



Interview with Johan Sam Dlamini

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TM: Today is the 11th of June 2013. I'm Tshepo Moloji, in Driefontein with Mr Dlamini to discuss about the history of Driefontein, mainly focusing on the impact of the Land Act of 1913 in Driefontein because later there were attempts to forcibly remove the people of this place. Mr Dlamini will narrate to us about what he remembers. But let me take this opportunity to thank you Mr Dlamini, first, for meeting with you and the information you'll be giving us. To start off, maybe Mr Dlamini you can introduce yourself and tell us your full name.

JD: I'm Sam Johan Dlamini.

TM: Where was Mr Dlamini born?

JD: At Dirkiesdorp, on a farm called Hoog ... [cellphone rings]

TM: There at Dirkiesdorp?

JD: Yes. It's part of Driefontein. Well, now things have changed. It's now under Piet Retief. But then it was under Driefontein.

TM: When were you born, baba (Mr), can you still remember?

JD: *Eish*, I can't recall the year.

TM: No problem. How long did you live in Dirkiesdorp?

JD: Actually the place where I was born is not exactly at Dirkiesdorp but it's on a farm very close to Driefontein. You see, when the government wanted to remove Driefontein I was already residing in Driefontein.

TM: How did you end up living here?

JD: I used to work at a mine and the *boers* said I should go and live where I was working.

TM: Where was this mine?

JD: Just behind that mountain (pointing in the south). There was a place called Copper. Yes, it was a copper mine. So I left this *boer's* farm but my parents remained continued to live on his farm. I came to live in Driefontein. When the attempts to remove Driefontein I was already living here. When the news made rounds that Driefontein was to be moved to eLondweni (Lochiel), discussions started. There were those who wanted the area removed and yet others were refusing. After some time buses arrived and this time we were told that people would be removed closer to Oshoek. Still there were those who were refusing to move. It became clear that there two opposing factions on this issue. The faction that was in favour of the removals was led by *ubaba* (Mr) Gwetsha Yende. The government then installed him as a chief. They thought he'd be able to convince the people of Driefontein to move to a chief's place.

TM: Was there a chief here?

JD: No, there was no chief here. The government was now using this plan to convince people to move; that they were following their chief. This place has no chief, so he couldn't be installed as a chief here. Here people owned stands, which they had bought. Right, disagreements continued. Then the buses arrived. It was said that those who boarded the buses would be accommodated at Oshoek. Some people board the buses. But when they arrived at Oshoek the people who lived there chased them away. They said they didn't want them there.

TM: Oh, the people who lived with buses from here?

JD: Yes. When they arrived at Oshoek they were told to go back where they came from, because they were not welcomed there. That meant they couldn't stay there. So they returned to Driefontein. The discussions and disagreements continued between those who wanted to remove Driefontein and those who were refusing. The government devised another plan to remove Driefontein. It then created this dam. It thought people would be forced to move because of the dam. The people of Driefontein refused to move and continued to live here. Time went on and the government came up with another plan and this time it used this *boer* from eMabona. *Eish*, I forget the name of that *boer*. And it came to a point when Mr (Saul) Mkhize was shot and killed.

TM: Oh, it was Nienaber (the *boer* from eMabona).

JD: Yes, that's him. I'm not sure whether this *boer* was promised money to this or not. But what was clear was this *boer* was connected with these people.

TM: Which people?

JD: Those who were in favour of Driefontein being removed. A meeting was called at Qedele...

TM: Who was meeting at Qedela?

