of the game.

Facilitator: That's very sad. Labour brokers, have you been affected by the issue of labour brokers in this industry, textile?

Respondent: Yes we are being affected by labour brokers in the textile sector. Here we have been, in the clothing industry we are affected by co-operatives, companies that are saying that they are co-ops whereas they are not co-ops. Do you know what is a co-op?

Facilitator: I do

Respondent: Co-ops is .., let's say four of us have been retrenched, we have been working in company A, then we decide to say let us operate in the clothing sector to manufacture .., you put your R50 000, the other one R200 000, we buy material, we hire a place, we will sew this thing and sell it. All the money that we are going to get there we are going to divide it amongst all of us and what is happening in the clothing industry after the Bargaining Council has been chasing them, will find that a

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company with about 200 workers tomorrow would come out and say we are co-

operatives now and when you follow that particular company you find that it is not

a co-operative because they are still being paid, if they are being paid R200 per

week they are still being paid into their account like a normal ..., there's no issue that

I am paying R200 this week, next week I'm paid R2000, I will be paid that amount

and will be earning the R200 probably just to cover up they make co-ops, two or

three people out of R200, it's only those four people who are getting the benefits,

the rest are just like normal workers. That is what is actually happening.

Facilitator: Are there problems around textile and clothing that are provincial?

Respondent: Like

Facilitator: I'm not sure maybe the dynamics of this province because of the nature

of this province and the kind of problems that you cannot find in Gauteng?

Respondent: There are such problems, like the product .., like I would say KZN, they

are doing normal product, they are just sewing ordinary clothes like this one,

whereas if you go to Cape Town they specialise with special materials, expensive

material. That is why you will find that the level of competition in Cape Town is not

like here in KZN, they are doing style job. There's competition, here we don't have

so much product of style. We just doing normal clothes, not stylish, whereas in Cape

Town they are moving with the trends. We are just doing ordinary clothes in this

province.

Facilitator: Is that okay for the market or there's a problem in the market because of

that?

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Interview by Brown Maaba

Respondent: It is okay for the Cape Town market because it's an expensive

province, they do expensive styles, here we can do a lot of these products but in

terms of payment the person may not be able to afford – at the same time we are

forced to pay the rate of pay, that is the dilemma we are faced with.

Facilitator: Is there anything else that is important which should have been part of

this interview?

Respondent: I think we have covered all.

Facilitator: Any closing word maybe?

Respondent: What I can say is that we are still looking forward to see the clothing

industry paying the same rate of pay even those people who are doing CMT paying

the same rate of pay like others. The only challenge that we are having is that they

cannot pay because of the charges that they are getting from the big employers.

For instance Woolworths, I am a big company I've got 1000 workers, I will go and ask

Woolworths to give me orders for R1 million job, golf shirts at maybe R35 but I will be

giving a person with 35 workers who is doing CMT for R5 or R10, for him to compete

with me it will me .., he will never make it but he will take it because he needs to

provide a job to his employees, that is the challenge.

Facilitator: Thanks very much for your time.

Respondent: Thank you.

**END** 

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