

TINY MABENA

Summary

Tiny Mabena was born in Payneville, Springs, and relocated to KwaThema where she went to school. Despite poor conditions at school – they had lessons under trees, double shifts of schooling – she managed to complete her JC but failed to go further because there was no space at the training college where she wanted to study. She started working for Braitex, a company that manufactured safety belts, harnesses and other things. Workers joined the Transvaal Workers Union, a union which Mabena refers to as a sweetheart union. Members of the Fosatu affiliated Sweet Food and Allied Workers Union then recruited them. However they did not fall under this sector and members were subsequently handed over to NUTW, the Fosatu textile affiliate.

She was elected a shop steward; with union members and shop stewards they recruited other textile factories so that NUTW set up a region and she sat on the branch executive committee. When the factory relocated to Atlantis and Isithebe to take advantage of the apartheid government's decentralization initiatives, she became a NUTW organiser until local government elections in 1995 when she was elected a PR councillor for the ANC.

She gives details of how the union successfully organized and mobilized for the 1984 stayaway in the Transvaal by distributing pamphlets at taxi ranks and stations and by negotiating with taxi drivers to withdraw their taxis on those days. She also elaborates on methods the unions used to evade restrictions on anti-apartheid activities imposed by the State of Emergency – eg holding union meetings in shebeens.

At some stage she moved to live in Duduza near Nigel. This was a political hot spot, very well organized under the UDF/ANC. She became very involved in her community and from her involvement in

the union's gender committee, networked this organization with Fedtraw and also assisted in the setting up of youth structures. As an activist in Duduza she remembers (sometimes with telling detail): the story of the booby-trapped hand grenades supplied to young activists which exploded in their hands, killing some and maiming others; the mass funerals; Duduza's struggle against the bucket system and its fight with the IFP.

Once the ANC was unbanned she assisted alliance organisations, was deputy chair of the ANC women's league and became a PR councillor in 1995.

Since then she has been involved with the amalgamation of 9 local government areas to form Ekurhuleni. She has also served as deputy chair of the Nigel Exco and at the time of the interview, was a ward councillor.

Facilitator: This is an interview with Ms Tiny Mabena, we are in Duduza, and the interview is done by Brown Maaba. Thanks very much for your time. You can just talk either in IsiZulu, IsiXhosa, English or mix, its okay. Kindly give me just a background of where you were born, how you were raised, and how you ended up in politics and unions.

Respondent: My name is Tiny Ntathane Mabena, Ntathane means Tiny in English, and it's the same name. I was born in Payneville, Springs, that's that old township of Springs. I was born in Payneville up until we relocated to KwaThema, I don't remember which year it was. As we relocated in KwaThema, I started schooling in Khwezi Kganyeng Primary School, that was the first school in KwaThema, which was a new township at that time from Payneville. But the way it was, there were no classes, we had, what do they call it, we had change.....

Facilitator: Oh this thing of classes during the day and night.

Respondent: We were learning under the tree, there were no proper schools and at the same time the school that was there, Ikhwezi, it didn't have enough classes to accommodate all the learners that were there at that time seeing that it was a new township. From Ikhwezi we then proceeded to a school that was called Combined.

Facilitator: Ok, KwaThema Combined.

Respondent: Yes, KwaThema Combined, which was also one of the primary schools in the vicinity of KwaThema. I went through Combined up to the time when there was another school built in KwaThema called Tsimong Primary School, which was a Sotho school so to say, I completed Standard 6 in Tsimong. From Tsimong I then moved to Phakama, the then Tlakula when it was Payneville, but when it came to KwaThema it was renamed Phakama Secondary School, until I completed, that time we called in JC.

Facilitator: Ok, the famous JC.

