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Interviewer: Okay It's 30th March 2010 and I'm interviewing Siphon. Just for the record will you state your full name would please?

Magudulela: My name is Siphon Magudulela.

Interviewer: And Siphon before I start asking questions related to the APF, I just want to know a few basic things about yourself. So where and when were you born?

Magudulela: I was born in a small area in Mpumalanga called Ermelo then we relocated while I was young to East Rand, Germiston

Interviewer: Okay. Since then have you lived most of your life here in Joburg or have you moved around?

Magudulela: Yes I have lived most of my life here but when I was attending school I went to an area now which is where they are fighting the border dispute to study at this school called Josephs so that's where I did my matric and all that and secondary level.

Interviewer: In terms of schooling was that, you've matric'ed?

Magudulela: Yes I have matric

Interviewer: Ya, any other studies?

Magudulela: I did a BCom second year. Because of financial constraints I could not continue.

Interviewer: And your family? Do you have brothers and sisters? Are you married? Do you have children?

Magudulela: I've got brothers and sisters. I'm not married, I've got three kids.

Interviewer: You have three kids? And how old are those kids?

Magudulela: The one this year is 21 and was born on 14 February, Valentine's Day

Interviewer: And the other two are younger?

Magudulela: Ya the other two are younger - 16 and 10 years.

Interviewer: And what about your work? What kinds of work have you done or jobs or anything throughout?

Magudulela: I worked at, before going to university, I worked at a company called Cargo Motors, now it's called Cargo Motors, Mercedes and Honda dealers so I worked there. I became a shop steward where I won there were five difficult cases where management asked me from which university I was coming from because I won these cases.

Interviewer: Well that's the next question I was going to ask you. Just tell us a little bit about how you became an activist, about how you became politicised?

Magudulela: Okay, I was at school there was like I said I was studying at a Roman Catholic school like St Josephs. So they used to be a lot of visits but there was one kind of visit where a person by the name of Rasmal Woods came to us, he was like a poet and then he was speaking to us about issues like the Mau Mau revolution in Kenya and all that and that is how I became politicised. So I started reading - as you know these Roman Catholic Schools have got a lot of libraries where one could go for reading - it became more interesting since then I never looked back, I became an activist.

Interviewer: And you mentioned that when you were working you became a shop steward, what union were you at?

Magudulela: I was with NUMSA

Interviewer: NUMSA okay. And how long were you at NUMSA? How long were you active at NUMSA?

Magudulela: It was for two-and-a-half years because I went to university.

Interviewer: This is interesting. So you are saying after matric you did go to university, you took some university courses. Did you get a degree?

Magudulela: No I stopped at 2nd year level, when I was supposed to do 3rd year, it was a question of financial. There was a problem where I used my main point of transport, my major transport was train so there was a train violence in 1993 where people died and there were skirmishes where I survived in the train and then I decided not to continue because the only transport for me to go there was the train so I could no longer afford to go there.

Interviewer: And were you active in any other political organisations at anytime?

Magudulela: Yes, during the school?

Interviewer: During the 1990s before you came into the APF

Magudulela: Yes I was a member of PASO the before it became PASMA. So in fact the naming of the organisation it was my idea because it was difficult because we were at a tertiary institution and here we were students fighting at high school. So we were interviewed and asked questions that we could not answer so I said this is a problem, we cannot have PASO at high school level and secondary level. So we decided, we put this proposal and our comrades like Brian Sekwepunye took this mission up until it was called PASO.

Interviewer: Why, tell us a little bit first of all why you got so much involved in the APF?

Magudulela: My involvement in the APF was through being a member of KCR which was started around after 1994 where we were busy trying to get SANCO [SA National Civic Association] to address the issue around housing where we stay. I was one of the people who were on the forefront so as a result through this area, questioning, interrogating SANCO to take up these housing matters some old people who were members of SANCO decided to form KCR...

Interviewer: What is KCR?

Magudulela: Kathrorus Concerned Residents so I was one of the founding members of KCR actually.

Interviewer: And when, what year was that?

Magudulela: It was 1995.

Interviewer: 1995. And just tell us a little bit about what you did in KCR?

Magudulela: In KCR we were ... at that time there we used to be taking issues and arbitrary evictions of people so we organised for security issues, we take them out. Also, because people were angry and they wanted to fight anything and I said don't do anything but concentrate on government things and they did concentrate. I was advising them around and in many of the issues there.

Interviewer: Were you an elected leader?

Magudulela: No I was not elected leader but I was down on the ground involved. Like there was one instance where one of the Kathlehong chairperson whom she was called Colonel Englebrecht but we managed to make sure that the stability was moved to the township so it was my effort. So we, the organisation became strong because of the activities that we were doing. So these comrades who were involved were not that much politicised - they used to mention those things that we have done in public so I felt unsafe ... so I moved to the library

where there was just people who were matriculants and people who were doing 1st year diplomas and degrees. In fact some of them were from the RAU which is now UJ where I was assisting them to study some were doing 3rd year , I was teaching them political studies

Interviewer: And just tell us a little bit about the fact that you were there at the founding of the KCR and that was quite a number of years before the APF itself came into existence ... just a little bit about the issues in the community and the community itself? I mean because KCR covers a very wide range and different communities, doesn't it? Can you just speak to that a little bit?

Magudulela: Ya the issues that we were busy with it was mainly housing because housing itself in the Kathrorus area is very unique. We've got what we call self help housing where in many parts of the country they do not know what you're speaking about, where people would go into FH home which was office of-the council. They were given material but they really never signed agreements for a bond but people were finding themselves paying bonds so these were the kinds of issues. There were also issues around people who owe banks then who claimed that they bought these properties on behalf of people but people were evicted then but there was no proof from either the local municipality or the banks about that transaction where they bought the property and for how much which gave us another problem. Also we also address issues around litter, around service issues in general , electricity and water.