JD: The community. And during the course of the discussions this *boer* approached and confronted the meeting and started to shoot. I heard Mr Mkhize saying 'Noma *ongangibulala se nginebe. Nginezimpande. Angiyidawo* (Even if you can kill me, I've spread. My roots are connected to this land. I'm not going anywhere). He said that: even if you can kill I'm not going anywhere. When the people who were at the meeting tried to attack this *boer*, Mkhize said no. He reprimanded them. He raised his hands and said 'No, let him do as he pleases'. Well, he was shot and killed. After his death the struggle continued, and the government tried to harass Mrs (Beauty) Mkhize. It thought she was going to be frightened especially after the murder of his husband. It really tried to harass her. We had people like Anneke (Klassen) working with us here, together with (Geoff) Budlender. There were many of them. At this stage the situation became really tense to the extent that, when I remember well ... [disturbed: someone entered the interview room]... We realised that everyone in Driefontein was against the removals except for the few people who had accepted Yende as their chief. Yende was only the chief of the Yende clan not of the community of Driefontein. If members of the Yende clan differed, he was responsible for resolving those differences. That's how he became their chief. But the mistake the Yende made was that they then regarded him as the chief of the whole community. But that was not the case. He was only responsible for the Yende clan. In Driefontein we didn't have a chief. Here we were under a committee called the Board – Council Board. Then it was responsible for overseeing the whole community. It was the Council Board that was at the forefront of the resistance against the removals. The *boers* who wanted to remove us from here realised that they couldn't convince the Council Board. So they created their own man who they could talk to and he in return would convince the community. Yende was able to convince only those who had accepted him as a chief. But the rest of the community rejected his plan. I can still remember that his had a sizeable following but they were not that many. We remained in Driefontein as you still see us even today we're still here. Time went and we continued staying here but couldn't see any development. And this happened until the release of Mr (Nelson) Mandela. Then the situation began to slowly improve. But this was after a long struggle against

the removals. As we speak there are rumours that the government wants to remove some of the people in Driefontein but I don't know where to.

TM: Wow?

JD: Yes. As we speak. The problem we're experiencing now is that we have other people who are not aware about our history. They'll be easy to convince to leave, because they'll be promised new places. It won't be like before. Well, time went on and Mandela was installed as the president of the country and we continued to live here. I once saw the *boer* that shot and killed Mr Mkhize at the gate in Oshoek.

TM: Oh, Nienaber?

JD: Yes, I saw him there. He saw and came and asked me where I came from? I said 'Well, I know you'. He asked 'Where do you know me from?' I said 'I know you from Dirkiesdorp, at eMabona'. He kept quiet. And then asked me where I was born. I said 'I was born in Driefontein'. He then turned back and left. We were next to the border gate. After I had mentioned that I was from Driefontein, he turned back and left. He didn't want to continue talking to me.

TM: Baba, you said you left the mine and came to live in Driefontein

JD: Yes.

TM: When you arrived here did you buy a stand?

JD: No, I didn't buy. I became a tenant at the stand belonging to the Ndaba family. I lived nicely there because Ndaba had allowed me to build as I wished. I lived there for a long time. When the attempts to remove Driefontein I was already living there. We were also fighting for this land although we were tenants. Years later I bought my own property. I left Ndaba's stand. And my property is in an area which forms part of the area Mr Mkhize was fighting for. I remember Mrs Mkhize and others went around looking for a vacant land to build and they finally bought it from the *boer* called Van Wyk. He sold that land and it's now called eZitandini or Masihambisane. That's where I have my own property.

TM: When you arrived in Driefontein to rent how did you find this place?

JD: It was just an open veld. Well, there was a yard and I started building my house. The yard was next to the road. I build my houses and installed *isithandelo*. The only limitation was that I didn't have enough space to plough. It wasn't a big yard.

TM: You mentioned earlier that people in Driefontein had bought stand and that meant they owned the land. Were there any rules or regulations guiding how the tenants should live in this area?

JD: No, the stand-owner where I lived did not set any rules or regulations for me. He welcomed and said I should feel free and the make the place my home. He allowed me to build in any way I pleased. In the end, when he was still alive, he suggested that I should buy his yard. But by then I had already bought my own property. He wanted me to buy the yard from him, because we lived well together. Unfortunately he passed away before we could even finalise our discussion. I was planning to purchase the yard where I had build my houses even though by then I had already bought my own property.

TM: What were the conditions of renting here – were you as a tenant expected to rent?

JD: There was a time in a year I was paying R100.

TM: In a year?

JD: Yes, in a year.

TM: Were there amenities like water ... what sort of amenities did you have in this area when you arrived?

JD: There were no taps. We used to dig pits.

TM: Wow?

JD: Yes, in our yards. You'll dig your own pit and draw water from there. Taps were installed recently. You were supposed to dig your own pit and toilet.

TM: What was the process of staying here as a tenant: could you just walk in and set a place or were you supposed to get permission first?