Respondent: Yes, the famous JC. Then after JC I then wanted to proceed to Botshabelo Training College, which at that time was mostly a college that accommodated Pedi speaking learners but I could not for the reason that by the time the schools were supposed to open I could not get space. So after that I stayed at home doing nothing until I got employment in a Company in Springs called BraitexBraitex, which was doing textile, their operation was textile in the sense that we were manufacturing things such as curtain tapes, safety belts, candle wax, it was a number of things that we were operating, also elastics for Playtex underwear, it was a lot of things, shoe laces, parachute cords, we were manufacturing a number of things. I worked there from 1984 until, it was more than ten years, and I worked in Braitex. As I was

working in Braitex we then started the issue of reorganizing ourselves as workers, because of conditions that were prevailing in the company, we organised ourselves into a trade union movement, which at that time there were sweetheart unions which were run mostly by Whites. We organized ourselves into that union which after some time we felt it was not even assisting us because well of course we know that we would end up concluding to say they side with the employer because we were not achieving our objectives. Whilst we were busy on that, I think it was Transvaal Workers Union at that time, whilst we were still members there, there were these unions that were under FOSATU, then there were nine affiliates under FOSATU, also textile at that time was not part of FOSATU but it was a union that was operating in Natal, those big strikes from Natal, it was operating from Natal, it was not a national thing. Whilst we were still members of the Transvaal union, we were approached by one of the affiliates of FOSATU, which that time was called Sweet Food, for people like Chris Dlamini.

We were then approached by them, mobilized us, recruited us, we then left that union to join the FOSATU unions, and at that time it was a time where the textile union from Natal was venturing in Transvaal, so we were the first company in Transvaal under textile to be recruited by the textile union from Natal and also which was an affiliate to FOSATU. We then became members of NUTW, National Union of Textile Workers at that time; we became members of that union. We operated, we stayed in the company, it was recognized, we fought for recognition, it was finally recognized, with the assistance of course of Maggie Magubane who was an official at that time of Sweet Foods union. She assisted us recruited, ensuring that there's correspondence going forward and backward to management seeking recognition of NUTW at that time. Finally we were successful in achieving though it was not easy, you know at that time it was difficult, but we managed, we

ended up getting recognition also with the assistance at that time for Fosatu unions, we were assisted by (unclear) Cheadle, Thompson and Haysom, who were lawyers, who were mediating between the company and ourselves so that we can at the end of the day clinch a recognition agreement. So we got that agreement, we then became members of NUTW, though I still don't remember which year it was, but it's around the '80s. We then after that entered into a process of shopstewards elections, we rejected the union that we belonged to before, immediately after we got recognition, we withdrew our membership and concentrated on a membership with NUTW, that is how we got recognition. So elections were held for shopstewards, some of us were elected as shopstewards then, and that is how we started becoming active in the movement as shopstewards representing workers in the company.

So as shopstewards we went through a series of trainings and then we also had to establish a branch in Transvaal at that time. We were then elected as members of the branch executive in Gauteng, it was not Gauteng at that time it was Transvaal, we were BEC members as shopstewards, we participated in that structure as BEC which meetings were held once a month until we came to recruit a number of companies in Transvaal, textile companies that were here in Transvaal, companies such as Greco Reneit Mills, Filter Flow, Lamberet in Pretoria and also in the West Rand. Until we had a sizeable number that was required constitutionally, for us to establish a branch, a region in Transvaal. We then became active as of then and we were part of the FOSATU affiliation.

In 1985, before 1985, discussions emerged between the FOSATU unions and other non-affiliated unions such as GAWU, two Railway unions at that time, also two unions of metal at that time. So those discussions

started then to sort of form one big federation in the sense that while we were FOSATU, it became difficult for unions in FOSATU, say in the case of trying to fundraise internationally, it became a problem in the sense that internationally we could not be funded because of parallel unions that were existing in South Africa. There was that recommendation to say for us to be able to be funded internationally, we need to strive towards working in the formation of one big federation, that is when the discussions started to bring together all similar unions to merge, to form one big union in the sector, that is sectoral unions, so that we are able to come up with this one big umbrella body which was then called at that time COSATU, which was formed in 1985, in Durban University.