Interviewer: And what area is this that KCR covers? Just a little bit about communities that are there.

Magudulela: It covers, Thokoza, Kahlehong, the townships of Thokoza and Voolsorus.

Interviewer: And those towns, how would you describe the social and political conditions in those areas?

Magudulela: Ya by that time I think it was after the violence which was more of tribal violence, we are speaking of the 1990s and there was tensions, it was not easy for us to go to the townships and approach people around issues of service delivery and housing. It was also not easy to go to some areas - there were still no go areas but we managed to do that where people understood what we are saying and finally they joined us. It was a time of Mandela period where they strongly identified with Mandela so if you said anything it sounded as if you were anti.

Interviewer: Why was it for you as well as KCR, that the issue of privatisation became important in particular?

Magudulela: Ya the issue of privatisation became important because we saw privatisation, a lot of people were going to lose employment and if parastatals then like Telkom were to be privatised they were going to be expensive like they are today, they are not accessible to many people. Eskom for example, a lot of workers have been retrenched so these were the fears that were concrete, including the unions that people are losing employment and that privatisation is not going to address the basic services like where if a company is privatised it's going to look for profit but if it's not privatised they are going to look for the interests of the people, of its workers.

Interviewer: Can you describe a little bit about how KCR came to hook up, became involved because it was one of the first community organisations in the APF, right at the beginning? Can you remember that? Can you tell us a little bit more about how that happened?

Magudulela: Ya although at the time that they joined the APF I was at a distance but I used to hear them saying that they were coming here. But I think the reasons that we hooked up with APF is because KCR then was busy fighting and then the leadership decided 'no this government does not want to engage with us, I think they are undermining us because we do not have political backing'. So they went to the organisations like PAC who were pro, but the people we spoke to including Joseph who was part of the organisation there did not do anything about the issue so they went to the IFP where Mzizi would usually mention their issues in parliament and all that. But we saw that was not enough so when the APF the opportunity came like the APF, then the organisation was able to associate with a social movement that is going to, that has no boundaries. I mean there were no limitations in terms of political schooling and all that, so we joined the APF.

Interviewer: And that's interesting because ... what you're saying is the initial impetus was to join political parties. So was the politics of an organisation like KCR - how would you describe that - its general politics?

Magudulela: Politically the level of politics there was too weak as you know its members were from SANCO but the problem was that the leadership had a problem with SANCO and they engaged with the ANC. The ANC had an attitude therefore they were seeking for a political home which they, not necessarily of becoming a political party but a political party that was going to take their issues up like a political party that is in parliament. As a result -

that is why they moved around political parties and did that ... so it was part of seeking for a political home. But also there was an element of opportunism within the KCR where people felt powerful and they felt can't we challenge the ANC in terms of local government elections which is now dominating the APF where people are behaving like they are seeking revenge from the ANC, they want to be councillors as if being a councillor alone is going to address their problem.

Interviewer: After the KCR joined the APF which was not long after it was formed 2001/2002 - were you active at that point? Do you remember the activities that were going on like the World Conference against Racism or the Summit on Sustainable Development, those kinds of big events?

Magudulela: I knew about those summits. I remember it was a massive summit, well organised event; it was powerful at the height of the APF struggle. It was a successful event; it was one of THE events of the APF.

Interviewer: And you participated? Were you apart of that?

Magudulela: Yes I was.

Interviewer: And in relation to that, how is that in probably some ways was the first time that many people from community organisations had met - a lot of different kinds both in South Africa and internationally - how was that participating in that outside the APF, the event itself and what it meant?

Magudulela: No it went well. People who are confined to the space of South Africa and people of Kathlehong when they get to share views from not only people from South Africa but from all over the world who are suffering from the same conditions they are stereotyping the people assuming that everybody will be – for example so and so is okay, everybody in Latin America is fine. So it was quite an experience, it was an eye opening occasion for most of the comrades so the scope of the comrades was never now narrow, it was open, it was wide in terms of how they saw the world.

Interviewer: Did that have any impact, I mean those kinds of events, the kind of things that the APF was doing, the solidarity and all that, did that have an impact on the work of KCR itself?

Magudulela: Yes it did because we started working with unions like SAMWU and we built a relationship with GIWUSA and all that and it did build a lot of relationships and people

actually took APF seriously at that time, they took APF seriously so communities are merely recognising APF even right now because of such issues.

Interviewer: Now, not too long after that there were ... some internal difficulties within the organisation, within KCR, can you speak to some of those?

Magudulela: Ya, like for example in KCR you see, that KCR, I think it was one of the organisations in the APF that started internal problems. I think it was largely due to various issues because we started having these issues three years back. Why was KCR divided? You only find that there was an element of indiscipline people who started, I think it was around financial matters where people were seen, who came in later to the KCR and became part of the APF. They started corruption and elements of unethical behaviour within the APF and they saw the opportunity of money and they started fighting. This is how it started and when the leadership at some point expelled them, when the leadership expelled them the rumour that we got is that in the APF there were people who were pushing for certain people - as a result the organisation became weaker. It is at its weakest level now but we, when I returned back we started building it up. But the internal strife is still there because of the indiscipline - a matter which is now currently suspended. So I think this is what caused the problem became like APF a indiscipline element which I think we need to deal with it as an organisation because we cannot kill the organisation. The biggest challenge is that there are people who are sitting here for money not for the organisation. You won't find them doing anything.

Interviewer: And how did - as you say internally - how did you deal with these kinds of problems as an organisation?