JD: You'd have to negotiate with the owner of the stand and when you agreed then you could settle in ... [disturbed: a woman talking to Mr Dlamini]

TM: When did you first hear about the news that Driefontein was supposed to be removed?

JD: When I arrived here there was no talk about the imminent removals.

TM: Then how did you hear about the removals?

JD: The first time I heard about it sounded as if the people of Driefontein were looking for another place to settle in. They wanted to move away from here. And then I heard that there was a place which had been identified for these people. That's what I heard after I had arrived here. But then the people of Driefontein began to question the meeting in which a plea was made for a new settlement. Then the question was asked: 'Who are these people who made this plea?' The answer was 'The tenants'. It was said that the tenants had demanded to move from Driefontein and were looking for a new place to live.

TM: Were there many tenants at the time?

JD: yes, they were many. A community meeting was called and none among the tenants knew anything about this discussion.

TM: Who called the community meeting?

JD: It was the Council Board.

TM: Oh! And where did the community meeting, can you still remember?

JD: At Qedela.

TM: Who did they call: only the standowners or everyone in the community?

JD: They called the whole community. We were informed that plans were ahead that the people of Driefontein would be moved to another place. The community responded 'We're not going

anywhere. We didn't send anyone to look for a new place for us'. It became clear that there were some people behind this whole story. After that meeting the situation seemed to calm down. Not long the issue came up again. But, again, it calmed down. It was like up and down. In the end the people who were behind the removals appeared. The community said we do not know these people; we only know the Council Board.

TM: Who were these people?

JD: Mr Yende and his supporters.

TM: Who were some of the people who supported him?

JD: Well, some of them I didn't know, but it was Mr Yende himself, and another Yende – I've just forgotten his name. But many of them were members of Inkatha. Later on some of his supporters defected and supported the Council Board. They questioned the issue of the removals, because they claimed that they weren't aware of it. They said they were not prepared to move from Driefontein. They argued 'We can't leave our forebears' graves and go and settle at a place we didn't even know. We're staying here'. That's how people remained in Driefontein until today. You know, the way we were fighting against the removals you'd swear we were also standowners. The people who suggested that the tenants wanted to move came from Yende and his supporters. We as standowners we were happy here as if we were now owning the stands. I'd be lying to you if I were to say I was ill-treated here by my standowner. I was comfortable in the stand where I was staying. And many others were too. I mean, after all we only paid R100 for the whole year. It was like I was staying for free. We paid towards the end of the year, in December. I mean if for some reason I could sense that I wouldn't be able to pay at the end of year I would inform my standowner and he didn't have any problem. He'd say 'We'll see during Good Friday (Easter). It was like I was staying for free.

TM: After you had settled this side what were you now doing?

JD: I became a farmer.

TM: Where did you farm?

JD: I farmed in my yard. I also tilled the land for those who didn't have the means to do it themselves. But we had to reach an agreement. If you were to go to some of the places where I farm you'd be able to take a photo and you'd see the maize I tilled.

TM: I think we can try to do that.

JD: Yes, you're welcome to take photos there.

TM: So some of the people would hire you to till their land.

JD: Yes, they hire me to do that for them. And after I've done everything I charge them. All the equipments used are mine: manure, seeds, antiseptics, diesel, and then I was using my own tractor. This happened until the government bought tractors for the farmers. Actually, the government those tractors for the farmers' association which I belong to. This association is made up of farmers from Mkhondo, Sofaspring, Amsterdam, KwaNgema, Umahamba. We're together in that association. With our tractors we till big farms. For instance, in my case I till a 28 hecters land to about 40 hecters. Then there are those tractors which till small farms. The

government doesn't contribute anything but the tractor. You have to secure your manure, diesel, seeds. All the government is that we maintain the tractors and avoid damaging them.

TM: So when you till for people how much do they pay you?