In 1985 COSATU was formed, we were still part at that time as shopstewards, when we merged with GAWU from textile clothing, we merged with all the textile unions and all the clothing unions, to form one big union in the textile and clothing sector, which the union changed the name from NUTW to ACTUSA at that time. It did not end up there; there were still other unions who were still outside the ACTUSA formation who were in the same sector of textile and clothing. Negotiations continued to engage those other unions to come in also so that we are able to form one big union, which we succeeded, and the name changed again from ACTUSA to SACTWU. So we became that one big sectoral union after 1985, we operated until to date, it is still named SACTWU, it has not changed the name. Whilst we were still members of SACTWU and being members of the BEC in the Transvaal region, we were also elected and participated in a national structure of the union, that's the NEC; we became NEC members, which were representing all members from Transvaal, meeting with other members from different provinces. So we became members of the NEC for a long time, attending all these NEC meetings, conferences and the like,

and at that time one was still a shopsteward at the factory floor, because you cannot be a member of BEC or NEC without you being a shopsteward in your own establishment.

So I became a member in the shopsteward up until the company relocated, it relocated and the reason for it relocating was that they could not absorb the pressure from the union anymore, because we were working for one of the most stubborn companies which was owned by Germans, of course you know how Germans are, so because of their stubbornness at that time I think we really pushed them to relocate. In terms of the union that we were in, we had a very good and strong union, almost all of the cases that we had in the company, the dismissals and so on we would always win those cases and they could not take it anymore, they lost money because of their own stubbornness. They were people who wouldn't want to sit down and negotiate or discuss issues, they would put their foot down and say this is what they want and we would go the legal route, wherein we know that in terms of the legislation laws that were there, it really covers us as members and also as workers. They could not respect worker's rights at that time, but arrogance was the song of the day from their side but ending up losing a lot of money, so it is out of that personally that I took to say no they could not stand the pressure of course, they then thought of relocating. Their relocation was in the sense that they look at the decentralized areas where there was cheap labour, they relocated to Isithebe and Atlantis, they divided the plant into two, part went to Isithebe (in KZN) and part went to Atlantis in the Western Cape, so that is how the company closed down. As I am speaking to you, I am told that they are back now, the problems are gone, and the problematic people are no longer there. When I raised this issue with the person who was telling me, I said to him, he was one of the opposite unions, I said to him I was going back to them to seek work,

cause I worked for that company, he said no they can't take you because they need very young people, I said oh I'll then take them up for discrimination because of age, he laughed and said I was still like that, I told him I won't change, I am still the same.

So that is how we ended up, when the company relocated and closed down, we were then, I think myself and other shopstewards, I was then considered as being employed by the union as an official now, as an organizer. So I continued with that work of organizing in the same union, wherein we were recruiting and doing all sorts of representing workers at the bargaining council level and also at the factory floor, negotiating for workers or members salaries and conditions and also other benefits, at factory floor, at plant level but also at bargaining council level, we would represent workers in terms of wage negotiations and all other related benefits, as an organizer. As we were moving along, after the formation of COSATU, also as shopstewards and organizers, we participated in all the structures of COSATU.

There was a structure of gender that was established, I also became a member of the NWC, National Workers Committee of Gender representing women, so we represented women in that national structure and also at regional level, where in the regional structure of gender I was the Deputy Chairperson in the regional structure, participating also at the national structure. As we established that structure of gender we were networking, working together with the, it was not Women's League at that time, and it was FEDTRAW, when the ANC was still banned, up until the situation where the ANC was unbanned. We then started working together, the national structure of COSATU with the Women's League, after the unbanning. We proceeded with the networking, working relationship, the gender

committee of COSATU and the Women's League of the ANC. Whilst we were still part and parcel of that structure, we used to have all these national conferences, also we would go out and network with unions in SADC, for instance Zimbabwe, Namibia, we networked with them. At the same time we were then given a directive as COSATU members that after the unbanning of the ANC, that we must go back to our constituencies, where we reside, to start working towards assisting ANC in establishing their branches, their base at local level.