Magudulela: Ya you know, a lot of us we did not, not having access to the office, the misinformation was brought to us. As a result the organisation was divided into two because of misinformation and people started taking sides. Then we had Thokoza KCR, Kathlehong KCR, the Voolsorus one dies automatically because it relied on Kathlehong, Thokoza and Kathlehong so when there were squabbles there, the Voolsorus branch died automatically and I went there to revive it in 2007/2006 I was busy there reviving it up until I got arrested which delayed the struggle. But the problem in Voolsorus is that there are two main organisations. One of the organisations where KCR decided to go into elections with DRA - Displaced Rate Payers Association - which is confusing a lot of people, they are taking people's money they are having a lot of corruption there of which some of the undisciplined comrades are part of that, they learnt some of the tricks from there.

Interviewer: And have you at any time during KCR held an elected leadership position in KCR, in the organisation?

Magudulela: I'm currently the coordinator of KCR.

Interviewer: You're the coordinator of KCR? Okay - from what you were describing there was a time when you were a little bit outside the struggles of KCR, what led you to sort of re-insert yourself in or sort of come back a few years later?

Magudulela: Yeah I was because of ...actually I was not away totally because when there were actions like evictions I used to be there, I used to be called in when I wake up. In fact I was giving the KCR information because one of our comrades from PAC was working with the banks so he used to come with the files of possible evictions so we used to move from Voolsorus to Kathlehong telling people that you see these actions are going to take place this day and this day. So I used to get information, but I used to supply information from our side so you see these people were amateurs and they used to mention 'so and so Siphos doing this, this comrade is great' so they did not realise that there were so many victims to the system. So I decided to keep a distance but I would come but I came fully when I realised that the organisation was dying so I came back. There were complaints about the abuse of the computer so I said no, they were saying comrades were crying that people are living large, they are getting money, whatever they are claiming then I said 'no get information' - that's why I decided to be active when I came back. But at that time I was busy at Voolsorus, I was busy reviving the Voolsorus structure so I came back after being injured then I started dealing with this issue and then found what the problem was.

Interviewer: You mentioned twice that you were arrested and injured - was that during the course of political activities? Just tell us a little bit about what happened?

Magudulela: Ya it was the 10th September 2007, I was at Voolsorus initially I was there just to visit that area so I was told by the comrades one of them Joseph that 'no you must wait there because we are going to come'. So I waited but I was supposed to go to Tsakane to see my brother who was ill so I waited until late, so we were waiting at a certain house then the comrades who were, I mean there was a lot of screaming so I went out to see. I found one of the comrades who was evicted and then she was dragged by four males and one female so I asked them 'why are you dragging this person on the street?' Actually I did not even realise that they were having guns pointing at the woman and they turned and shots were fired at me and they said in SiPedi (translated by transcriber) 'that I'm inquisitive and that they will take me out' and they started shooting at me. Fortunately I dived on the ground.

I was missed actually by four bullets, actually one woman who wanted to go outside, she was on her way to intervene. Later when I was dizzy she came and told the police - who came to the scene - that this person, take this person now urgently to hospital, they shot at this person, I saw them shooting at him. She did not realise that they had four missed bullets, so at that time I was beaten for +- 3hrs, dizzy, after they shot they tore my leather jacket. My leather jacket is still there and they handcuffed me for +-3hrs, I did not realise that the people who were doing that were policemen. They were policemen so I was then taken to hospital. The police in Vosloorus police station insisted that no this person must go to the hospital so they took me there where I had to spend five minutes. In fact there was no examination ... they just said go there if you are injured on the leg and so forth so how can you climb if you're in handcuffs how can you climb on top of an x-ray? So after the x-ray I was given tablets, this normal Panado tablets and I had to go back to the cell where I was put back and it was unfortunately the following morning it was after 12h00. So as a result because of my involvement at Voolsorus they used to detain people for like as an example they will arrest people on a Thursday so that they know this person is only going to appear on Monday. They were trying to force people to ... so that they will have to sign to leave the houses. So when I saw that situation I went to intervene, I spoke to management, police management. As a result they will arrest the person, I will phone them and tell Captain De Villiers, I would say 'captain there are people arrested for trespassing and you know trespassing is not a serious crime can you give these people bail?' Then he would organise somebody, the following day they would, so the prosecutors and the police who were corrupt realised that when I was there, there was no progress in terms of their cases. So on Friday - ironically before I was initially remanded - they said within two weeks you will be arrested. So before two weeks I was arrested and I was kept in prison for 23 days. I was not allowed bail until after 23 days where I was given bail but I was shocked because I had initially told comrade Joseph what should happen during bail application if they deny us bail what should be done and all that. And I was given bail actually because I phoned, there was one of the comrades who when we were arrested I told him to phone Captain De Villiers and he was given bail but I was kept in prison whilst I was bleeding. I was shocked because these comrades did enquire about that but I was just kept there because I was injured. Fortunately the woman I was arrested with had a lawyer so this lawyer you know he was the one who sold us out so on the 11th October he admitted that he actually said leave this issue leave these people alone, there is an offer for you of R15 000 per month, go to Safe Call for a truck ... obviously a truck is not R15 000 but if you raise R15 000 you are going to be given 10% of that a month of R300 000 which was R15 000 every month for 5 years I said well its fine but I'm not into that, I'm here because of this woman, 'can you assist this woman go

back into her house as you said she has to go back'. But I was let down. They did certain things to me you know I went to the director of public prosecution to report the prosecutor because he was the one who denied me bail. Then I was given a task to mobilise people around Vosloorus where I spoke to Hans Strydom who is the public prosecutor of Boksburg to come and address people and where he refused but later came. I included people like Joseph but when I sent my initial report which was my preliminary report to the department to the national director of public prosecution I was with Joseph and Jabu so they were given a task - to go and investigate and bring in a person who has been evicted and was renting property and an old person, a senior citizen and orphans but they never did that and my report disappeared. I don't know what happened to that report, it just vanished so there were certain things that we should not trust with comrades .

