

Interview with Esther Segakweng, Salamina More and Petrus Rampou

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Tshepo Moloi [TM]: Today is the 23rd September 2013 and I am Tshepo Moloi and I am in Mogopa, am I pronouncing this correctly? I am with a few ladies here and they will introduce themselves shortly. They were involved in the forced removals and they live here and were affected by the forced removals. I would like to first thank you for your time and the information that you are going to provide me with today. As I said, this is a project for SAHA Land Act 1913 Legacy. It is just to get an idea on how the forced removals came about and how the place was and how things are today in a democratic country and how things are today and what you can recommend to happen in terms of development. To start with, I will ask you to introduce yourselves for me and tell me where you were born.

Esther Segakweng [ES]: I am Ester Mathapela and I got married to Segakweng and I was born in Mogopa and I attended school in Mogopa and I went to Swartkop.

TM: When you say you were born in Mogopa, do you know when it was?

ES: Yes, it was in 1969

TM: Okay

(Door opens)

TM: Okay and you are?

Salamina More [SM]: I am Salamina More; I was born and got married to More. I was born in Fochville and I moved to Mogopa in 1977.

TM: In Fochville when were you born?

SM: I was born in 1962

TM: Okay, let me go back to Ester and talk about when you were growing up, as this was the 1970's. How would you say the place was?

ES: Mogopa was a rich place to grow up in as it had plenty of farming and mining as well.

TM: What is that by the way?

ES: That is mining diamonds

TM: Okay

ES: Growing up was fine, as they used to mine diamonds as well during this time.

TM: What did they farm?

ES: Mabele, beans, watermelons

[TIMECODE: 04m:11s]

TM: Okay, if you can describe the houses during that time in the 1970's. How were the house then?

ES: As you know, as the Setswana language says that we will not be the same, and the others could build big houses and others built what their strength could afford them

TM: Okay, you are talking about people used to farm. Who used to farm: was it men or women or was it combined?

ES: It was the men that would farm

TM: Okay, it was the men and what would the women do then?

ES: They used to....[?]

TM: Okay, in the village here besides farming did they work in other places?

ES: There were people that worked in Rustenburg and the white people used to bring their own people to come and work on the mines and they did not like taking people from the community here.

TM: Okay, where were these white people from?

ES: They came from other places such as farmers or neighbouring farmers.

TM: Okay, they were farmers. If a person that worked in Rustenburg were they able to come home or how did that work?

ES: They would come back home every month, and they stayed there on the mines

TM: Okay, and Salamina,you say you were born in Fochville?

SM: Yes

TM: And you arrived here in 1977?

SM: Yes, in Mogopa

TM: Okay, when you arrived here, how did you find the place?

SM: It was a big area and it was beautiful and the people used to farm and the houses were built from stones. Others had shacks but there was love that was present in all the people and the men worked outside of the area and they would come home at the end of the month to bring the money that they had worked for during that month.

TM: Okay, it was mostly woman at home?

SM: Yes

TM: Okay, you mentioned that there were different types of houses and others lived in shacks and others lived in houses and I would like to ask, maybe Ester can respond, but when the people moved here, where were they from?

ES: They were from Free State

TM: Okay, let us say your parents and your grandparents, where were they from?

ES: They were from Free State and then they went to Loudenstate and then they came to Mogopa

TM: I did not hear you clearly there, what did you say?

ES: They were in Free State and then they moved to Loudenstate and then they moved to Mogopa.

[TIMECODE:07m:43s]

TM: You don't know when they arrived here by any chance?

ES: I am not too sure on that one

Petrus Rampou [PR]: I do not want to say that I am entering this too much but I want to help the ladies

TM: Not to worry I understand you can come into this as well. Come closer

PR: I am Petrus Rampou and I was born here in Mogopa on the 28th of 1958 and I was born here and there were clans here and there were six clans that were present. There were various clans such as Phuthini, Moreli, Kgafela, Thloane, Klaas and More in Mogopa. In this clan of Mogopa and they held or ran the community in Mogopa and there was a *Kgosi [Chief]* that was selected by the community at this time. They were on the top and they were on top of the More family and the *Kgosi [Chief]* was...