We then started that work participating and assisting ANC in re-establishing branches in local areas where we resided, up until structures were formed. We became established branches of the ANC, we established branches of the Women's League, and we established branches of the Youth League and also assisting the other Alliance partners, the establishment of the SACP. We participated in those structures, until today as I am speaking to you we are still members. I have been a member also, in terms of our branch, because after the unbanning, in an area such as Nigel for instance, you will have only one branch of Nigel. So at that particular time I was also the Chairperson of the Nigel branch, and I also became a member of the Women's League branch, as a Deputy Chairperson then, up until today where I am still participating in all these structures of the ANC, of the movement.

In 1994 where elections were in place, there was a clear indication that we are going to be going into elections in terms of electing new democratic government, we were still strongly involved. Was it 1994 when there was elections for the interim phase of local government.

Facilitator: I think it was 1995,

Respondent: Yes, we were then also nominated as candidates for the interim phase which we participated up until the full blown elections were held in the country; I participated from the interim phase until proper elections were in place wherein full blown elections were held of all spheres of government. I was then elected on the local sphere, nominated at the local sphere, that is local government where elections were held. In the local government elections I was then the Deputy Chairperson of the EXCO, Executive of the Nigel Municipality. I also as the Deputy Chairperson led the committee that was called Legal and Corporate, I led that committee, until the first term was done, I think it was 1999 if I recall well. The second term came in also of the elections, I was still also elected as a Local Government Councilor, but also in the first term, as I was saying I was appointed at a Deputy Chairperson of EXCO, and also at that time I was a PR Councilor.

The second term came in, I was also elected as a PR Councilor, which I still led the Corporate and Legal Committee, and also participated at the structure, interim for the local government in trying to amalgamate the nine local government municipalities to established what is called today Ekurhuleni. I was part of the Amalgamation from Nigel, and I still participated in terms of amalgamation at a committee that was called Inkundla, we were calling them section 95 committee, in trying to amalgamate and to come with one uniform committee of the Ekurhuleni then when it was amalgamated. But one must also say that I am still also active even today in the structures of the ANC, I am still active. I was in the regional structure of Women's League, elected as the Deputy Chairperson of the Women's League in the Ekurhuleni region. After the first term that is gone past, I also was still elected as a member of the REC, Regional Executive Committee of Women's League in Ekurhuleni, which I am still active in as a member in good standing to date. In the last elections, last year, I was re-elected again

as a Councilor, but not a PR Councilor this time but as a Ward Councilor, representing the ward which is called Ward 98, which is a new Ward in terms of the new demarcation after the local government elections, that is where I am today.

Facilitator: Wow quite a rich history.

Respondent: I must say also that during the time of the state of emergency, the '80s that is when we were still NUTW and we were still FOSATU at that time. FOSATU when we merged as COSATU, we operated under difficult conditions at that time, wherein the state of emergency did not allow us to hold meetings, we normally had what we called COSATU Local, we used to meet in Roma in KwaThema, that is where we used to have our local COSATU meetings of local companies that are in Springs and local members that belonged to affiliates of COSATU, so under the state of emergency it was difficult to hold such meetings because we were barred from holding such meetings, we were not allowed to hold any public meeting at that particular time after the declaration of the state of emergency. But what we used to do, you know tactics are tactics, what we used at local level, lets say like (unclear) industries which were forming part of the COSATU local, because of the restrictions that were there, and also because of the tapping of phones, that we could not communicate telephonically because telephones were tapped. For us to be able to be active, the structures within the area would phone each other and say, where is tea today, we wouldn't say where the meeting was going to be, and we would indicate where the tea was going to be, this is the way in which we were now operating, we would say we are having tea in Thlabi's Tavern, so we would converge there in the evening to have our normal meeting activities in a shebeen, and the reason is that we were running away from them because there was a stage whereby

they found us at Roma after the state of emergency was declared, we had a meeting of course, COSATU local. We were not aware until somebody went out to go to the toilet, when the person came back he told us that they had surrounded the whole area with hippos, they were there, and two of them came in and said to us that they were giving us five minutes to disperse because you know it's illegal to do what you are doing.