Interviewer: I'm sure we will get into a little bit more into some of general issues around that but just some other questions about the KCR and other things. What would you describe as the main goals or objectives of KCR and how that changed over the years given the challenges and the contextual political challenges that have happened since KCR was formed?

Magudulela: The initial goal as I said was the issue of housing so we strengthened our struggle and joined the APF which is one of the achievements of APF and KCR was the process of SERVCON. So this process came with its complications because this process was supposed to bring a relief to the people who were experiencing problems actually it was abused that is when a lot of our comrades became corrupt because they were associated with some of the people, the councillors. As a result people who were residing in those houses, people who were evicted - title deeds were not given back to them even some of these comrades. A lot of people lack trust in the organisation due to this corruption that was happening. Leadership was the one that got title deeds; most of the people could not as they were busy with the programme.

Interviewer: The leadership of the KCR?

Magudulela: Ya they got title deeds a lot of people on the ground did not get them and then what happened is that these comrades who were suspended started a programme of saying to the people 'do not sign on SERVCON because if you sign there when you have problems we will not help you'. I went to them actually and I said to them 'if you think the SERVCON process there is something wrong with it, why don't you go to the office and ask for a meeting so that you can verify?' So KCR decided on a delegation, they went there comrades like Mkhabela and them, they went there to verify and found the process to be correct. When

they reported they said 'okay, if you sign, you sign there and don't come to us' they said people should not sign but they took their own families, they have got title deeds for their own families. The people who listened to them do not have houses as we speak so it changed, as a result people had confidence there in the KCR, but it declined. But now since I came into being people know that you are honest and they trust you and they have confidence. The problem is this continued lack of dealing with these comrades where they are just invading the organisation, disrupting the meeting which means people do not come, but interestingly right now we have got a lot of people who come to the meetings.

Interviewer: And the key struggles have they remained more or less the same?

Magudulela: Ya, struggles I think we are focusing more now on electricity, we are focusing more on water and services but there was one instance where someone from our community came into our workshop, we were speaking about rates in the East Rand and they demanded that rates should be cancelled when they were lambasted and by the then housing MMC, Sambo cause that programme was not in the agenda at that time so comrades had information and wanted to apply it wrongly and the issue was not even there so we got our own lessons while fighting for electricity. Comrades will just think about issues that were not necessarily implemented - let's say issues like pre paid water meters which were implemented in Phiri, they were not implemented in East Rand. People would speak about pre paid water meters and they said 'No we have no intention of implementing them here'. So these are some of the problems that we get but we learn from those problems so now we are upfront about our issues.

Interviewer: And how would you describe the response of the state - in other words, government and the state - to the activities of KCR and its struggles?

Magudulela: Ya we had a lot of comrades who were like kept there, who were arrested for trespassing until there was a new station commissioner who came and said 'I have a lot of criminal cases going on, I don't have time for trespasses and in fact you know you are saying people are trespassing in their own houses, I don't understand that could you please leave those cases'. So then it changed but then ... it was official, the system was official, people were arrested but we managed to sustain, defended people, we tried through the APF and stuff like that.

Interviewer: And what about the dominant political parties in the area - their response to struggles of the KCR?

Magudulela: You know the ANC was shocked, to be honest it was shocked. Some councillors said, in fact there were documents which said if the ANC could work closely with KCR then they could manage to control this area, in fact then they could change some of the conditions under which people were living. So for us it was a victory where the councillors really realised that. In fact last year when we were allowed to register people so that they will be eligible for the second part of the process which we extended this year to all APF affiliates when we reported one of the councillors in Ward 60 said no, go to KCR where we have got SANCO is not going to help you any longer, go to them they can help you, I know these comrades they are very sincere they address these issues. For us it was like WOW! How can an ANC councillor refer people to us ... in fact there are two, Ward 59 where there are issues around housing a lot of people are referred to us 'go to KCR they are going to assist you .

Interviewer: Okay, so in some ways you are saying over the years there has become some sort of respect from ANC in the area for KCR?

Magudulela: Ya there was a lot of respect. In fact one of the chairpersons from Kahlehong which is Colin Dube was once a candidate for SOPA for election, you can see the impact of KCR. SOPA approached him, they said 'can you stand for us' so he stood for SOPA. They saw that this organisation has potential so let's ask someone to stand for us, he stood for them.

Interviewer: You mentioned earlier that sections in KCR have contested local government elections, how has that worked out in terms of those kinds of politics?

Magudulela: Ya I think it was a marriage of inconvenience I think, because they met an organisation called DRA, which I explained about. This organisation their slogan was 'Down with pre paid water meter, forward with pre paid electricity meters'. I confronted the leadership of KCR, ' how do you make an alliance with this organisation which is preaching pre paid meters partly whilst we are anti privatisation, how do we explain our self to the community when it comes to this confusion? People because they were opportunists they forged ahead with that. Fortunately they managed to get 3 seats and you know what happened? A lot of people they initially promised some of our comrades that one will put from Kathlehong and some from Voolsorus- never. That never happened, they took 3 people from Thokoza and put them who were actually members of DRA and we lost. A lot our comrades were used to mobilise people out of the communities out of their monies, prepare food, then we said 'no this cannot happen' ... during the last, I remember when they wanted to form a Socialist Green Coalition we also approached them and said 'no we cannot allow

our organisation to die like that because partly the reason for KCR to die was because of this contesting in local government elections. People got confused and a lot of people got disgruntled and they were exposed to this corruption of DRA where people are charged R1350 which is going to the lawyers and there is no lawyer whilst they are arrested in courts. Nothing they are told about title deeds up to so far none of them has got title deed so far they are getting ripped off and the leadership simply said we don't deal with DRA and I said that was not enough you need to explain to people because you took them to DRA, they remained there, they do not know the difference between DRA and KCR.