ES: Dialo

PR: No there was someone before Dialo that was Thomas More and he was the headman. Yes, it was Thomas More and he was the headman and he was selected by the community and this meeting was held in Bethal. There was a big meeting in Bethal for the people in Mogopa and they said that Thomas More should be the *Kgosi [Chief]*. After time the next *Kgosi [Chief]* that followed after Thomas More had passed away. This was Simon More that came and there were problems that came about. In 1973 and they wanted to put us under the leadership of Bophuthatswana. This is where they made us take identity documents or dompass [identity documents] for Bophuthatswana. This how the forced removals came about in Mogopa. They refused as they said our grandparents bought this land for their children and their children as well for them to live on and that is why they did not want to move out of this place. They bought both the bottom and the top and Swartrand IP 145 and this was bought by the elders and the others that came after them bought Haartebeeslaagte which was IP 146. These are the places that our parents bought for their families and Haartebeeslaagte was there where most of the farming activities took place to get food for the community to be able to eat. Once they were done farming they would take them to the community for everyone in the community to eat. However with the Government of Bophuthatswana this is when there were problems that came about. This is when the issue of forced removals came about in 1973. There were Pilani and Sethlari and then there was Ga Rasithunya [Clan – Gunmen] and those there were from Ga Raselepe [Clan – Axeman].

TM: Okay, so who was part of Ga Rasithunya?

PR: Rasithunya and they were happy with being part of the leadership of Bophuthatswana and Raselepe are those that did not agree with this and they believed that the land was bought by our parents for us to live on in 1910

TM: Oh, this was bought in 1910?

PR: Yes

TM: Okay, let me ask you then Swartrand and Haartebeeslaagte: is there a big distance between the two?

PR: It is not a big distance. You came in there where there is a tap: that is Haartebeeslaagte and then you went on and there is another gate and that is part of Swartrand and that is where the houses are built and on the other side is where the farming was done.

TM: So they bought Swartrand first?

PR: Yes, it was bought by using pounds which was the currency in circulation at the time.

TM: Okay

[TIMECODE: 14m:24s]

PR: I have the paper that shows this proof

TM: Okay and when did they buy Haartebeeslaagte?

PR: When they just bought Swartrand bought by our grandfathers and then our fathers added and bought Haartebeeslaagte and it was also bought by using pounds as well.

TM: Okay, the money: where did they get this to buy the land?

PR: Our grandfathers used to farm and that is how they made an income. They had chosen a headman that they had known and that person was a big *Kgosi* [Chief] in Bethal and that was Mamogale as they were unable to purchase land and they needed a *Kgosi* [Chief]. Mamogale is the one that bought Swartrand and Haartebeeslaagte and he signed for it as the others were not able to read and write and that is why Mamogale did this. It started off as Hebron, let me explain it for you when they left Free State they moved from there in 1910 and the others came and went to Swartrand and others went to Bethal and others went to Hebron and that is how they got to choosing a *Kgosi* [Chief]. That was Mamogale and the money from the mines for the diamonds and he took the money as he was the big *Kgosi* [Chief] or Headman and he took all the money.

TM: Okay, thank you it gives us context now. Let me ask you then in 1973 there was this meeting and then there was a division thereafter?

PR: Yes there was a division because we did not want to fall under Bophuthatswana and we wanted to fall under the land that we know. We were at the bottom and the top and we had the title deed of the land and it was signed for by our grandfathers and they bought it for their children and their grandchildren as well.

TM: With the ones that wanted to fall under Bophuthatswana or Bop, what was their reason for this do you know?

PR: Their reason was that they saw it as a good place when looking at Bophuthatswana and white people were better than black people. That is what they were after, most people that fell under Bophuthatswana did not like it really from the other side and... the Minister of Finance in Bophuthatswana and... I do not have his name.

TM: If he is a name, he is known so it is okay for his name to be discussed.

PR: Okay, it was Solomon Rathebe and he was under Bophuthatswana and he was the Minister of Finance and he used their money to bribe people and people thought that Bophuthatswana was great. That is how the division came about. In 1973 that is when the problems came about as some went to Bethal and others went to Modikwe and others went to Berseba. This all happened in 1973 with the forced removals.

TM: Were there a lot of people that left that time?

PR: Probably it was about 200 that left and then we stayed behind, and in 1984... no in 1983, the forced removals came about again. It came from Bophuthatswana and the president from Bophuthatswana came through to us at the school to talk to us regarding the move and what we would get from moving. The president was Mangope at the time. The place that they wanted to move us to was Pachsdraai; it is on the way to Modikwe by Zeerust.