At that time there was this comrade called Bangilizwi Saul (Solo?), at that time he had this big ton of newspaper, it was banned at that time, that literature was banned and he came with it to the meeting, and when they came in they found that material and confiscated it, I forgotten the name of the newspaper, it was called SASPU, we had to disperse. After then that's when we started talking about tea, but now to their surprise was that campaigns were rolling, were moving, they were wondering where the campaigns meetings and planning held. We knew that even if they can come to that tavern, it was a shebeen, tables are full of bottles and we would be busy planning, that is the strategy that we applied at that particular time. One other thing I forgot to mention, you recall the 6, 7 and 8, the stay away that hit the government very severely, we were also part of that planning, and that stay away was not planned locally, we went out as FOSATU affiliates, we went out when we were planning that stay away, I must be honest, we were out in Isipingo, Durban, planning for that stay away because of the problems that were there. It was resolved in one of our regional meetings of COSATU that we must come out with a campaign and the campaign was that stay away of 6, 7 and 8. And how we planned that campaign, as I said that we were in Isipingo, we planned there and came back. As we came back, I don't know how they got hold of the information, they got hold of that information, they got the information, they went to Isipingo, we were stupid as well at that time

because when we registered there we gave true information, after they got the information, they went to Isipingo, they confiscated the registration book wherein they were able to track us down individually, but also even then we used a strategy that if they come to me, you would phone the next people to alert them that they came to you, alert others that they are on their way to them, all the people who were. This is how some of our comrades we ended up not knowing what happened to them, people like Sam Tambane, we only came to know when they were dead, what happened to them we never knew, we would have questions when we are told that Sam Tambane was dead, where was he all along. People decided to disappear, that was during that time of the crackdown and also during the time of the state of emergency, wherein a lot of our comrades were arrested, people like Godongwana, Chris Dlamini, Jantjies, all this crew, they were arrested and detained at that time. But if you look at the outcome of the plan we had for the 6, 7 and 8, it was very successful, it went well, we achieved our target, that the three days, economy and business really suffered, because there were no trains, there was nothing moving, we mobilized to an extent that the mobilization people acceded our mobilization. The way in which we planned that, was that in terms of the areas, we were all in East Rand, we had these secret meetings, prepared all these things like pamphlets and other things, when we were planning we divided ourselves in terms of areas. Those from Daveyton would take material for Daveyton, those from KwaThema would take material for Springs and KwaThema, and we sat that night, when we disbursed we didn't go to sleep, we went to all the taxi ranks, stations to drop the pamphlets so that come the morning, when people are going to work, they would pick up those pamphlets and read the content of the pamphlets, that is why that stay away was so successful. We also had discussions with taxi operators, sensitized

them, mobilized them, that is why there was no movement on that day, everybody decided to stay away, that is how successful it became.

I think I can go that far today to say I am still highly involved and active as a member of the ANC and member of most of the structures that are here, assisting also the tripartite alliance in establishing SACP, Youth League, Women's League where there are no branches and structures. We are currently still involved and also in terms of recruitment, recruiting membership, we heard the President, the target that was set was a million, so that is what we have been doing, we are still doing that even today, not to say just because we have reached our target, we must still go further, we don't relax, in a movement there is no relaxation.

Facilitator: How was your family affected by your involvement in politics?

Respondent: They had to adapt, once you are involved in this thing, its difficult to say no, they had to adapt but at the same time they had to understand because they were also affected as much as any other person, not because they are in the house, so therefore things are rosy, what affects the rest of the community also affected them. In as much as in the area here, remember Duduza used to be one of the spotlight area during those years when Maki Skosana was burnt and killed, it affected the entire area of Duduza, and we were participating at that time. Also issues of say like, there was a hostel where we have built a customer care unit, that house there was a tuck shop of the hostel and here it was a beer hall, the area that sells drinks now, this area and also this side, it was a hostel.