JD: Let's I've asked to till a huge land, but the owner has his own diesel and will give it to me to use. I'll first measure his land and check my diesel. If I had filled full tank diesel in my tractor I'll use my diesel to till his land. And when I'm finished he has to refuel my diesel to the point where it was when I came to his farm. It has to be full tank again. But he doesn't have diesel he has to pay me to refill my tank. You'll find that sometimes I have *dess, planter, spray* his land. But still some people would complain that the diesel I'm using costs a lot. Sometimes you'll find that they'll call me to come and till the land and when I get there the people there do not have diesel. You can imagine I can travel a long distance only to return home without working because there was no diesel. So I'll use my diesel to till the land. After work I'll the owner that he has to repay me for my diesel. When the owner has enough money he'll pay me for my diesel.

TM: So the land owners only pay for the diesel

JD: Yes. But what we have to resolve now is that the land owners have to pay some money in addition to paying for the diesel. For instance, if the tractor has a puncture the burden to repair it is left with the one driving the tractor. There's another gentleman, who is the chairperson of the association, and I'm his deputy ... When the drivers experience punctures they call me and I'm forced to use my own money to perch the tire, or to close the filters. If the tractors ran out of oil I have to use my own money again. Well, I pay for these things and keep the receipt. And when we meet I'll produce the receipts to prove how much money I have used.

TM: Oh, then the government reimburses you

JD: Yes, that's how we claim our monies from the government.

TM: Before the government's intervention when you arrived here you were self-employed...

JD: Yes, I was self-employed.

TM: Then how much were the people who asked you to till their land pay you?

JD: Then we charged R5 for *inyawo*. As time went on it increased and became R10.

TM: What is *inyawo*?

JD: Let's say for a hector we could charge R500. And you must remember that we're not calculating in terms of the length of the land but in accordance with the breadth of the land. That's how I worked previously, and that was my life. I worked at a mine and when it was shut down, that was the time when the country's economy was in shambles; overseas countries weren't purchasing our coal anymore, that's when I decided to become self-employed. I bought a tractor and three kombis, which I registered as taxis. Not long I had five kombis.

TM: You managed all these through farming?

JD: Yes, through farming. I worked in this rank. In fact, I applied for this taxi rank to be established. But after a while I decided to stop working at the taxi rank, because of differences. You know, I whenever I noticed that things were not going according to plan and when I tried to intervene and correct the situation, then some of the people would accuse me as being a

troublemaker. I was questioning the tensions which rose among members of the rank, to the extent that you'd then learn that one of the members had been killed somewhere. Then I decided to stop briefly, with the intension of returning to the business sometime later. I joined a farming association, and now I'm surviving through my tractor. I'm working for the Farmers' Association and work for myself. I till huge farms, anything from six hectares upwards. But those with one or two hectares I do sometimes help them. Actually, our tractors are not allowed to till small farms, anything from one up to five hectares. We start from six hectares upward.

TM: What is the full name of your farmers' association?

JD: Do you mean our organisation?

TM: Yes

JD: *Eish*, do you think I can still this name?

TM: You've forgotten it? It'll come back

JD: Yes. It's because it was established recently.

TM: It'll come back to you. When you first arrived here and started working as a farmer was everyone in Driefontein reliant on the land to survive?

JD: Yes, it was like that. People survived through farming. At home where I come from we used to farm using cattle. I grew up farming. I learned a lot about soil from an early age. I mean, I can look at the soil and tell you whether this soil is appropriate for farming or not. I can differentiate between various soils.

TM: When you arrived here what were people farming?

JD: Maize. Well, few people also farmed spinach. But the majority farmed maize.

TM: Where were some of the people in Driefontein employed?

JD: They worked in the forests for the Germans. Many of the whites living in this area are Germans. In the morning trucks and tractors would come to fetch them and in the evening they'd be returned home. They slept at home. Some were employed in Johannesburg. Others at Swepe, at Palmrod. It was where the famous firm of Baas Piet was located. Others worked in Piet Retief.

TM: Those employed in the forests what were they doing?

JD: Cutting down trees. Some where cleaning them; by that I mean they cut the leaves on the trees.

TM: Now after you've fought a hard struggle against the removals what is the land being used for today; do people still farm?

JD: In a strong way now. You see, after we had refused to move our neighbouring *boers* refused to employ some of our people. I can still remember some of them were even saying 'Go to Mandela to give you work'.

TM: That's what they used to say

JD: Yes. We then began employing some of these people to farm. After some these *boers* realised that their decision wasn't benefiting them, they then re-employed some of our people. The situation began to improve again.