TM: I saw it

PR: With that move as well there was a division again. Others stayed behind, I would say about 400 stayed behind and we said we were not moving and the rest left. After some time had elapsed... about August or from June to December that year, and then came February in 1984 and that is when the forced removal came and they moved us to Pachsdraai forcefully. They then took us to Pachsdraai forcefully.

[TIMECODE: 22m:05s]

TM: The ones that remained?

PR: Yes

ES: I would like to add a bit to what he has just said, with the forced removals we used to have prayer meetings at a church Roma with Desmond Tutu and Alan Boesak and the time was not nice really and then from then onwards the forced removals went ahead when they moved us to Pachsdraai

TM: Okay, let me go back to *Mme Salamina* as you arrived in Mogopa in 1977, there was a division already that *Ntathe Rampou* has mentioned. When you arrived did you notice these divisions?

SM: Regarding the forced removals of 1973 I was not there. However for the forced removals of Mangope, I was there and I experienced those removals. Even when he came to the school with the army and we were singing and we would have our hands crossed over and not shaking at all really.

TM: What does the song say?

SM: It is our land that belongs to us

TM: Okay, how does the song go though, would you be able to sing it?

SM: (Laughing)
(Singing Song)

SM: The people that met at the church at Roma before they moved, they used the trucks and they moved and when we stayed behind and our parents were being beaten and they were being loaded onto trucks and we followed them on buses and we found them there already.

TM: Let us stay on the removals of 1984; did they arrive in the afternoon or in the morning to move you all?

ES: They came around 3am and you would just see them and they had loud speakers when they arrived at your house, they would come with the truck to load your luggage and there was a bus that was there as well so they would pack your things and you would get loaded onto the bus as well. There was an office and you were given a number where you were going to and they would take you there. The people from Mogopa had cows, goats and livestock and the white people had slaughtered the cows and they had made their braai's if you go to that gate down there they had their things there and they had set up there and they were eating and drinking there. Our farms: we just left them like that, as they took us to Pachsdraai and in Pachsdraai Black Sash came in and Mike came there with Mokoena and found us. When we got to Pachsdraai Mike moved us and we ended up in Bethal. It was in the veld and some were taken to Modikwe and Berseba and others ended up in Bethal. We were not used to the life in Bethal; that is when a Trust was formed.

PR: Wait a moment. When we got to Bethal and Berseba we would have meetings at Oukasie and this fell under Brits and not under Bophuthatswana and therefore we could not hold our meetings in Bethal as it fell under Bophuthatswana. We held the meetings there with *Ntathe Mathse* to arrange to move back to Mogopa and in Berseba and Modikwe and Bethal we stayed there for about five years and we were planning throughout this time. We would hold the meetings at night because we were afraid. We would hold the meetings as it fell under Bophuthatswana and we were afraid to get arrested. The biggest thing was that we used the fact to clean the graveyards and we would take the elders and we would tell them to go to Mogopa and we used to hold the meetings.

[TIMECODE: 28m:12s]

ES: To clean the graveyards, this was when we had moved from Bethal and we were now in Onderstepoort

TM: Berseba.

ES: We had moved from Bethal and we had moved to Onderstepoort

TM: Okay

PR: There was alternative land that we were given by Gerrit Viljoen (Community Development Minister). He was the president at the time. He wanted to give us this land it was actually Piet Koornhof and this alternative land was Onderstepoort and we thought we cannot live in this place as this was close to Sun City and we cannot live here as it was too close to the luxury life and we are not working and we did not want to live there as well. We then decided to go and ask to move back to Mogopa, we stayed there for about 7 years in Onderstepoort. We planned on how we would go back to Mogopa and we were working with Black Sash through this time. We met with the president, no it was Gerhard Viljoen - he worked in the Government and we spoke to him and said we want to clean the graves in Mogopa as you can see we do not bury here where we have moved to, but we bury where we are from, which is Mogopa. We cannot bury all over and we used this and made a plan and took the elders to come and live closer and get a tap as well to get water and we would take water for them and Marj Brown and Aninka used to help us with food as well for these people who were cleaning the graveyards. When the Government saw that these people were coming back home we had them in one place, and then they started going to their houses and they stopped them and they wanted us to do things their way as they said that Mogopa was their land now. We agreed for them to show us. They took us to Vryburg, there is a place there which was called Madimagapane and they took us there and we refused to stay there as we cannot farm there and we said we want to show them where we want to go and stay. We decided to take them and they did not allow us to go to Mogopa, instead they went past and they were taking us to Onderstepoort. They refused for us to go back and we reminded that we have won the case in 1985 in Bloemfontein for the forced removals and it was won and because of your Government that was making us live uncomfortably but we then made an appeal with Shadrack More. This was in 1985, we had read the legal advice who was Cheadle Thompson and Haysom (CTH) and they were standing for us and we won it. They arranged for us to come back to Mogopa and we attended a few cases and we would win the cases because of the case of 1985 and Mogopa was the place for the people and we were removed forcefully. We won a few cases in the High Court in Pretoria. We got the permission that way to come back and stay in Mogopa. They had broken down the churches and schools and these were rebuilt again. People contributed about R5 or so to rebuild the schools and community structures. The school was done where it was before in Swartkop and it was called, Regorogile and it was because they had come back to Mogopa and that is how the forced removals of Mogopa came about.