Interviewer: Okay. What relationships, positively does KCR have with other organisations that you've worked with outside the APF?

Magudulela: Outside we had a relationship with Khanya, this relationship collapsed, it collapsed because ... I do not know why it collapsed. From the office we know that there was a workshop run by Igshaan, in fact there was no accounting from that workshop that's why the relationship went sour, we had people bad mouthing 'ha you're going to Khanya, they exploit people and all that', so that was it. We had organisations like Earthlife, FXI but we do not have a relationship right now, the relationship was just faking trips where people will fake trips and collect money for that. A lot of comrades were aware, here is corruption manifesting itself in KCR. So the relationship with organisations like CALS which was supposed to be there because we were fighting for houses, Wits Law Clinic, Pro Bono, people did not know anything about that, no one was helped actually through those things.

Interviewer: How would you - since now you're more actively involved in the KCR and APF in the last 2- 3 years in particular - how do you think your organisations' membership or involvement in the APF has impacted in the organisation - politically, organisationally ideologically or whatever?

Magudulela: Ya I think a lot of influence it was like in America where Malcolm X became a member of the nation of Islam and was oriented wrongly saying people were blue eyed devils and he went to Mecca and was told that in Mecca he would find those people. So my journey into the APF was like that. In fact for a lot of comrades it was like that so they started seeing that things are not like that. It is not what they perceived a lot of things that are here like access to services of CALSZ, access to Earthlife access to a lot of organisations that have a relationship with APF, so it really changed the relationship. The people are now starting to understand the struggle like broadly, we've got old people who are experiencing problems with pension surplus and they do not have access, now we are aware that in the APF we have got such a forum hence a request for a workshop. Unfortunately this workshop

could not be held because it was in late December but it is going to be held after the disciplinary hearing of these comrades because they are disrupting a lot of our programmes. But people are now learning as I said its like a journey of Malcom X to Mecca where he saw a lot of things. This is a journey so a lot of our comrades will start develop them into dealing with issues because they relied on individuals who actually did nothing, who were telling them that they have got summons. These are love letters, we know them and there was one comrade in Voolsorus, you know when I speak about her, she was strong and powerful, she really mobilised Voolsorus called Maureen Bonani, she is now living in a backyard in Diepkloof next to Bara Hospital. She was evicted the consequence of that was that was because Joseph said to her that there is an APF lawyer from Germany who was going to defend her. Voolsorus at that time was bad, it's worse now but at that time it was worse. She went there for the first day, on the second day they told her 'you don't come with a lawyer tomorrow we are going to she came in when she was phoning Joseph their phones were off, his and Jabulile. The third day when she went there they said 'today it's your trial, we are going to sentence you, we are not playing here if you do not come with a lawyer. As a result one comrade was forced to hire a lawyer who was just moving around the court. This lawyer forced her to sign that she will leave her property, she left her property and then whilst her clothes were outside the person arbitrary evicted her so she had to move because she signed and you know one comrade who paid for the fine, anytime she can get a nervous breakdown because that issue affected her so much because she had faith that APF will defend her property, they were sold out by a comrade unfortunately. It is the saddest part of what happened and unfortunately people are now remorseless, they do not feel what they have done its wrong. I think our struggle has now reached a limit where we are saying we should really deal with this corruption and factionalism that has rocked the organisation. These factions in fact are around monies not around politics because people who abuse and shouting at the CCs and all that when you go to their areas they are doing nothing – nothing you cannot see them anywhere. Some of them hardly have meeting. I think we need to do something about it so that we have real people who are struggling, who are taking up issues because the people who are just sympathetic are looking at the opportunities to get closer to resources of the organisation rather than the struggle.

Interviewer: What is the involvement of the APF with the KCR particularly over the last while? What areas would you say have been most beneficial or that you've worked with the APF the closest and allowed the organisations to deal with its own problems - in other words has the membership in the APF benefited KCR? One would ask why would a community organisation want to be a member of the APF?

Magudulela: You know that question is interesting Cde Dale, as I have indicated earlier that KCR was divided into two. Last year we had a meeting with one of the branches in Kathlehong, the Thokoza branch organised a branch in Kathlehong so we went there to call meetings as we normally do. Then we were confronted with a leadership that said 'why are you calling meetings here?' Then we said 'this is Kathorous we call a meeting anywhere in Kathorous Concerned. Then they said 'no we are an organisation' After that there a decision that we should speak about unity. So there was a meeting, I think it was last year in November, where Thokoza, which is Bheki Khanya College went there to speak on the issue so there we had a meeting where they were talking about personal issues like 'if Trevor is still the member of the APF the unity is not going to materialise, if you're still members of the APF there won't be unity because, KCR was divided because of some people who are in the leadership of the APF. I then responded, I said ' you are raising personal issues, it's not an organisational matter, if you have a personal issue with Trevor go and address it with him, SECC is not part of the KCR so go and speak with SECC if you think there is something but it's not. In fact people who were least expected to challenge him. Coming to the issue of how the relationship between APF and KCR - one of us who is our treasurer Job Manase stood up and said 'rona we spoke about the case of the comrade who was murdered, we were assisted by the APF, we were running workshops we were assisted by the APF, we have knowledge now because of the APF, we are not going to do that. If you have a problem with the APF stay in Thokoza, we don't have a problem with the APF we are not going to continue our relationship because we are benefiting. So in other words KCR is benefiting from the APF through the words of that person people are now starting to realise now that it's benefiting them. Funeral policy you know they realised that there was a funeral policy afterwards, there were not even aware of that information ... people were claiming funeral policies for themselves.

Interviewer: I wanted to ask you in terms of the APF specifically ... now what areas of work of activism have you been involved in, in the APF specifically not so much just KCR?

