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Dale: Okay thanks very much first Bricks for doing the interview.

Richard: Okay.

Dale: Much appreciated. I am just going to ask you a few questions to get to know a little bit about yourself. Can you just first of all state your full name?

Richard: Richard 'Bricks' my nickname, Mokolo is my surname.

Dale: Ok and Bricks when and where were you born?

Richard: I was born on the 16th of June 1959 in Evaton, in the Vaal Triangle.

Dale: Okay and since you were born, where have you, different places where you've lived?

Richard: I lived in, as I was born in Evaton I grew up there, we were living as sub tenants from the stand owners of Evaton. My parents moved from there to Sebokeng, now I grew up in Sebokeng, from Sebokeng I moved to Orange Farm in 1992.

Dale: And you have been here since then?

Richard: Since 1992 I've been here.

Dale: Okay and just tell us a little bit about your family, are you married do you have children?

Richard: Yes I am married I have two children.

Dale: How old are they?

Richard: Twenty seven and twenty one.

Dale: Okay, so they're already grown, hey.

Richard: They have grown up.

Dale: Adults.

Richard: They are boys

Dale: Okay and what about your schooling, what schooling have you had?

Richard: I attended a Catholic school from the primary level, I went to Tiro High School and I ended up Standard 9 and from there I attended other informal educational institutes.

Dale: Okay and just a little bit about your work history as well.

Richard: My work history. I worked for a company called Cape Gate from 1978 till '81 and from there I've never worked.

Dale: So you were obviously doing some kind - though you were not fully employed – work, but what is that you've done mostly since then in terms of your activities?

Richard: Since then I worked for community based organisations. I became a field worker of the Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference. And then I worked for the advice office in the Vaal. I worked for the Detainees Parents Support Committee in 1985 and '86 cause I was active in the UDF structures in the Vaal.

Dale: Okay now just describe to me how it is that you became politicised or political activist?

Richard: As I stated earlier on that I was involved with the Justice and Peace Commission for the Catholic Bishops Conference and then the conditions we were living in the black townships and in 1983 when there was a strike against the Tri Cameral Parliament elections the call that was taken by UDF against the elections of the Tri Cameral Parliament - black parliament, the black local authorities. I became more involved in politics and then 1984 there was an uprising in the Vaal but I was not in the leadership of the '84 but I was part of the community by participating and giving out pamphlets and attending meetings. 1984 after the arrest of the leaders, the Tri Cameral, Delmas trial and other trials that took place I became elected in 1985 as a Chairperson of the Vaal Education Crisis Committee. Now that's how I became involved in politics.

Dale: Alright and tell us also a little bit how you first became involved in the APF and the formation of the APF right at the beginning?

Richard: Ja, in the APF say in the year 2000, there was a winter school of Khanya College. It was in 1999 I think the first winter school, I attended the winter school of Khanya College and some of the topics that were set by Khanya College during that winter school were mentioning a lot of things about globalisation, privatisation of the basic services. And then Anti Privatisation Forum was introduced as an alternative movement to oppose privatisation in 2000 and in the year 2000 I started trying to link myself with the other communities like Soweto, SECC to get more, to hear more about the organisations that are opposing globalisation. And then in 2002 we formed Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee and then I introduced Orange Farm Water Crises Committee to the Anti Privatisation Forum so that we can create the relationship and working and become an affiliate of the Anti Privatisation Forum.

Dale: Okay and just tell us ... why did you feel the need to be part of forming the Orange Farm Water Crises Committee here in this community?

Richard: That was because there was lack of serious delivery and the development that came under the name of job creation development in the community. Through water pre paid meters is where I have realised that the community of Orange Farm is going to suffer and then we conducted the research to see because there was SANCO then and what SANCO is doing about these pre- paid meters, SANCO was no longer representing the people but they became part of the system. And then I realised that there is no structure that is representing the people anymore and then there was a lot of electricity cut offs taking place in Orange Farm and you see SANCO members being sub contracted or companies like

Eskom cutting off electricity for the people. Now we wanted to build the organisation that will defend the poor people who cannot afford to buy pre paid electricity card and also to maintain the access water to pre paid meters. That is how we started realising that all this pre paid system of electricity and water is pure privatisation of basic services.

Dale: And how did you understand privatisation at that point in terms of, we use that word Anti Privatisation, but how is it that it was felt specifically here for people on the ground and in Orange Farm?

Richard: Yes to understand that because there were debates, there is this thing of public sector, public assets, 'public' 'public' and then public is under the control of the state, like the public hospitals everything we knew was that this is 'public', 'public', 'public'. When they introduced these pre paid meters and it also became more clear when the water supply in Orange Farm is directed to Johannesburg Water and then Johannesburg Water registered as a Pty Ltd realising that now Pty Ltd is a company and managed by Suez Lyonnaise, a multinational corporate from France and then we realised that no, people are making profit out of basic services

Dale: I mean you called it Orange Farm Water Crises Committee, so it was to deal specifically with - at that immediate point - the crises of water or was it as you say encompassing other issues as well?

Richard: Encompassing other issues, but because there was something needed to mobilise people around it the burning issue, now pre paid water meters was new. It was not like electricity pre paid because the electricity pre paid when it was installed it was like something like development because people who didn't have electricity who were using the candle and when they brought the pre paid electricity system in Orange Farm it was like some development you know because government is supporting development. And it's by that people are living in shacks, but you become a poor person even in shack who has got electricity at least each and every person wants electricity but with the water pre paid meter, because water was there before through communal stand pipes and then when the introduction of this pre paid meters came we thought that development that we were expecting was to see government providing or actually the City of Johannesburg providing water and sanitation without any conditions of people paying through pre paid meters. And they will realise now that this is something that is going to destroy or change the lives of the people.

Dale: Okay and then you say you got introduced to the workshops and everything through the APF. Then how did the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee, how did it become part of the APF from that point on 2002?