TM: I'm certain that the community of Driefontein was expanding then.

JD: Yes.

TM: Did you have enough space to farm

JD: Well, not everyone liked farming. They wanted to live as if they were in a township. You can see now we have RDP houses. Even those who have huge tracts of land there are among them who do not like to farm. They'll ask you 'Who's going to till the land? We don't want to be covered in dust.' They ask us 'Who wants to work in a dusty place?' But there are those who really like farming. They hire people to farm for them and then pay them. I mean, in some of the house there are no men only grannies; in some cases the men work in Johannesburg; yet in other cases you'd find that there are men but they can't work with the soil. They spent their time drinking liquor.

TM: How do they survive?

JD: They say they make plans. There are women who also like to farm. You'll find that they have grown spinach in their yards. And there are those who like to farm but they lack land to do that. But again if you really want to farm and do not have enough land you can request your neighbours who have huge land but not using it to farm to allow to farm on their land. At the moment I'm farm about 38 hectors of land here. In some cases I'm using other peoples' yards. When harvesting time arrives I collect all my maize and take it to my yard, then compensate the owners of the yards with a sack of maize each.

TM: Mmm ... You also mentioned, Mr Dlamini, that you started living here as a tenant then later you found your own place. Can you tell us how you found this new place?

JD: The one I'm residing in now?

TM: Yes.

JD: This place was bought from a *boer*, Van Wyk. This *boer* was selling his farm. After hearing about this Mrs Mkhize, Sitha Gama, NaKhumalo went to discuss with this *boer*. Then they seemed to reach some understanding and trust. While we were waiting for the decision to be made, Mr Yende – the one I mentioned earlier – appeared in the scene. He approached this *boer* and told him that he wanted a piece of land because he had many supporters. So he wanted to buy this farm to settle his supporters. This *boer* informed him that he had already discussed this issue with some people in Driefontein. But he then said 'If they don't meet my demands you can still buy the farm'. This *boer* then called Mrs Mkhize and the other to come and see him. They went to his place. There he informed that there was a certain man by the name of Yende who came here with the offer to purchase the farm. They were surprised. I can remember exactly how much did that *boer* want for his farm. But we contributed R700 – If I remember correctly – then the government met us half way.

TM: Who were the people interested in buying this land: tenants or landowners?

JD: No, it was a mixture. Everyone was allowed to participate. That's why you had people like Mrs Mkhize involved as well. What was said was that the land was being bought for the people of Driefontein who didn't have places of their own. That's how we found that place. There are people who own stands in Driefontein.

TM: Is this place different from Driefontein?

JD: Yes, it is different, because there a length of a stand maybe could be about two and half hectares. Now what's happening is that all those who do not like to farm they fill their yards with tenants. In my case because I farm I don't have tenants. I have a big garden. The reason we wanted to buy that land was because we wanted to farm and own cattle.

TM: Do you find that today people are still using their land for farming?

JD: Yes, they still do. Even inside Enkampani (Isizulu name for Driefontein) there are still people who still farming.

TM: The other issue you raised was about the RDP (houses), which were built after Mr Mandela became the president. Who stays in the RDPs?

JD: Some of the residents there are people who were living in Driefontein, others are those from outside. And there are those who are employed by the mine, mainly those from Natal. I wouldn't know how this group ended up staying in the RDPs. I mean we've heard rumours that in other places some of the councillors were selling the RDPs. It's happening here as well. For example, I put down my child's name in the waiting list, but till today the house has been allocated to him. But somebody is occupying that house.

TM: You say your child's name was in the waiting list...

JD: Yes

TM: And the house was built and allocated...

JD: Yes. But then my son was no longer interested in that house. He went to work in Johannesburg and then returned to work at the mines. But then he passed on.

TM: Wow!

JD: That's how the story about the house ended.

TM: Mmm... But when looking at the life in Driefontein when you first arrived and now is there a change you can point out?