Magudulela: Okay. I'm a regional coordinator, I started in 2008 in July so I'm the Regional Coordinator of East Rand, I'm fully involved in reviving the organisation in the region where we had 4 affiliates now we have got 5. We had about 6-7 communities that want to affiliate to the APF in the region, in fact there are more we are engaging in the issues. There was a protest last year in an area in Thokoza we involved the media there we were interviewed by BBC, I brought in ETV, we were involved in Buhle Park, Phumula, they are having issues around lack of infrastructure, poor service delivery, then in Phumula they have bond houses which are RDP in outlook but in nature people are paying bonds so we are taking up

struggle of challenging the department of human settlements to cancel these areas as bond areas because really these are not bond areas. So we are now involved in areas like Kwathema where as the APF we never had any affiliate. There are people who have brought in their constitution, it's called Kwathema working group and they are a real mass organisation. I've been there several times and we have also organised meetings several times holding meetings with the office of the mayor to address issues around electricity, service delivery and all that, like in the previous week we were there . In areas like Palm Ridge we had people who were potential affiliates there so unfortunately due to some of the problems that we had of corruption people were discouraged but we are reviving them, they are part of our struggle. We also involved with an informal settlement next to Ramaphosa called Toyko Sexwale informal settlement. In Ramaphosa in fact we have people who are part of us which is going to assist us in the fight against xenophobia which in that area we had no inroads dealing with the issue around xenophobia which I think it's an achievement for us to go into that. I think it's an achievement for us to be part of this community next to Thokoza where there were reports about xenophobic attacks and all that but during their recent protest there was no element of that and we tried to educate people around that. We are planning that these workshops should have a workshop around xenophobia and all that so that we will begin to have a structure that is capable of dealing with the issues when they emerge.

Interviewer: Why do you think that so many communities in this particular time right now are receptive to joining and being part of an organisation like the APF?

Magudulela: In Phumula we found serious reception, you know in these areas that I have mentioned there is an element of SACP, in Phumula there is a strong element of SACP but the area we went to the SACP is rejected, its totally rejected. They are saying we are for the APF because we know the APF has a track record because of the water case, so people are saying these people stand for their issues, they challenge issues until they get what they want so they really want to associate with us. They do not want to join the SACP because they are singing, they were shouting because the chairperson of the areas, originally from Kathlehong is a strong supporter of the ANC – blind supporter so I said we cannot affiliate to SACP, the SACP and the ANC are one thing for the community's sake so we are happy we achieved the efforts of researchers like Carin, you know we used to go there. You know these things involve transport and money but she would come and say 'Sipho lets go there, let's go to Eden Park, let's go to this area'. We have got a new affiliate called Eden Park, they are everywhere, you know the week before last they could not get hold of me so they phoned Carin so Carin told me, we went there, we were supposed to go to Phumula but we

started there. So it is thanks to people like that that we are getting inroads, in fact we had no regional structure, the only regional members were the secretary, the treasurer and the chairperson but last week on the 22nd we managed to elect a leadership but the people are still seeing as me as if this region belongs to me, they still say 'no this is our man, this is our man'. I 'say this is a region, we need to speak about regional leadership' and they say 'no we have elected a regional leadership' and I say 'why do you keep referring to me as a region, I'm not the only one'. Then we have got the challenges that we must impart skills on the comrades so that they became effective, not only in the East Rand but I've seen throughout the APF that there is a lack of skills. Like people would when you take up a march I think you should have exhausted other avenues so that you force government to be accountable. You take up issues with the department of housing from local, provincial and national and when you engage in a march they are forced to respond because you have got all the proof that you engaged with them and they engaged you so that kind of response I think it's more persuading to them. I inculcate that culture within the organisation and bring out our comrades.

Interviewer: And speaking of that, how would you describe, I mean you've talked about some of the very positive aspects of the APF and what it brings also some of the shortcomings ... how would you describe the track record of the APF with regards to ... I mean it was formed as part of, when it became a collection of community organisations, so in your experience as being part of this how would you describe should we say the strengths and weaknesses of the APF in regard to its core mandate and mission which is community struggles and assisting and trying to create solidarities and do that amongst communities?

Magudulela: Ya the strength of the APF is allowing us to have a platform, communities have a platform to express themselves and it is also giving communities a lot of exposure. Like we assist communities in terms of their issues being covered by the media and all that and also in making a relationship that is beneficial to the communities like relationships with organisations like Earthlife, international organisations, ILRIG ... and I think this is what the APF is doing. And when the APF is taking up cases like the Phiri water case, these are positive steps, they are really landmark cases which are putting the organisation up there up in the sky unreachable to including political organisations. This is the milestone of the organisation but the weaknesses of the organisation is the fact that I think we need to revise our relationships as affiliates and the organisation simply because the organisation would decide to discipline that person who is the office bearer of the APF but is going to return to the affiliate and the affiliate is going to bring that person back so I think that needs to be revised to make sure that in the AGMs we speak about these issues so that affiliates, when

a member is disciplined at APF level they also form part of the disciplinary process. And our weakness also is that we do not have a standing disciplinary team to look into some of the issues so these are matters at CCs that do not need to be there, they need to go to the committee and investigate simply because some of the issues are issues that people who claim, it's actually a lack of knowledge and information. So if there was a committee it was going to investigate that and say you must understand this is how it functions and all that there is a lot of time that we waste speaking about these things in the CCs and AGM are not really worth the CC and the AGM if there was that structure they will go there.

Interviewer: How would you describe again from your experiences the relationships between community organisations and what we call individual activists or people that aren't necessarily political groupings because those are the three main components of the APF?