Richard: Before 2002 there was a international conference in Durban, the Anti Racism Conference and then as Orange Farm Community we took part, we were a part of that Anti Racism Conference and Xenophobia. And then when we came back we were preparing for WSSD, World Summit on Sustainable Development, whereby all international social movements, you know governments coming to South Africa and it was easy to prepare and to understand Anti Privatisation Forum because there were

meetings, workshops, seminars planned to prepare for the WSSD and then as Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee we were part, we took part in organising all those for that event.

Dale: Okay and just tell us a little bit about ... how the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee is structured, how is it formed, what's the organisation like on the ground?

Richard: Ja as a Social Movement or Crisis Committee, Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee didn't operate with constitution because we didn't want something that will bind us to focus on certain issues because it is a crisis. And then we open our operation to deal with all the problems that are facing the community and it was also operating as advice committee because now people were bringing all different social problems to the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee and when it was formed we tried to look into this structuring the organisation and see other structures of the NGO's, the CPO'S. But with the Crisis Committee we said 'no we don't need same structures but we need people who will be coordinating campaigns'. Now we had a Chairperson, Deputy Secretariat and a Deputy Secretary we didn't have a Treasurer in the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee because we didn't have money and then when we were thinking of challenging the crisis that people are facing, the burning issues and then it was formed at the Roman Catholic Church - Saint Luanda - in Stretford Extension 47. And the Orange Farm Water Crisis we expanded to other extensions because of the demand of the people because now people were coming into the church and report the cases and then what we are doing encouraging people from the different extensions to build up committees that will be conducting a survey around their needs or the challenges that people from that particular extension face. And then we were meeting every Wednesday as members of different extensions to share and to see what is a common challenges that are facing people from different extensions and then from that extensions we had people who were not exactly the Executive Committee or what, but the Working Committee for people to come together and see if there is a need of calling for an action or writing a pamphlet, distributing a pamphlet. You know we didn't have office where we operate from and we didn't have facilities like a building, you know telephone but because we had space from the Catholic Church where our advice office for Human Rights was operating from. Now we were informing people if they want to meet with the old WCC (Water Crisis Committee) because the paralegals of the advice office were also members of the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee. When people need advice, they need assistance from the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee they were leaving the messages at the advice office. That's how we were operating and then on the part of gender, because we have community based organisations that are dealing with different sectors, the HIV and AIDS, the food security, pre-schools and we have started mobilising all these sectors also to participate in the Water Crisis meetings. That's how Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee is formed up.

Dale: And it still more or less operates the same as it has from the beginning?

Richard: it is still operating same as the beginning ja.

Dale: Okay how would you describe the main goals or objectives of the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee? Over the years should we say, there's been something as you say to help people with their

immediate problems, is there something beyond that or has anything developed since the start of your struggles over the last several years?

Richard: Yes, what have been developed was to make people aware of the policies of the government, because people when they are fighting for a certain crisis, it is only the focus of water and then when the water issue is resolved what is the next? All the crisis committees were focused on a certain issue and then we realised that the challenge is not only that issue but it is the system by itself and linking all these social problems with global struggle, you know the globalisation and we are so fortunate, I personally was fortunate through the support of the Anti Privatisation Forum to attend some of the international meetings World Trade Organisational conferences where governments were making deals you know around privatising basic services and then the influence of the World Bank, the influence of the World Bank and the...

Dale: IMF.

Richard: World Bank and the IMF. Now all those things are structures that are not exposed in the communities. People in Orange Farm when you talk about the World Bank you don't know what that is. When you talk about the World Trade Organisation they don't know about, you know the World Economic Forum. It is only the Minister of Trade, the Presidents and then there is not transparency in the country to come and report back to the people about all these international conferences. People they only see when the Ministers or the President going to Geneva, going to England but they don't know what they are going to do. They think they are going to represent them and they are going to invite the, you know the investors, but how that affects their lives people are not aware. Like for instance the question of the debate that the government is running away from of nationalisation, capitalism. Now what we have achieved as Orange Farm, we created space from the community to start realising that beyond the government there are other structures where the government is accounting, the government is not accounting to the voters, it is not the voters will be considered only during the election period, but after the elections, who is taking the decisions? And the other thing that is what we see as an achievement in Orange Farm is the struggle of you know, blaming the Ward Councillors, the Mayors without looking into the system. Because now the shift from the government, you know we had that campaign or call of 'Fire the Mayor', but its no longer the actual movements it is the government saying fire the Mayors and then because now is where the government realise that the focus is on the individuals. If the people who chose the Mayor, even they fight but after changing the Mayor, changing the Councillor things are becoming cool for a certain period, an example of what happened, is what happened in Balfour, when Zuma went there, Malema and the other Ministers went to celebrate firing the Mayor with bottles of wines, but after the Mayor nothing happened, no delivery meaning that it is not the problem of these individuals but it is a system by itself. Now our main, main focus is to educate people about the system.

Dale: So you were saying specifically being part of the APF helped make that connections and expose you and others to things much beyond, far beyond Orange Farm?

Richard: Helped a lot, because even members of the APF when they talk, you can listen, you can hear about people who understand their story because from the RDP policy, GEAR policy, ASGISA you know, because from the APF there is a lot of education and information about the economics, political economics of the government, how the Government is shifting? Why the government is shifting? Who is pressurising the government? Who has got powers between the business and the voters? You know because every time now after the elections there is war between the business, its fighting for its space and the community also will be coming in and say we demand one, two, three, now the government is not actually knowing where to go ja, and that is where you will find the government shifting from the poor running with the business. This is how the Anti Privatisation Forum assisted its members to understand the local and international politics.

Dale: Okay and just tell us ... as you became involved in the APF but also from the Orange Farm component how was the response from the ANC and the state to the new struggles that were happening in those early years, how did that shape things, the response from the state and the ANC and from, the government itself?