In 1994, when we started falling under the President Nelson Mandela they would come to us here in Mogopa. Originally we were about 350 families in Mogopa however we are more now probably almost close to 600 families. Most of us want to be under ANC and we voted for them the ANC as a political party to get good things. Mandela then gave us R4 100 000.00 and he said you showed people that people do not get removed from their land forcefully. The houses that you see you would think that it is RDP but it is not RDP it was a project that Mandela put up for us, to build ourselves houses. We would give the people who were removed forcefully and we did this because we wanted the Department of Education to do things and they would ask us if there are a lot of us that needed a school for the children as we asked them to assist us and that is how the school was eventually built and it ends off in Grade 12. I am a little sorry that we did not start with what we were supposed to, but in Mogopa for it to be called Mogopa it was because the people worked for themselves. Our elders that were in 1910 or 1913 they had dug a water mill for themselves for them to get water. They did it for themselves up until they got water underground and they did not know these things of boreholes.

[TIMECODE: 37m:08s]

TM: You said you were going to explain why they called it Mogopa this place?

PR: I tried to look for this name that they say Mogopa and see what they are saying. So I said we have arrived at home or when I am thinking about it and what this meant and they said that they would dig to get to water and that is how they got to this name as they used to dig for water for themselves and that is how they got to Mogopa.

TM: Okay, I understand what you are saying; you wanted to add something Esther?

ES: Yes, it is Esther. Regarding the forced removals of 1983 to go to Pachsdraai. The tractors and the cars and what they used to farm, all ended up in Pachsdraai and no one got what belonged to them. The people in Pachsdraai asked for their cars and they never got anything back. Everything had been left behind and they got damaged.

TM: Okay, you say in 1983 and 1984 when they wanted you to move to Pachsdraai, which police moved you? Was it the South African Police that moved you?

PR: It was the South African police that were moving us. They were helping Mangope as they were working together and the white people wanted this land and they told Mangope to take us, the people, and move under his leadership. We did not know if they were with the Bophuthatswana police as well but their uniforms were the same. The white people wanted this land and they did not know how to do this thing. It was the South African police and they had the uniform on and we could not tell if they were with the Bophuthatswana police and their uniforms.

TM: So when they moved you, as you said that they came around 3am, when they got to the next place did they just dump you when they got to the other side?

PR: No they just dumped us on the other side as there was a big veld

ES: Where does he mean?

TM: They have moved you now at around 3am; they put you into busses and trucks, where did they take you to from there?

PR: Pachsdraai

TM: Okay, where did they put you were there? Houses or what did you find on the other side?

PR: There were shacks that had been built by the Government and they told you where you were going to stay,

TM: Okay, did they take the whole family or are there people that have stayed behind?

PR: They took the whole family

TM: Then what happens with this land, where they are moving you from?

PR: They would then take the land the cows were still there and we were selling cows at a very low price to get an income so that we can have some form of income on the other side to enable us to be able to eat. The white people also had cows and as you left they would come and break your house down. Some people had built their houses from bricks and sand and they broke the houses down. The first removal that left in 1983, they were given their compensation but when we moved we did not get our compensation.

TM: You wanted to say something *Me. Salamina*?

SM: I wanted to say when we arrived to Bethal and the *Kgosi* [Chief] he welcomed us and he did a celebration to welcome us when we got to Bethal.