JD: Yes, then we were slaving under the *boers*. There's definitely change. You see, those who'll argue that there's no change I'd say are those who are lazy to work. Secondly... [cellphone rings]. From my side I can see some changes. The problem is that things do not always happen as they had been planned. When this mine started operating here we were told that the majority of people to be employed there will be from Driefontein and those living in the neighbouring areas. It was said that, for example, if the mine had employed 75 people 25 of those have to be from outside Driefontein and 50 be locals. That's not how things turned out. Even those people living in the neighbouring areas were not employed. Instead the mine employed people from far away in Natal, from Piet Retief. Discussions were held about this matter. I can still that I attended one of the meetings to discuss this matter. Then the clerk or someone in managerial position

confessed that he doesn't know who to speak to because even the chief has brought his own people. We asked him which chief? He said it's Yende. Which Yende, we asked? He said Gaba. That's Yende's son. We then told him that we're not saying the mine should employ our people but must hire the people of Driefontein. We didn't care whose people were employed but it should be the people of Driefontein. And we were not arguing against the employment of people from outside. No. We said they should also employ them. What we emphasised was that at least in a day they should employ about five or ten from Driefontein. This discussion continued for sometime until the mine expelled this man. Apparently he was making people paying him some money. Well, the mine is still operating, producing coal. But if you were to go through the mine's books you'll realise the majority of people employed there are from outside. What's sad is that ... You see, I worked in Natal for a very long time, I think I worked there for five years, people there didn't accept anyone from outside, even those from other areas in Natal. I was working in Dannhauser, at Dundee, and you'd find that there was someone from Vryheid. They wouldn't accept that person. They'd preferred to employ locals. In a case where they had employed ten locals, then they could employ another five from outside. That's how companies over there employed people. Here we see buses coming into Driefontein to drop off to start working at the mine. That's a major challenge we're still faced with and I don't know how it could be resolved. There are rumours making rounds that there are plans to remove the people who are residing at New Stands. Where they want to take them to I have no idea.

TM: Why – are their houses closer to the mine?

JD: Yes. But the mine is trying to use tricks. You know, peoples' houses over there are cracking. But the mine is still going down to produce coal. We need to investigate who agreed with the mine to operate here. You know, whatever machines the mine is using move underground some of the peoples' houses just fell down and broke. Those are some of the changes. But I must say today we're far better off than the time when the *boers* were still in control.

TM: Have you as a community met to discuss how to tackle the problems caused by the mine? I mean if peoples' house fall and break people would be forced to move out of Driefontein.

JD: *Eish!* The community once met, although when I got there the meeting had already started. Mrs Mkhize was present. Yes, the community once met and discussed this matter. The reason I arrived was because the main people who were called to that meeting were those who reside closer to the mine. But the problem we're experiencing now is that we have among us those who are opportunists. They claim that the mine has promised to find them a place to reside. What they forget though is that if and when that place is found will belong to the standowners and not the tenants. The mine will say to the standowner 'here's your new place with so many hectors'. And it would depend on the standowner whether they want to move with their tenants or not. It won't accommodate the tenants. And it'll be easy to do that, because the mine would say 'all those with title deeds should produce them'. Those who have them will produce them and get new places to live. If you don't have a title deed you'll be left on your own notwithstanding your efforts to convince others to move. Well, people can talk our government badly that it doesn't help people, but I must say ever since the black-led government took over we're receiving help. For example, I think it's about five or six years, or even leading up to ten years, the people who have small land to farm the government provides them with manure and they're assisted with farming for free, and they're also given seeds and have their land sprayed with chemicals. I mean those people whose farms range from one to five hectors. The government assist those people. Those in the farmers' association don't receive help from government, because it is said we farm huge areas. I'll say there's change, because the government does assist people who are farming

in Driefontein, even on the neighbouring farms. But the problem there is that many of the *boers* don't like that. They refuse entry to anyone wanting to enter their farms. There's a farm where I went to and asked the people who live how their employer was. They said he was okay because he tills their land. But on that day he had not finished tilling some of the land, because he was busy elsewhere. Then one of the men there asked me to till his land. Because he said his boss was okay, I went in and started working. I even *dessed* the land. I did that again in another homestead at Watervaal. I think there it was six hectares. The first farm it was six and half hectares. It was the same farm although they had built in separate places. I worked well there. The *boer* there didn't cause any trouble. On my way home, I tilled another farm belonging to a certain woman. She didn't have a husband. Her children were a bit older. I asked her whether they were assisted with farming or not on their farm. She said they assisted. Then I said 'How come your land was not tilled?' She explained her problem, including the fact that there was tension between the *boer* and her son ... [cellphone rings]. I think there's some progress now than it was before. There's a change, but for those who like to work. But those who are expecting handouts would argue that there's no change. I mean, even if you're begging but you shouldn't then want everything. People should meet you half way. They should boost to move ahead.