Richard: Ja, after the pressure of the Social Movements, the Anti Privatisation Forum, there were a lot of you know response from the government. Like for instance the indigency policy where the government was trying to respond by you know using its divide and rule of providing services for the poor and then the poor must come up and declare themselves, to come and sign. And then there were a lot of sponsors that our government also introduced, some of the projects through public works is temporary jobs of six months, that's how the government was trying to respond. And then trying to fight back against the social movement to divide people in the communities and then also by introducing these community workers, you know. I think those are the ways of government trying to respond by saying we are doing this we are doing that but knowing very well that this is not going to work. And then for free education saying that it is education for the poor, the free education for the poor, some of the schools, government will provide free education for certain schools, not for all schools. You know government was trying to respond to the demands of the Social Movements like the Anti Privatisation Forum.

Dale: And what about the more negative responses? Those were some of - you could say - positive things that they were trying to do, but what about how they responded particularly to direct actions and protests that happened within Orange Farm as well as from the APF's side?

Richard: That is known by the barrel of a gun you know bringing the police with guns, rubber bullets, bird shot, tear gas, water cannon and then shooting, arresting and then threatening some of the leaders. Like for instance I was chased by the National Intelligence Agency you know before the WSSD. They knocked at my door every time and sometimes they came and I was not around, I was in Hong Kong attending the World Water Forum in Hong Kong. When I came back I was told there were Intelligence walking after me and then they left their telephone numbers, they left their addresses where I can meet them at the Head Quarters of the police station in Vereeniging. But when I came back they pushed for meeting with me trying to understand more about Anti Privatisation Forum, trying to make me scared to

work with the Anti Privatisation Forum and then also using the very same old style of spying on people or building spies, inform about the preparations about World Summit on Sustainable Development because they were worried about that. And then also there was a campaign here in Orange Farm on Human Rights Day of marching with the electricity pre paid meters on the street, people taking out their pre paid meters and then I was also harassed by the police. They used the very same apartheid old style of you know harassing, people who are educating people or bring alternative information to the people.

Dale: And how did that, as you saying the attacks, the arrests the teargas the spying everything, how did that impact on the community itself, on the organisation, did it change things, did it make any difference to people at all or how did it impact in terms of the politics and the way in which we went about struggling?

Richard: Ja that comes from the individual people with the understanding of the struggle but I think most of the people of Orange Farm, after experiencing this harassment from the police they realised that the truth does not want you to carry a gun or protect it with a gun. And then they realised that why government always when people are fighting for their basic service, for their rights you will find police coming you know and scaring people with arrest. But what motivated people more is when they realise that even when they take them to court, tomorrow morning they come back. There was a lot of waste of time where police you know didn't even have a case, police didn't have a case against people who are protesting because they take you there and then we paid bail for other comrades, you will find we paid bail today and next time when they appear the case is dismissed. Now, it's just only just to make people scared but that also helped a lot because people realised that this harassment is also helping to motivate the people.

Dale: Okay, now you mentioned early on that after the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee joined the APF and you yourself as well as others were exposed to a range of international things that also began to impact didn't it on the Orange farm Water Crisis Committee in its own relationships with international agencies. How did that help Orange Farm in terms of its growth and its ability to do the things that it's been doing in the community?

Richard: That helped Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee a lot because any struggles that take place from Orange Farm in particular, it becomes known internationally and we receive international solidarity. You know there are people from abroad who are making statements, supporting our struggles and people from Orange Farm they even see that they are not alone in the struggle, it is an international struggle and when people are visiting Orange Farm from the international world they are having an experience with them. An example is where we had a seminar around water services...and then looking into the water supply - how many litres of water are supplied from the municipality to the people, individual people, twenty five litres per person and then when other people from Italy telling you we are using eight hundred litres per person per day. South Africa is not actually a dry country and then people, there is water but there is no access of water if you don't have money and then people start realising that there's a problem of water and then they struggle, the difference between the developing countries and the under developed countries and they start measuring South Africa as one of the country that is

claiming to meet the standard of the global world while it is not providing people with the very same standard. Because you will meet the standard as long as you got money, because when you don't have money you cannot, its only the rich that can get better services.

Dale: Okay now just shifting a bit to the APF, when you became involved and then you got elected as the Chairperson of the APF, when was that?

Richard: I think it was 2004.

Dale: 2004 at the AGM in 2004?

Richard: Or 2005 somewhere there, I am not sure.

Dale: You are not sure, okay. And then just tell us a little bit about your experience as the Chairperson of an organisation that at that time was growing quite substantially and had a lot of different communities involved in that - as the leader of the APF, how was that for you?

Richard: For me it was good to be elected in the Anti Privatisation Forum and then I learnt a lot, I got a lot of experience dealing with different communities who are facing different challenges and then even how people were approaching the Anti Privatisation Forum as a resource centre for everything, financial resource, educational resource and even just for awareness, learning from the APF taking it back to the communities. And then from the movement like the Anti Privatisation Forum you get people from different political backgrounds because there is one thing common that brings us together, that's privatisation, opposing privatisation, fighting for basic services in the communities. But political ideology becomes a problem where you will find some people they've got only interest in fighting for a certain issue, if it is an education struggle, the focus is on that education and then you will also meet people from the other political ideologies from that privatisation forum, there are people who have sympathies with the ruling party you know and the common approach that was only bringing people together is when there is a crisis or a campaign that Anti Privatisation is leading, but the mindset of the people are different.

Dale: ... in the APF most of the members are from Community Organisations but there's also political groups and there's also individuals, people some are intellectuals or what you would call middle class activists ... when you were a leader how did you experience the relationships between those members of the APF?