In terms of campaigns that were here in the township but also because of the conditions. We were also involved in the issue of bucket system,

we took up that campaign as community structures, that when people were moved from the old location (unclear) where there were buckets, we were moved from that and were promised that as we moved to the township we will have infrastructure in place, we will have a sewer in place, the bucket system wont exist any more. We came here and the same situation prevailed up to a stage where we said no this is too much, we were promised and nothing has happened and nothing has changed, we are still sitting with the same situation of the bucket system that we left there. When we were moved from that old location (unclear), it did not take them long to renovate that area, those houses which we were using buckets but the sewer was installed because they were putting colored's there, so this is what prompted also the community to say it means that we are being undermined, the people who are enjoying benefits are the so called Whites and Coloured's, that is how this issue of the bucket started. When we had that meeting it was over the weekend, Sunday where we resolved as a community, inclusive of local structures, that Monday we were all not going to go to work. Each and every one and house, must take their own bucket, we will march and come and dump them here we are sitting because it was municipality offices, to show them that we are tired, enough is enough, the things that they promised us to date have not yet been implemented. But the Monday did not happen, it was on Sunday when we had that meeting that Monday morning we will converge in a march coming here, the Monday did not happen, the youth contradicted our decision as a community, they said they were not going to wait for Monday. Immediately after we disbursed, they started their own, that is the very Sunday afternoon, they took those buckets, I think they saw that Monday was too far for them. They immediately took the buckets, as we were sitting at home, I heard that the youth have carried the buckets here and they were confronted with some of the police which were living locally, there was one

arrogant policemen, unfortunately when this thing was happening that afternoon, they met with him here, it was them and him to an extent that they moved to his house, it was closer to my place, I heard noise and when I looked they went into his house and torched it with fire.

After then they went to all the other police, they visited them, Le Grange's dogs, torched them with fire, they rooted them out of the township, one night was enough, they rooted them out except of two, there were two policemen that they left out, the other one has passed on, he was called Senzo, the other one John Gumede is still alive, he is still around in Memes, and the reason was simply that when there was a case in town, when they were harassed by police, they (Senzo and John) rescued them, and that is the reason why they said we are going to leave them behind.

Subsequent to that after all this had happened, these two felt uncomfortable because it might be seen as if they are the ones who sold them out, they felt uncomfortable within the committee, they started packing their things also moving out, fortunately so the information came to the community and went to them and found them packing, they put back their things and told them they were not going anywhere, they took their things from the trucks back to their houses and told them they were not going anywhere. Those were the two policemen who survived the torching of the other policeman's houses. The following morning when we went to work, they had put up tents in the field because they had nowhere to go, up until the time whereby they found them houses next to Meryvale, those houses that were in Meryvale which were for the base at that time. Some of them still stayed there but some of them came back into the community after we decided to reconcile, they bought back their houses, but some of the houses had been demolished, so some of them decided

to leave the community. So those were the activities that were there at some stage that led to a situation that Duduza was ungovernable. People were scared, wherever you would be, whether in Daveyton or Johannesburg, if they hear that you come from Duduza they would ask you how you survive in Duduza.

When this issue of hand grenades also happened, yes the saddest one. There was a stay away, because it happened at midnight, people did not want to go to work the following day, it was a stay away, it was very sad I must say, what the situation was like, people's body parts were all over the place, it was very sad, hence people decided to not go to work, up until this thing was sorted out. Fortunately we still have some of the survivors, they are still alive, people like Titus, Veli Mazibuko, John Mlangeni, Gadafi, we still have few of the survivors, of course they don't have some of their body parts, but they survived. Duduza was in that situation, we were involved, Duduza was united I must be honest, it didn't matter how old you were, the community was united. If one has been killed, the mass funerals, like the one of the hand grenades, what used to happen is that there was that unity, we knew when we would go to down to the cemetery and on the way we would have basins with water for tear gas, we would go down there and come after the funeral we know things will start to get bad. Here in the township we all knew that in the evening when we sleep, we don't lock our gates because when chaos starts you must be able to get access to move out so that they are saved. At the same time, there was a time when the hippos would patrol in the evening, but the day chaos starts, there would be trenches built so that the hippos can fall into them, which will give people a chance to run away.