[TIMECODE: 42m:47s]

He said we were big people, and he said when we pull each other we need to all help each other out.

TM: Okay, let me take you back a little as you mentioned a visit to the school by Mangope? Were you at school at that time? Do you remember what he said and what was happening around you at this time?

SM: He spoke about when our parents fighting and he did not make people fight and there was a child that fell in the fire and burned.

PR: Is this Mangope that you are referring to?

SM: Yes

PR: When Mangope arrived he said to the community of Mogopa, I have come home to where you wanted me to come. As children I am a father, the question I want to ask you if you find your parents fighting, as children do you help your parents to fight? No he said if you find your parents fighting and they see their child burning, they will leave their fight and help the child and then the child falls down and that was his words. We said, but the elders said that they would help the child from burning, and he said no I am here as well to assist you as children from burning.

TM: (Laughing), so he called the meeting with the community?

PR: Yes

ES: These meetings were held at Swartkop Primary School

PR: He would say that the dogs have been held and their mouths have been closed, because the President has come and dogs was the community that was refusing to move. When we agreed that our parents would not leave the child to burn in front of them, he would then say no, the wife has come now to come and help you.

TM: When Mangope came to speak to you did you know him at that time?

ES: Yes we did know him

TM: So when he got here, how did you welcome him?

ES: We would sing for him

TM: So was this song for him in particular?

ES: It was the National Anthem of Bophuthatswana

TM: But you already knew it?

PR: They would sing it at school

TM: Was this applied in the school even before the forced removals?

PR: Yes, this was in all the schools of Bophuthatswana, all of them and they would sing it and they would put the flag up as well.

TM: So after the meeting what happened? Was the community given a chance to ask questions at the end of the meeting before the meeting came to an end?

PR: No we were not given a chance to ask questions as I said the people were kept quiet as we were dogs that had been tied up on their mouths. The Minister of Finance said this and he said the President has arrived and he said the dogs had been tied up and they could not speak and we could see that and that is how a dog is if you scare it, that is what happens.

[TIMECOE: 46m:50s]

TM: Okay, why did the elders not raise their issues, were they afraid?

PR: No. The elders?

TM: Yes

PR: They were not afraid you have asked this in a good way. We had a *Kgosi* [Chief] *Mamogale* was working with Mangope and he was saying that he will deal with the President and we knew that as the headman he as agreeing with what the President had been saying.

TM: You wanted to say something?

SM: I wanted to agree with what he has just said.

PR: He knew what they had finished off with and that had discussed. They had agreed and the *Kgosi* [Chief] said when the President arrives you must not say anything, I will sort it out with the President

ES: That is what happened and thereafter they came and they started putting numbers on the houses.

TM: Okay, hold on what happened after the meeting?

PR: After two weeks they then came to put numbers to the people who were going to be moved.

TM: Who were putting the numbers on?

PR: It was put on by the South African Government

TM: So these numbers did they put them up while you were here and you had not been moved as yet?

ES: Yes

PR: Yes, they put them up while we were here

ES: These were the people who were going to be moved, not Black Sash. They used these so that you knew where you had to go when you got to Pachsdraai and you would just need to look for your number on the other side to ensure that you knew where you were going to on the other side.

TM: Okay, I am asking this question because in Driefontein they put these numbers up at night and they did not know the numbers that had been allocated to them?

ES: Here they did it in the afternoon

PR: Here they did it in the afternoon as they did not see any fights with us but they put them up and if you refused they would pass but they knew what they were doing.

TM: So they then take you there and you have been given your numbers and you are now in Pachsdraai and the shacks that had been built for you. If it happened that you did not have a shack, what did they do for you in this case?

ES: If they did not fit then you were given a tent

PR: Yes, they gave you a tent but there were lots of shacks. If your things did not fit they would give you something to cover your things.

TM: As you said that people from Mogopa used to farm and they had cows and they lost their things, how did they feel about this and losing their things?

[TIMECODE: 50m:34s]

PR: The feeling was sad for our families as they had lost their things and they did not get any compensation and they had lost their vegetables on the farm and the white people just took what was left and most of the parents passed away and only the children were left behind to see what has happened.

ES: I felt bad because we had a tractor and we had two vans and they ended up in Pagsdraai the tractor and the two vans and we did not get anything. They took everything out and the engine was on the floor and it was just a mess. Then you have to pick up from there.