Richard: The relationship was not good, it was not clear, because there were individuals who were taking their own directions you know and then even just claiming that glory, that victory from other individuals. And then when you come to the intellectuals, APF with the research project with the support of the universities, with the support from interns abroad from international universities, it was very good because I think that the researches that were conducted was reflecting the truth of what is happening in South Africa. And the challenge that was serious in the APF on the leadership skills from communities because some people were relying on APF to sustain itself, to sustain their affiliates you

know, for Anti Privatisation Forum has a Forum there to take care of the affiliates. The leadership in the affiliates groups, they were not organised in a sense of organising for their own structures and then building organisations in the community level and see other approaches of building you know struggles, campaigns around other struggles that are taking place in the communities. Like for instance an example that I can do, if people are focusing on housing the issue is that housing struggle and then from that community they are unemployed, there is poverty, there is HIV and AIDS, there is pre schools, there is schools, you know how to link all these struggles with your main struggle and getting people to work together you know to build stakeholder structures in your own community. And then to also acquire the local resources because from the struggle that we take, we need also to develop an alternative resources, not only just focusing on the funders but the local resources, what can we do with the local resources, how can we bring other people on board. Even some people they are not taking part in protests, toyi-toying, but there is another way of the very same people supporting your struggle. You know an example, the local people say we need paint for graffiti writing you know the mural art, whatever we don't need always to go to Anti Privatisation Forum because that message, we are not writing that message for their structure in Johannesburg, we are writing this message for community and how the community participates in that message. Now we have the hardware's operating in the community that we can form the campaign and they can donate the spray paints you know. The approach of pushing the struggle, taking the struggle forward in the APF its far different because some people are saying every time 'APF' 'APF' must do this and that and that and that.

Dale: And Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee water has been very successful in as you say establishing projects particularly to sustain itself and to support the community. Just tell us a little bit about some of the things that have happened here over the years in terms of what you were talking about and working with being self sustaining?

Richard: We have medical doctors operating in Orange Farm who cannot declare themselves as supporters or members of the Anti Privatisation Forum but who can support the Anti Privatisation Forum indirectly. When some of the comrades are short during the campaign, the protest that we are doing unlike taking them to the ambulances where they will be arrested, now we have negotiated with the local doctors to support our campaigns of struggle and we inform them, we take our members to the local doctors because those are the resources that we have and we have local business people. When there is struggle especially when there is this kind of blockade, when we are organising the blockade by 1am – 2am people are on the street, they start blockading and by seven/eight the comrades are exhausted, they are hungry and there is no time for this comrades to go home and make food. Now we have a good business relationship with our business people to support the struggle with food so when the comrades are fighting there and then there is somewhere where we store food for them, they come and they eat and they go back to their bases you know. And in the food security projects, this spinach that we are growing here we use the pots of the pre schools, we cook and then the neighbouring houses from where the action takes place, we put food there, comrades will come one or two at a time they eat, they leave they go back because we try to sustain our struggle. That's why sometimes you'll find Orange Farm campaigns, blockades takes long you know around two, three, ,four

days continuing because even comrades will say 'ay, I am tired' but they've got support of other people behind. Some of the comrades we train them for first aid because we don't need the first aid of the system you know, you cannot fight a system and at the very same time that system you know to take care of you when you are injured. Now we've got our own caregivers, these people of HIV and AIDS they are local workers, they are members of us and then we phone them but when there are injuries or whatever, they must be next to us so that they can take care of our comrades. Now this relationship that we developed with other community based organisations helped to sustain the struggle, helped a lot with sustaining the struggle but if the struggle is only for the comrades, the radicals ... we see ourselves as radicals and then we leave others aside now it's dangerous because each and every person has got a role to play in the community in the struggle. Every person is important it's not only people who live in red T- shirts, the APF T- shirts, but even people we differ with them politically but with the community work we come together because the basic services that we are fighting for are the basic services that are used by all, it's not only Anti Privatisation services that we are demanding, but it's for all, from the ANC, the PAC the Inkatha's the DA, whoever needs those services. And where you'll find these people, you will find them from the unemployed, unemployment is hitting hard on every people, it can be ANC its hitting you, its HIV and AIDS it is hitting hard on all the people and then from these caregivers you'll find people from different ideologies but their focus is to service the people, they are providing the service that is not even supported by the government. These are the community initiatives that were supposed to be supported by the government but the government is not supporting this initiative and then it's easy to mobilise people to take up the struggle. Now this is another form of you know sustaining the struggle and making people aware of when we talk about solidarity. Solidarity does not mean that you need someone from outside the community to come and show solidarity. Solidarity can be done even in the family life or your neighbour can show solidarity. That is why you will find the way we operate in Orange Farm, we say 'okay, there are people who can afford to buy water pre paid meters, they can afford, they don't have problem, and they are employed. There are people who are driving nice cars, expensive cars, got well furnished houses but when you come to a community campaign, you need to show solidarity to your neighbour, you can afford to pay for your water, but your neighbour cannot afford and even if you got money you cannot buy water even for your neighbour for the rest of your life. Now it is important to defy, paying for that pre paid water in solidarity with your neighbour. This is the message that we are passing in solidarity with the people who cannot afford.

Dale: And the success of that in Orange Farm. How would you rate how you are able to make that a reality, all of those kinds of approaches in Orange Farm with the struggles that you've undertaken?

Richard: We made it into reality by conducting a survey. The places where they were selling this pre paid meters, electricity cards are closed down because the people who were sub contracting to sell this for Eskom they say they are no longer making money, people are no longer buying. There where they were selling this pre paid meter people would close down; they are saying people are not buying. Now we have achieved because there were people who were given business, you know this business opportunity to sell water and then you get a certain percentage, but we went to those people to show them how brave are you to sell water to your own people. They stopped it; now it's only Shoprite where people go

and buy the pre paid meter but in the townships in the community they closed down and then you visit the families you see all the pre paid meters are by-passed because we encourage, we make it a call for people to bypass and then we are using the community radio station to pass the message. Because we speak to the radio station and we even point out that 'in my house, I am not buying' and when there is Eskom meetings, then I raise up my hand and I say 'I am not going to buy' during the presence of the Eskom - 'Bricks is so brave, so how can I not'. And I tell them that unlike buying electricity card or water card I would rather buy food for my children to eat or I can rather buy a beer, it is not a secret to buy a beer because there is leisure time, there must be a leisure but because of this oppression, suppression we don't have time for leisure and then every time when people are criticised that people are not affording to buy for the basic services but they can buy beer. There's nothing wrong with buying a beer, there's nothing wrong because they buy expensive whiskeys [laughter] now there is nothing wrong, people are allowed to buy the beer but the electricity must be supplied to the people by the government and then people need to show solidarity.