The worst of them all was when Koornhof visited, to look at the situation here in Duduza. There was a plan of course, the bucket system started

all this. He came here, he was on a hippo, there were plans already, we said because our complaint is the bucket system, we wanted him to understand our situation, as he was travelling on the main roads, comrades went out and took these buckets, put the contents of the bucket in a plastic, and as he was driving they swing the plastic and throw it straight at him in the hippo, he ran away and he never came back, they wanted him to feel why we were fighting, these are some of the things we are fighting for, the conditions we live under. There was then also at that time when Duduza was hot, there was this deployment of people, we used to call them Lekganyana, they would come into houses looking for male youths, they called them Siyayinyova, we would end up clothing these boys in dresses, head wraps and high heels, for them to be safe, so that these guys would not confront them because they were targeting the boys. What they would do they would take the boys if they found them and lock them in the hall, keep them there, hit them, so we said as a community we cant allow such things to happen, some of us who had boys in the houses had to take them out of Duduza to our families who live outside, so that they are safe, they don't land in the hands of Lekganyane. In this area we were deeply affected when Duduza was up in flames.

The other thing that made things worse was when they bombed the houses of Thobela, when Thobela's kids died, it made the situation worse because they were members of the youth, the other one was a Secretary of COSAS at that time. So those are some of the things that we really had to live with here in the community and go involved, because it didn't help to fold your arms, you had to be involved because all these things that people are fighting for they are affecting you as well.

Facilitator: The fact that you are Black, it's enough for you to serve.

Respondent: You would hear in a meeting, we would laugh, an old lady would stand up and say Viva COSAS and ask if she can be a member of COSAS as well, we would laugh. They were highly politicized people from Duduza. If now was then you wouldn't dare commit a crime in Duduza, they would have captured the culprit. When these guys came once to steel taxis, they caught them, we woke up in the morning and were told that they caught these guys at the taxi rank, there was no noise, they did it quietly so, they took them and torched them with petrol and tyres, when police arrived they only saw shoes that this was a person.

So that is how Duduza was like, the politics inside. Even now people normally say why is it that we cannot handle our matters as before, because there was no crime here in the township then, we would go out and look for the culprit, find them and deal with them.

When Inkatha came here and had meeting in the hall, the community said they didn't want those people there, they said they didn't want to see the IFP there. They had their members and leadership in the township, people like Mr. Mbele, Mr. Skhiya, and former Mayor's grandfather, they were members of the IFP. Then in terms of the youth and politics, they would say that we don't want Inkatha, we are ANC here. So when they had their conference or seminar, the community warned them saying they don't want these people, they told them to stop bringing Inkatha people into the township, they disregarded what the community was saying. On the day of that event, the women woke up in the morning and went there to cook for this big function taking place, we were not around because we had a workshop somewhere I can't remember where. We are told that the community went straight to the women who were cooking, they spilt all the pots

and put sand in the food, the women ran away. Apparently the Inkatha convoy was still on its way, they waited for it and it went out very fast escorted by police, they told them they were not wanted in the community.

So Gatsha made a comment and said that the tiny, dusty township, he will solve it and show us who he is, they told him to bring it on. The other sad incident was when Mrs. De Lange was killed, that night we did not sleep, they destroyed Namani's bottle store, they were in there, they looted liquor and got drunk. In the morning they decided to attack a bus that carried White school children that travel here between Tsakane and Duduza, we were scared fearing that the Boers will attack us with bombs so we decided to try and stop them, we couldn't stop them, unfortunately this poor woman who was a nurse, who lived here in the plots, came driving along that road going to work, she met the angry crowd, she died instantly, hence they call that road De Lange road, she died there the White woman.

Facilitator: Is it officially De Lange road?

Respondent: No its not, that's just how we call it. It is Sonestraal Road but because of that incident of that day, the women De Lange where she died, they decided to call it De Lange road.

Facilitator: So the school kids survived?

Respondent: It didn't come, I think someone tipped them, or they took another route, I don't know. They were saved by this soul of Mrs. De Lange. I think that is my involvement in this whole thing.

Facilitator: Thank you for your time, I know your time is tight. Do you still have some time?

Respondent: No I don't. So that is me, my involvement.

Facilitator: Please look at this form, it's a release form for this interview, that I was here.

Respondent: What should I do with it?

Facilitator: Please read it and see if you can sign it for us, it's a form from work.

END.