Magudulela: Ya let me speak about the individual because they are the most criticised parts of our organisation. You know like you will look at the future of the organisation without John, without you ... a lot of people are now saying this organisation is going to die within three months if people like that are not there. But it's interesting that some people are saying 'these are individuals' and they do not see the positive contribution of the people. In terms of affiliates I think we have a lot of affiliates that are not worthy to be called affiliates, they don't meet and meetings is just one aspect but taking up issues of communities is another but they are not. A lot of our affiliates are not doing that especially people who are coming with this criticism that people are individuals but when you look at them they are doing nothing. For example they will criticise John, he is bringing in a new programme like Unemployment Masibambane which these communities should utilise. People are busy focusing on personal issues on the contribution and performance of the individual issues. I think this is important on the affiliates I think they need to learn, but our problem with the affiliates is that they are lead by people who do not understand what they are doing. The majority are easily taken out of that picture of people who know what they are doing, people who know what their goals are. Some the objective is to destroy the organisation so we need to educate our affiliates very well so that they understand very well what we are standing for and the issues that we should take up and they must not dwell on personal issues like questioning ' what is this? What is this? Where is he coming from issues' now you will go to a level of being speaking about the issue of racism, some of us our political orientation wherever we are around ... I indicated I was a member of PASO which was a sub member of the PAC where we believed there is only one race – the human race. The colour of the skin is just as irrelevant as the shape of our ears and our noses. We should focus on the contribution that people are doing that's all.

Interviewer: Okay, and other political groupings? How have been your experiences with some of the political groups in the APF?

Magudulela: Like the TCF which is now called Tsakane Crisis Committee the problem with them is that they are not taking community issues. When we try and investigate this matter you find that these people were not even supposed to be our affiliate they were supposed to go straight to Keep Left because they are speaking of Keep Left politics. And we have another disturbing factor which is called the Socialist Group where they will recruit people from other affiliates and confuse a lot of our comrades and really this Socialist Group I don't think their mandate is socialism, I think its disruption of organisations because while people get into this then a faction erupts and inner squabbles in region starts people fighting for control of the region or whatever. You don't know what is the agenda maybe the agenda is that they want to go to elections so if they want to form a political party why don't they go outside? Political parties are outside us; they must go there, form a political party and canvass for people in the name of a political party which is what they need to focus on. You won't understand what is actually happening with these people because these movements are actually taking away our comrades to disillusionment. Cause like the last time when we went to the Conference of the Democratic Left at the end you could see that the real problem is that people are seeing the APF as capitalist people that they are making business and shopping centres so the APF is seen in this context by people who are within us who are having these social groupings. They are seeing us as potential commodities that they can use to form their own organisations - which is what I learnt from comrades from the Democratic Left. Next time I'm going to raise it. This is not about that, I think there is an ulterior motive to this, you are seeing us as potential commodities, the organisation that you can use, you know they were announcing that we should go to communities and announce that the Democratic left is APF. Imagine communities like KCR, you are confusing people, people are there for their issues. I think the issue of a political party though it's a long term issue, we cannot just speak about forming a political party when we are not able to control Kathlehong as a whole, they are not able to control Soweto as a whole, they do not have a lot of membership ... now we are talking about socialism, it needs us to educate people so that when people are marching, you see these marches people are not speaking of socialism as an option so why impose ourselves and say 'no left from a socialist left there is a call people want an alternative' do we know what alternative people are looking for? We don't know ... there has never been a single march where people had marched and said we want socialism. It's unfortunate that it has happened in America but in South Africa it's never

happened where it's supposed to be happening, its only American marches where people were saying we want socialism.

Interviewer: When you say American are you talking about a long time ago?

Magudulela: Ya in this recession

Interviewer: You mean in the 1930s?

Magudulela: No recently, but in this county I have never seen any community that was saying socialism.

Interviewer: In that regard speak a little about both from your work in the KCR and also in the APF how would you describe the levels of what we call political consciousness amongst the rank and file that make up community organisations and the APF itself? You'd just started speaking to that, what you think that consciousness is?

Magudulela: The level I think its too low. I might sound like a scratched record, I used to say we need to have political education, we need to have a clear socialist programme of action, I think the level of thinking of politics in our organisation is too low. It is very, very low, if there is any. It's only a very few individuals that's why you see individuals dominating in the CC. Like let's say men from Oliven speaking - a lot of these people are afraid to speak. It's a challenge to us; we need to develop our comrades. The level of thinking is too low and is too little hence a move to political parties is too soon when we are not sure whether people are with other socialist act. It is clear that people who are closing the community are coming from the ANC some come in their t-shirts so how do you claim that they are loyal to you because they are only coming to ask for the service that we are offering. So what we need is to sit down and discuss this as the APF in general and come up with a clear socialist agenda where we need to educate our people so that as time goes on they can say we can form an alternative or a political party. But for now it's still too soon to be running a programme to form that. It's not an overnight thing but there are short sighted people, some are being seen as the people who are the APF but my experience with them and interaction I see they are what Alexander Pupu say 'drink tea from perennial streams where shall ... because they have too little knowledge and no information about issues and running organisations.

Interviewer: More recently one of the issues that have been highlighted in the APF has been what generically might be called the problem of gender relations and issues of social violence. In your experience in an organisation like the APF at least on paper have certain social principles and values that it's supposed to defend and stand for ... do you think that

gels well with where people are at in the general sort of conditions under which the APF operates?

Magudulela: Ya I think my experience was at the AGM where we were elected you remember when they were speaking about the march to the taxi rank there were different kind of sentiments people were saying why are women dressing in miniskirts so that shows you that we have got different kinds of views in how we advocate issues around women and challenges and women abuse and all that. Recently I was shocked when the chairperson of the organisation said that you know 'women are lying' - it was in a meeting and she was saying that you know this woman is lying. I was shocked, you see we have got two affiliates in the Vaal like WCCC who are supporting a person who has committed rape and is facing rape charges and the fact that there is a very senior comrade in that list means that we are still far from achieving our goals that are there in our documents. You know if senior comrades who are well vested in politics who understand these issues but it's not a matter of a court sentence it's a matter of bringing the organisation, I mean of being against the principle of things that our moral standards and ethics they don't understand and then it is too dark before dawn, these are our comrades who are doing that.