Dale: So would you say that now in Orange Farm that the majority of people that live in Orange Farm are not paying for those basic services, they by-pass them, now?

Richard: Yes

Dale: Yes, the majority?

Richard: Yes.

Dale: And that's accepted in the community?

Richard: That's accepted. Before there were a lot of threats from Eskom especially when winter comes; they were coming and cut electricity, now for the past three four years even the people who were cutting electricity, there was people taking sub contract to cut electricity. They were members of the community, we invited them to the meeting, we went to their families houses, we informed them that it is not good to take that jobs because it is dangerous to cut electricity for your own neighbour, "we are unemployed", we have shown them we have many examples you know, the mercenaries can be given a gun to go and shoot your brother and get paid, you'll do that, there's no difference of you know shooting your brother or your sister and of cutting off electricity of your neighbour, it is the same thing. Now today you will never see the sub contracts carrying step ladder to cut electricity anymore in Orange Farm because we didn't say join the APF, we didn't need them to join the APF but we want them to do the work of the APF.

Dale: And so in many cases I mean you could argue that the success there has produced a sort of self government in a way for people. I mean we've talked earlier on how the reason to form organisations and to join organisations like the APF was for people to be able to have accountability, for people to be able to receive services. So would you say in Orange farm as a result of these struggles that you achieved a degree of that in a sort of people's government if you want to say in a local level?

Richard: Yes, this is so but we are in the process ... like for instance now if we can go outside with you, you will see there are a lot of women outside from the pre schools. They are going to fight these by-laws because Orange Farm is part of the City of Johannesburg and the by-laws of Orange Farm are similar to the by-laws of Sandton and Randburg. And then we confronted the officials from different departments, the Department of Environmental Health, the Department of Land, the Emergency Services they response, all this people from different departments, their response is around the by-laws. We say “no the by-laws, how can you link us with Sandton, how can you link us with Randburg?” They say “no your councillors voted for these by-laws” ... now we have the copies of the by-laws and then there are challenges facing the pre schools, the pre schools that we developed in Orange Farm are operating in shacks and then they must be given permits by the Environmental Health and the EMS must give the go ahead to the Environmental Department to say “yes, you can give so and so the permit to operate”. And then if the preschool is operating from a shack it must not be given a permit and these people who are operating the pre schools like for instance this project here were given the land, five year lease land but the conditions you must not put proper structure, now you can put temporary structure. Now you put temporary structure and then you want to access funding for the project, but the department says no it cannot give you the permission to utilise that land because of one, two, three. Now these other challenges who are facing people who are operating in Orange Farm in different sectors. Now we are working today with the pre schools to start challenging the City of Johannesburg to review the by-laws because other conditions that pre schools must have flush toilets, water and sanitation and the proper structure. While the Municipality failed to put infrastructure, there's no sewerage pipes around here, there is no water connection in the premises of the people, there is still that communal stand pipes, people connected water by themselves in their own yards and the feeling is that let the pre schools, people who help themselves start fighting against this injustice of designing same by-laws with the developed community. And we started educating people, we had a workshop, last week we had a workshop educating people about the by-laws, what is by-laws? And now there is a campaign, we start a campaign, we wrote a memorandum - I will show you after this interview - and then after this memorandum, presenting the memorandum we are planning an action with the preschool teachers and the children, either to go and toyi-toyi at the Masondo's office in Braamfontein. This is how we involve community in the struggle because now the service delivery is not only housing, water and electricity. Service delivery is broad. And the other focus of the OWCC (Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee) around access to justice, in Orange Farm there is no justice taking place. We have a police station in Orange Farm we don't have Department of Justice, no court in Orange Farm. People are appearing in Vereeniging, when people are arrested here for protest whatever, they take them to Vereeniging Court and they arrest you when you don't have money. They take you to Vereeniging, tomorrow the Magistrate releases you, you don't have money to come back to Orange Farm, its far - they say “no, no, no, no before you can take people to Vereeniging build a Court here, it is part of service delivery”. Now service delivery is broad and we sat down as OWCC and said we need to work together with other structures that are existing and build campaigns you know with different structures and give them you know a way of campaigning. Now the first campaign that we are busy with now is the campaign against these by-laws.

Dale: You mentioned earlier that the OWCC has adopted an approach that says everybody is part of the community. How have other organisations - you mentioned earlier that SANCO was active here and then it became non responsive to people's needs - are there any other organisations that you work with in the community or in the area, either political community and otherwise?

Richard: Our focus mainly is on CBO's (Community Based Organisations) not political organisations. SANCO, we will be meeting with the individuals of SANCO when they are involved with the community development because they are saying, because they start regarding APF as a political organisation and this is the propaganda that they use. They say "the APF is a political organisation you know" and they're talking nonsense. Now we have a way of finding them because when we invite the CBO's they are even restricting them, they are going to talk about the CBO's politics and then service delivery and no one is going to defend any political party because as Anti Privatisation Forum, we regard ourselves as a Community Based Organisation, we are dealing with community issues. Now what is important from the Anti Privatisation Forum is to provide more education to the people to make them aware about why, because we use even the 'why' method; why we are suffering, why we are struggling, why you know and the people for them to analyse the root cause of the problem. Now people say "we suffer because we don't have good leaders and we don't have that", but now last week we confronted the officials of the Environmental Health about the by-laws because they are refusing to give the pre schools the permit to operate and when we criticised and condemned these by-laws, they say "your leaders voted for the by-laws', they never mentioned Orange Farm is under these conditions. When they are sitting there and they agree these by-laws are fine, they're good for City of Johannesburg, your leaders are not representing you there because they were supposed to say no, in Orange farm we cannot put these by-laws because Orange Farm is not developed". They were addressing this, they became angry, they said "these councillors they are not representing us, why are they sitting there"? You know, now this is how you start conscientising people, educating people because they think that 'oh Orange Farm Water Crises Committee they are always speaking about the 'anti privatisation', 'anti privatisation', but you can use the other language also to oppose that, now this is the strategy that we are using.