TM: You were in Pagsdraai as you have a leader here and this was the headman in Pagsdraai. What happened there. Did you have a headman that led you or what happened in Pagsdraai?

PR: No you know what happened when we came here; it happened that this thing of the *Kgosi* [Chief] was killing us

TM: No, wait when did you come here?

PR: It was 1987

ES: No it was 1989

TM: No, I am asking about Pagsdraai

PR: We left things as they were and we trusted our *Kgosi* [Chief] *Mamogale* as we did not want to fall under Bophuthatswana and we believed that he would hold us. This happened up until we went to Onderstepoort, when we arrived there we had clans that I mentioned before and they had their individual head and when we arrived in Mogopa in the 1990's and we agreed that this thing of the *Kgosi* [Chief] was not working for us and this is when we formed the Trust. We then chose members of the trustees and it was formed through CTH and we formed the Trust and this was done with Aninka Claassens as we did not trust each other. We chose eight trustees and it worked up until the ones that are in place at the moment.

TM: What was the responsibility of the Trust?

PR: The responsibility of the Trust was to look out for the community

SM: They had to look out for the people of the land

PR: They had to look out for the land which was the chairman and we trusted them a lot and the treasury looked after the money and the secretary provided us with minutes and the chairman looked after the land.

TM: When you say they looked after the land, what do you mean when you say this?

PR: They would look after the land if you came from outside to look for a place to stay as this was for the children. We would give you the site and you would pay for example R1000 and that was for you and your children and that is how the Trust worked, and they looked after the money

TM: You said Aninka was one of the members, do you still remember any of the other members of the Trust?

PR: It was Thlapi, More, Aninka Claassens

ES: Phudiyane

PR: Yes, Phudiyane

TM: What his name?

[TIMECODE: 56m:15s]

PR: It was Phudiyane Molefe, Mokwale More, Aninka Claassens, Madimane Thlapi, Daniel Molefe, there was Lucas Kgatiswe and Khumulane Kgatiswe

TM: Who was chairing this Trust?

PR: It was Lucas Kgatiswe

TM: When you chose these people to be members of the Trust, how did you choose these people to be there in the Trust to represent you?

PR: The way you ask it, we looked at it from clans as we chose it from that clan we chose one person from each clan. We were afraid that if we chose one clan that there would be problems but if we choose one person from each clan that one representative can go to their clan and provide them feedback if money was received or anything happened then that representative can go back to the specific clan and provide them with feedback.

TM: Ester you mentioned that before the forced removals you were holding prayer meetings with Desmond Tutu and Alan Boesak, how did these meetings come about?

(Door opens)

ES: They came through Black Sash; they were motivating us through prayer, Piet would you be able to explain better for me?

PR: It was around June and Moatse and the white people came and spoke about the forced removals and they sat by the tree and they said let us go with children and there was a big tree and that is where the meetings were held and we could see the white people coming. When they come from the gate and that is what we did and they were afraid to come in because they saw Alan Boesak. However after three weeks they came and they proceeded with the forced removals. This happened in 1984 as they were afraid of the time that we were with Alan Boesak

TM: Okay, now you have been moved from Pachsdraai and others went to Bethal?

PR: Yes

TM: How would you say Bethal is in comparison to Pachsdraai?

PR: I would say Bethal is well developed it was close to employment as it is by Sandton and Randburg as you leave these towns you are in Brits. However it did not have water. It was easy to get employment though, there, but there was no water like Mogopa.

SM: We would need to get water from other places

PR: Other things were there- even education and there was Primary Schools and High Schools and Crèches as well.

TM: I want to ask a question before I forget it. Bophuthatswana is a country on its own and to live there and be a resident and get their benefits you had to have the relevant documentation for this and then at some point they used to take people from this side. When you went, did you have the documentation?

PR: Yes, I had one as I had the passport. It is green and long and I started off with this. I knew that this was for Bophuthatswana.

TM: There are others that did not take them?

PR: Yes, they had the brown ones, the old ones

TM: Those were the reference books

[TIMECODE: 01h:01m:54s]

PR: Those were from South Africa

TM: So when it is like that, in terms of the benefits, those that did not have the Bophuthatswana identity documents; were they able to get benefits such as schools, pensions or what did they do?