TM: And the youth does it also has the same enthusiasm to farm?

JD: *Eish!* In our area wouldn't want to lie ... There was a time when we met as Ndlangamandla Association. Our chairperson was Mr Dladla – Futhe Dladla. He gave them two hectares

TM: Giving who?

JD: The youth. This place was enclosed with a fence. He took them to a certain *boer* to give them a water-pumping generator. He set a day when they were supposed to meet to go to this farm. Up to this day they haven't showed up. In a meeting they were raising issues. Then Mr Dladla stood up and told them 9-9 (i.e. township slang for direct or directly) and none among them tried to refute what he was saying. In that meeting they were complaining saying 'We the youth are not taken care of'. Mr Dladla put up his hand and stood up. He told them 9-9. He asked them if he didn't offer them a place to till? He asked 'Did I take you to a certain *boer* in Piet Retief to donate a water-pumping generator to you? They all kept quiet. One of them said Yes, you did. He asked 'Then what held you back?' What help do you want now that you'll be able to accomplish? They couldn't answer him. Our youth ... You shouldn't be fooled when you hear them speaking on radio, complaining that no one cares for them. The youth is cared for but it doesn't want to work. All the want to work in the offices. If you say to them while you're waiting for those jobs work the land. They refused.

TM: Does that mean after you no one will work the land?

JD: Yes, it'll be the end. Well, there are those who are trying. But what I usually say is that if a child grew up in a family where the adults didn't work the land, then the child wouldn't know how to work the land later. When a child grows up in a family where everybody drinks liquor, that child would also become a drunkard. I work the land and my children also do the same. Some times I get called to come and till the land somewhere. Then someone else would ask me to come to their place. I then tell my children to go and finish off my work where I couldn't. They would do exactly as I instructed them.

TM: They're used to that kind of work

JD: Yes, they're.

TM: What's to *desa*, Mr Dlamini?

JD: When I *desa* it means I first use the plough to till in order to separate the soil, then pour some chemical to burn it.

TM: I think we can stop here. We managed to cover a lot of ground about the history of Driefontein, dating back to its origins and the attempts to remove it, and how this was resisted. I was particularly interested when you spoke about the youth. Because there's a misconception that everyone who lives in the rural areas likes to farm.

JD: That's not true. To be honest with you means are made to guide them in that direction, but only a few follow this direction. And these are the ones who grew up doing this kind of working. For instance, the children who grew up on the farms like farming. But those who grew up here only a few like farming.

TM: Does this mean the majority of the youth here is employed elsewhere?

JD: *Eish!* It's unemployed. Others are really searching for work but they can't find it. Well, there are those who have employed by the mine. I can't generalise as say all the youth is unemployed. And do find employed in the contracts, but before long you'll hear that they've left the job. I mean, I wouldn't allow anyone to come to work drunk, because should that person get hurt at work I'll have to bear the blame. Indeed, some go to work drunk and you wonder how they are going to do the job. I've experienced this. There's one young man I asked to help me driving my tractor. He said he doesn't like to work on Saturdays and Sundays. I, on the other hand, I work throughout the week, from morning 'till evening. I started at 4 in the morning and I'll finish at 10 at night. But then I requested him to assist me one Saturday. Hey, man he arrived but when he tried to stand up straight I could see he was shivering. I looked at him and asked him if his knees were hurting? And he said no. I asked then what's the problem? He said I started with a few drinks but then later I went overboard. But 'I'll be able to drive', he emphasised. I refused and told him that should he get hurt while driving my tractor I'll be asked 'didn't I see that you were drunk?' And how would I respond to that question? He looked the other way. Then I told him to leave. I got my boys to assist me.

TM: (laughing) Mr Dlamini, we can hold it there. Thank you

[END]