Dale: Okay and it's clear that from the projects that Orange Farm Crisis Committee has been able to start that you have been able to access certain financial resources as well. Where have you been able to besides locally, where have you been able to get support, financial and solidarity support and how did the APF play a role in that if any?

Richard: Ja there is ... the APF played an important role to assist the Orange Farm Community to meet with other international communities and then by visiting Orange Farm they see the initiatives of the community of Orange Farm and the linkage of the community development projects with the struggle, because the projects are developed out of the project for resistance. They contribute a lot for the resistance like for instance the University students from USA who came now recently. We have now a long relationship with them annually they visit Orange Farm and they donate something for the Orange Farm community. And then we have media support through Anti Privatisation Forum to put the Orange Farm on the map for people to see what is happening in Orange Farm. The initiatives because the

committee offering funds are not only the committee which is 'fighting' 'fighting' 'not really doing anything. Now we are doing something to challenge the system and then this is also impressed in the media and then they give us lot of coverage, support and even to pressurise the local government because they know very well that from these projects that we are doing in Orange Farm, are projects that are led by people who knows about, you know the struggle. It is not only project for income but it is also project to develop struggles. Like for instance there is another NGO who is funding other community based organisations with Buyisani Back which is an environmental NGO. They wanted to build a structure of R1,5 million here and then they gave us the plan of the structure they want to build and because of these by-laws and the politics of the JPC (Johannesburg Property Company) of not giving us this land. The land is still a problem. That NGO together with us here we confronted the JPC confronted the City of Johannesburg but we didn't achieve our goal to access this piece of land to the extent that the NGO withdrew from supporting us. And we used that as a weapon to fight the Masondo office, fighting for their land. Masondo's office, Department of Environment of the City of Joburg decided to build this you know to answer for, because they were under pressure now. Then now we mobilise people and then we take more land by force now and then they decided okay because that NGO was going to build the similar structure like this. Now we as City of Joburg, we will build to put the structure for you. That is how they compromised, but the compromise is also not working, because they thought maybe we will say its fine you know. Now we start demanding the price of this structure how much is the structure to build, we don't know, we don't know there is no transparency, they have never been told until the specification. How much was allocated? How much was bought? And how much was paid to the contractor who was building this and how much is left? Now they are running away, they tell us "no it is not necessary", we say "no it's necessary, we need to know, we need to know". Now they say that they are fighting with people who know their story and then now the question of the EMS not approving the shacks of the pre-schools. How they can not approve the shacks and while they build the shack because this is the City of Johannesburg. Now we try to use anything as politics as we can, as politics and then they've put flush toilets here. This is two bathrooms here and then they are not flushing because there are no sewer pipes and the City of Johannesburg put these and now they can put toilets, nice toilets that's flushing but there is no sewer pipes. Now when people are blockading Golden Highway, it's because of these reasons you know, it is not because people are instigated or people are fighting for positions you know. People are fighting for the right causes even you as a Municipality; you brought this structure that is incomplete. Now people cannot use that toilets because there is water that we connected by ourselves but we cannot say this is complete, it is not complete because it is not flushing because it does not have a flush system. Now they fail even to answer people.

Dale: I am just going to go back just a little bit, a few more questions on the APF's side. You were Chairperson for a two year period, that's right?

Richard: Ja

Dale: In the APF. Now I want you to be as straightforward and honest as you are able to do so. What would you have considered - at that time there were a lot of challenges in the APF and debates around

things that was going on - did you feel that you could not continue in your leadership capacity in the APF or was there just a desire to come back to the community and put more energy and effort here? In other words what were some of the things in the APF that might have not been so good that you would not want to continue that leadership role?

Richard: Ja. I tried to change the leadership approach in the Anti Privatisation Forum from communities but I realised that the focus of the affiliates of the Anti Privatisation Forum is not on building the struggles but it was only for personally building individuals. There is a lot of individualism in the APF whereby people are attending each and every meeting at the APF without having a constituency from where they come from because even when we were trying to do auditing with comrade Silumko visiting some communities, you will find there are no structures, there is only their names. And then people were focusing on the budget of the Anti Privatisation Forum to say "ja there is money in the APF". And then I was spending a lot of time trying to support these communities to change their focus on looking at the APF budgets, because when we attend the CC [Coordinating Committee] most of the time the discussions were around money, money transport money, people were putting the requisition for money for the projects that were not existing. Now I decided not to disturb or not to force people to change. Let me direct my energy to the community and then because Anti Privatisation Forum is in my blood I can work or I can do Anti Privatisation work in the community and then start building pilot projects that Anti Privatisation communities who want to come and learn or who want to utilise the services of Orange Farm, we are prepared to go anywhere to share with any community. That's how I decided to leave my position as a Chairperson of the Anti Privatisation Forum but to bring more focus to Orange Farm. And then other challenge that I was facing with Orange Farm, the advice office for Human Rights in Orange Farm was closed down because we didn't have money, because there was no funding after the EU and the Foundation for Human Rights funding collapsed. And then the advice office was part of the Catholic Church and then the priest who was in charge there decided to close down and then the paralegals they look for other greener pastures, they leave the centre. But my aim was to come back and rebuild the advice office and we managed to rebuild the advice office. It is existing now in Orange Farm and that's why today you see comrade Silumko, I invited him because, well we'll talk about that later. Now I like community work more than sitting in the office or sitting in the meetings, because it's good to sit in the meeting, plan and act, plan and act. But you will see there are comrades who are doing nothing you know and then at the end we claim that the structure is growing, the structure is growing we have, so we count many affiliates. We just break our ways some people they break away they build something, they want to affiliate with other groups, want to affiliate. Now, then I said okay it's fine let me leave these comrades to continue with whatever they do. But my advice to some of the comrades was to prepare themselves for when money is not there, what are they going to do? Because the struggle, there is a struggle when you've got money, when you don't have money what are you doing, what will you be doing? And the example is that with Orange Farm there are so many campaigns, even when I was the Chairperson we did a lot of campaigns without asking money from the APF, because the struggle is not money from the Anti Privatisation Forum. It's a struggle, it's led by the people if it is a burning issue from the community, the community will organise themselves. We can lead them but you don't need to every time when there is action, you ask for money. You can ask money for bail