Interviewer: One of the criticisms of organisations/social movements like the APF ... there seems to be this expectation that the APF should have all these different programmes but often times the reality is that certain characters of communities are not necessarily receptive to those kinds of things. So speak to the challenge of trying to create a balance, not forcing things because you know you could have a top-down organisation that says because we have community organisations, this is a forum that is supposed to be a collection of autonomous organisations. In your experience as an organiser, as a political activist in the APF as well as KCR how do you think that plays or can play itself out in a positive way?

Magudulela: As I mentioned before I think we need to revise the autonomy and educate our communities. Like you would find the APF stand against women abuse and all that and in communities affiliates are not taking up such struggles practically on the ground they are not representing women who are abused and raped. So it's a challenge but I think as organisers we need to have a programme where we explain to affiliates that these are possible programmes, housing is one issue we are fighting, service delivery is another but here is another human tragedy that is happening, women are being exploited as a result some of them are killed, raped and all that, it is part of our struggle let us take them up. I think it is taking that conscious political decision and educating people I think a lot of people would support it. On the issue of the court case we spoke about this issue in our meeting as KCR

and in the region you know. In the region there is nobody who is having a different view on the issue from the APF's position so we have a united position, I think our comrades are conscious around this issue.

Interviewer: You've mentioned several times the problem of leadership in particular not just in KCR but in terms of what we have witnessed in South Africa over the last few years is that many of the social movements that formed in 1999/2000 have split or somewhat disintegrated or became a lot weaker. Do you think those challenges or some of those difficulties that they experienced are predominantly about leadership?

Magudulela: I think they are predominately about leadership, leadership and what leadership means to people. Like leadership in the APF there are a lot of funders so people would see you when you join and became a leader with access to resources so this is part of that. Another element I think is the state is playing; I think they are seeing that these people are huge and they are trying to get there and divide them because that is their role weakening them so that they became weak. If they are strong they are a threat to these people, if they are weak they are nothing. So I think part of it is the state but a lot has to do with opportunism, access to resources mainly even the opportunism comes as a result that they want to have access to resources

Interviewer: What do you think in the more present contemporary period, what would you say are the main challenges of the APF now that its 10 years old, it's been through a lot of difficult challenges, it's still here even with a lot of potential problems as you said.

Magudulela: Ya the challenges of the APF. I was recently in an area called Kgobojwane its in Limpopo, its part of the area that I identified. People want to affiliate to the area, everywhere in the country where you go people want to affiliate to the APF. The challenge of the APF is expansion. The organisation is concentrated in Gauteng but people are thinking the APF is like a national movement, they want it everywhere. The challenge is that the APF does not have the capacity at the moment to be that national movement which is what our struggle demands but the capacity is not there - resources confine us to this small place. People really want to affiliate and this is a big challenge for the APF, expansion. APF is now a brand that people trust and rely on which we need to protect as members.

Interviewer: You've been in KCR from the '90s onward predominately most of the changes in South Africa, have you seen changes in both the socio-economic changes where one could say ... in other words the APF has been well received, the APF is now an organisation

that a lot of people would like to join up to but in practical terms what do you think the APF has achieved in practical terms?

Magudulela: In practical terms in the East Rand the APF has achieved; 1) there was a plan that the municipality would install pre paid water meters, it did not. They saw that the APF is challenging it there and here are activists of the APF so they cannot even implement that; 2) it's the issue around SERVCON where a lot of people got their title deeds through intervention. Generally people, the municipality or the government is aware of the APF factor and they are strongly suspicious of the influence of the APF. Like recently I said we had a meeting with the speaker so there were as lot of communities coming there, we were moving from one venue to another we almost moved to a hall so they saw the influence. They ended up saying this is an APF meeting so they are aware of us. Yesterday they went to Norkem Park to address the issue of electricity which shows our influence. If we demand that they do this they do that, they went there after they realised that that community belongs to the APF.

Interviewer: Do you think that the more recent political changes that have happened within the ANC and country over the last two years have impacted on both the country and the communities? If so how?

Magudulela: Ya their resolution in Polokwane, one of admitting that GEAR is the cause of problems, you know they are giving us credit, they are acknowledging that what we advocated as seeing that privatisation is going to destroy a lot of jobs/people's lives is true although they are coming with it as a promise and admitting what they are going to implement in Polokwane. But the communities are now understanding the causes of the problem are privatisation and outsourcing. As a result we spoke about issues of outsourcing in Erkhuleni, they are discussing it, in fact it's one of the reasons we were called to a meeting on the 26th April by Sicelo Sicheka's department. He said we must come and discuss value added tax. We actually rejected it being implemented not only in Erkhuleni or in Gauteng we said this issue should not be implemented people are in living poor conditions so when they are saying they are going to revise that policy it means we had an impact because if they are willing to review their policies it means we have an impact and that thing is sending signals that people are unhappy and they might rise up to these issues.

Interviewer: Those are key questions I have but I always ask at the end of the interview whether or not there is something that we haven't addressed, something that you want to address with regard to either KCR, the APF or more generally in terms of the issues we covered or other things that we missed out? Is there anything you want to address or say?

Magudulela: I think we need to do as the APF it's in my suggestion that we need to have a programme or a structure where we can train comrades in politics that is constituting on educating people so that they understand the issues so that they would understand how to advance their struggles and all that, I think this is the only issue that I can add although we alluded to it indirectly.

Interviewer: Thanks very much Sipho