application when the comrades are arrested and ask for money to release them, you can ask money for giving them food in detention. I think I was trying to use that experience that I had ... because I worked for DPSC (Detainees Parents Support Committee). I knew how dealing with lawyers, dealing with detainees, family detainees. That was something that I wanted to introduce to the APF that if comrades are arrested how do we, because it's another method of mobilising. If comrades are arrested on Golden Highway, we take the list of comrades who are arrested and in the evening we visit the families just to show the families that there is organisational concern, supporting the families. And then that encouraged the families and the families can see "oh this is an organisation, we are part of this", it is not a family problem. Or when you come back from detention the family start shouting at you criticising you "what, why you were there" you know we try to tell people that this is organised and then we will represent the family there and then they will see us there, you know. Now for working with the community you need to have time, you need to sacrifice yourself; you need to have skill of working with the community.

Dale: Does the Orange Farm still - through the APF - work with other communities as well and if so how and which ones?

Richard: Say it again.

Dale: Through the APF, the Orange Farm or OWCC membership in the APF - you earlier mentioned that one of the benefits was to meet up with a range of other people who were struggling for different things also similar kinds of things - how has that impacted in terms of the work in the membership in the APF in introducing you to other communities, not necessarily NGO's and other's but outside of Orange Farm as well? You know what I am saying?

Richard: Ja.

Dale: In this area or if it's in the Vaal or nationally?

Richard: Ja there are comrades who are visiting us from other neighbouring communities and then even comrades as far as Pretoria. Last we had comrades visiting us here Chauke's and the others and then when they arrived we had a bigger meeting here. They were impressed, we had a seminar and then we were talking about all these challenges, issues linking the struggles globally and there are people who are learning from us and we are also learning from other communities, that relationship is still there.

Dale: Okay.

Richard: Still there.

Dale: What would you characterise ... as the main strengths and the main weaknesses of the APF from both your own experience but also from the community and where you see that?

Richard: The strength of the APF is the information that the APF has got. The relationship with the international world within the leadership of APF we have different components. The community, the

academy etc, workers like John, like yourself those are the strengths of the Anti Privatisation Forum and for having the office with the human resources sitting in the office, the material that is written, the research that is conducted by the Anti Privatisation Forum. The relationship with the Anti Privatisation Forum with the media, I was glad to read your statement about this opposing the borrowing of money, the World Bank.

Dale: World Bank ja.

Richard: I was glad for that and then some comrades, you remember those teachers' comrades, they called me and said "Hey, Dale McKinley opposes this" I said "no it's fine" you know. Now this is good, those are the strengths you see the APF is there and the link that APF is educating members of the international, you know of local politics. Because it is not only for our South African politics, but this globalisation politics it's a strength, a strength you know and then there are so many things I can go on and on and on and mentioning about the APF and the success of winning the confidence of the funders War on Want, showing interest, many funders who are interested in supporting the APF, that is a strength of the Anti Privatisation Forum. Now the side of the weakness of the APF is on communities. Communities affiliated to Anti Privatisation Forum they come with genuine issues, but when times go on, they end up losing their focus, start monitoring their leadership in the APF, start criticising each other and then not even changing the leadership because the problem of the leaders is from the communities, not developing a new layer of leaders. You will see the leaders who were there in 1999/2000 when they start affiliating they are still in the leadership. Now there is no change of leadership from the communities. I think that is the weakness of people sitting there knowing APF or becoming more active in the APF with the name of communities that they are no longer representing. And then there is no monitoring, proper monitoring of APF to communities to make sure that most of the communities, they don't have constitutions like AGM's, they are not operating formally but I think it will be a good idea for leaders to change you know. Sometimes if for three years I had been attending APF meetings, from the next years from the community we need to change, people will be attending the meetings in APF and then other people coming down to work with the communities. But there is no time working of with the communities, people are working there, you know. That is the weakness of the Anti Privatisation Forum.

Dale: Okay and just a last couple of questions. How have the more recent political changes in the ANC in the country, Polokwane, new president, a lot of new talking about service delivery - we've seen a whole range of different things happening in the last while - how did that affect or impacted on the work you had done here on the OWCC or if anything the way which people think about the kinds of struggles that you've been waging?

Richard: Ja after Polokwane, say our struggle before Polokwane we are getting there, we are getting there and then the ANC changed the minds of the people by removing Thabo Mbeki as an obstruction for development. COSATU, ANC some of them, not all of the ANC members removed Mbeki, but few in the ANC, COSATU, SACP were more influential to remove Mbeki and then the change of the people that came during that time, when people thought Mbeki failed them Zuma might be the best and I mean

some of the members of the social movements they became confused. There was that confusion whereby people thought Zuma would be much better because he is supported by COSATU and COSATU was claiming that Zuma is a man of the poor [laughter] and then COPE came up and COPE also responded in this way and some of the community members became more confused. Even the people who were supporting the politics of the social movement decided to join others, COPE I have realised that even in the Anti Privatisation Forum, some say we go with COPE, we go with this ja its fine. And then but I made a statement with the, what is it London Paper...Times?

Dale: The London Times.

Richard: The London Times, ja I was interviewed before Polokwane and then I made a statement that *Umshini Wami* will be taken to the dustbin. Then there is no more *Umshini Wami* now and then the Zuma era, people they didn't give Zuma a long time to stay because people realise that nothing is going to change. Especially when Zuma was contradicting himself about economic policies, basic economic policies are not Mbeki's thing, it is ANC thing. We will keep on with GEAR; we will keep on with our friends. There were no changes from his speeches and then he even went to address international world before he was elected, he was conditioned. People now they started focusing on that and then we in Orange Farm we started sitting together watching news, reading newspapers, analysing you know debating around that and people started becoming aware that you know there is no changes here. And then it became now worse when there is this Malema saga of driving expensive cars, tendering you know even COSATU they didn't have a chance to keep quiet. They were forced now to respond and then that causes havoc between the two. And then people they don't have trust in Zuma anymore because they see how people are responding to the challenges that they are facing. And then another serious challenge is this 2010, people have been waiting for 2010. They were told wait for 2010, five years ago where after immediately after the announcement of world soccer in South Africa. Then people were made to raise up their minds and hopes that life will change. Now this is 2010 and then nothing is happening and I see the development. When we talk about the legacy project of 2010, its airport, and the roads and then those roads are not coming to Orange Farm, they are not going to Protea Glen. They go to Johannesburg stadiums, hotels. Those are only projects and then how the government focused to 2010, putting their energy to 2010 but failed to focus on RDP that energy that they used to build the 2010 stadiums, trying to meet their world cup, the FIFA standard. If they used that energy to build RDP houses then at least we will say they have done something but they failed and now people they see now here is 2010, there is only two months left and then it is only one months' soccer game and then its finished. Now it's a question of profit of 2010. Where the profits of 2010 will be going to, it will be directed to the communities of Orange Farm or other communities or FIFA will take all the profit and go back to Geneva? It's a serious wall in the minds of the people, each and every person now is asking himself that. Now the 2010 is over, what is the next? Meaning that what will be the next promise? Will the 2011 local municipality elections they say and after electing the new councillors, the new councillors will be saying "give us a chance, we are new". Now we start preparing people now about the new elections to say are they going to vote for the very same bite or are they going to vote for councillors

and then what will be the outcome, people need to think critically about that. Now nothing really has changed.

Dale: Just one last question there because it is a very interesting. OWCC has taken a fairly consistent stand over many years about not entering into any formal politics, in other words, electoral politics, keeping out of that. Now with the local Government elections coming up and as you were saying clearly not much changing, what then becomes the main challenge for the organisation like the OWCC in politicising people but not also encouraging them to believe the illusions of you know the same kind of thing again, like it's just going to be a new Councillor or we wait as you were saying? So in other words what is the other alternative in your experience and argument for people not to fall into the same trap again?

Richard: I think this is a hard time for us to strengthen the work of the social movements more than focusing on the elections and we have been debating this for a long time as the APF and some of the people they feel they can oppose by participating inside. But an example is these by-laws that I spoke about and then they were designed during the presence of the very same people sitting there and then what they have done? Nothing, because in their council is a majority rule. Now as Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee we don't see for our self participating or it is a right time for us to participate in the 2011 elections because the system is still the same. To participate in a system that we cannot change we've seen is a waste of time and then selling out your own people. Now we have a different understanding and that understanding is staying with the Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee, even you can ask other people from Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee, they can tell you the very same thing. We are being approached by some other people to contest in the community you know, "we can stand as an independent". No, no it will be a contradiction you know, we don't want to contradict ourselves you know. Now we believe that we will see which organisations agrees with us or if the Anti Privatisation Forum take a clear direction on how to come up with an alternative and what will be the role of our councillors in the cabinet or Metro but we are not going to change now and then we are not going to betray ourselves. We feel that from outside we are doing a lot, we can educate people, we can speak aloud without any conditions, we can fight against all this policies outside and we can put pressure. Like for instance the idea of protesting against these by-laws and using any method of going to fight. That is our vote.

Dale: The last question I always ask in these interviews is this? Is there anything we have not talked about or that I haven't asked about either OWCC or the APF that you would like to add or to say you don't think we've touched on?

Richard: No I don't think. I think we tried to cover all (issues) I think the question of strengthening training what is strengthening training that APF were conducting around we talked about socialism, we talked about ... but community development ja and to make people understand the word community, what is community? We need to go deeper into that because people will tell you that we are from the community, from the community, are they really meaning they are community and then what is community? We asked that question long time ago because how can we say we are community when

we are divided you know. Now it is the responsibility of leaders like our community workers, like us to unite community that is our work. It is not easy, it is not child's play it is a hell of a work. Now that will make people to start focusing on community development and you build community and from community development you start building organisation. You build community, you build organisation but you cannot build organisation when community is scattered. Now that is why we are trying to do. I can show you in the minutes, the previous minutes what we had here of stakeholder meeting and from the stakeholders we identified many sectors that are operating the community and then we cannot leave other sectors out of the community, wish them away. It's like people who are wishing the APF away or out of community. They cannot, we are there and I used to make an example during the violence against IFP [Inkatha Freedom Party] and ANC where people were saying they don't want IFP numbers in the community, but they failed, you cannot wish any organisation away but how to win that organisation, how to win them. Now I think this is what we are trying to do from Orange Farm. Lastly, I managed to get six hundred people filling up the community hall from Community Based Organisations only because those people are people who are active in the community, they are active in the community and you can change them. It is easy you mobilise and mobilise and mobilise them, they come together. If you are a good facilitator it is easy to make them get out of that meeting their common understanding. More than six hundred people filled up the community hall and then we've inviting from the HIV and AIDS fifteen people and I think fifteen from your organisation, from the pre-schools bring fifteen people, the disabled because we need the disabled people in the APF. Are we organising the disabled? "What are these community members doing here because those people they've got issues, they've got issues and you are representing them"? When you talk about privatisation it is affecting them, now we need to organise them and they are there, they are in the community, that is community but we leave other part of the community.

Dale: Okay.

Richard: Thanks.

Dale: Thanks Bricks thanks.