PR: Yes, they were able to as we were in Bophuthatswana and you would use the Dompas

TM: So you could use it

PR: Yes, you could continue using that

ES: I would like to add to that because, it was hard because our parents did not get any pensions, and they last saw a pension when they were in Mogopa. They did not get a pension when they were in Onderstepoort, Pachsdraai and Bethal and in Berserba that is where some of them got their pension. However only when they returned to Mogopa that is when they all got their pension again.

TM: So in Pachsdraai and in Bethal they did not get any of their pensions?

ES: No they did not; they only received the pensions again when they came back to Patsema when the Trust came in and spoke to the Government and informed them that the elders have not been able to get their pensions and the rest eventually only got their pensions when they came back to Mogopa.

TM: When they arrived in Pachsdraai did they attempt to apply for pensions again?

ES: Pachsdraai: I am not looking at this too much as we did not stay there for too long. We got there and we moved onto Bethal. In Bethal they did not get their pensions

TM: Why is that?

PR: In Pachsdraai if you agreed to go to Pachsdraai you received your pension just fine. However, if you had refused to go, then you would not get your pension. You needed to get the identity document of Bophuthatswana and the elders did not want to take these identity documents as they believed that they fell under South Africa and the Government said that they cannot help us because their Home Affairs worked with identity documents for you to qualify for the pension to be paid. That is why they struggled to get their money from the pension. They only got them when they went to the alternative land which was Onderstepoort

TM: Okay, what I am getting from this is that people used to be able to make an income and when you moved and others were not getting their pensions and how did they survive then in this case?

ES: It was difficult in Bethal. We lived on those that were working outside such as Rustenburg and they would bring us food and the elders suffered and if you did not go to school as a child, and it was hard because the police would give you problems. It was in the rules

SM: You pay for everything in your yard as well.

TM: What is that?

SM: You had to pay for what you had in your yard

PR: We were not used to this as well

ES: We were not used to this and we wanted to come back to Mogopa and we were not used to drinking water with the animals and it was very tough for us.

TM: Okay, another thing that you mentioned *Ntathe Rampou* was the case of 1985

[TIMECODE: 01h:06m:04s]

PR: Bloemfontein
(Interruption)

TM: So who did the community work with?

ES: Okay

TM: Are you going to lunch?

ES: No it does not matter

TM: Which lawyers did you use as a community?

PR: It was Cheadle Thompson CTH

TM: So in the community, who worked with them, the lawyers directly?

PR: They worked with the trustees

TM: So this is the Trust that you mentioned that had eight members?

PR: Yes

TM: So it started in 1985?

PR: Yes

TM: Another thing that you mentioned were the meetings that you held in Oukasie? Who was holding the meetings?

PR: In Oukasie we had meetings. We came from different places and there were different villages like Berseba,, Bethal and Modikwe. We could all go to Bethal and then go to Oukasie in Brits to have the meetings as we did not want to have them in Bophuthatswana as Oukasie fell under South Africa.

TM: At these meetings what did you discuss?

PR: We would discuss the issue to come back to Mogopa and compensation and how we would build houses and how we would leave here to go back to Mogopa as Bophuthatswana was here and we did not want any newspaper interviews as we were afraid that our plan would be released.

TM: Another thing was that you said from these meetings you came with a strategy, and have the elders to come this side and they would clean the graves. Were there people who agreed and were there people that did not agree with this?

PR: I would say 90% had agreed and there were others that enjoyed the life that side. They decided that they had built their own houses. When we started they told us to enjoy the life and if they say if we must leave, then we must leave and others enjoyed staying there and we were close to the towns as Pretoria and Brits and Gauteng and they decided that they want to stay and their children were working. They had built their houses and they were happy there.

TM: Okay, so you made the elders came this side?

PR: Yes 80% of the elders were this side now

TM: Okay, you put them close to a tap?

PR: Yes, we did this so that they did not suffer with water

TM: Were there any houses here as well for them?

[TIMECODE: 01h:09m:49s]

- PR: No we built shacks for them so that they can have a place to stay and the women were on the other side and the women were on the other side
- TM: What did you do, when did you do this, were they already this side?
- PR: We would leave Patsema around 3am so that we could be here around 7am in the morning. We did not want them to see us. We would put up the shacks and we would leave and in the evening we would leave and that week, that is what we did. At a certain time we knew we had to leave and we would ensure that by a certain time we would be gone.
- ES: By the time the white people woke up, they would say but you said that you were going to clean the graveyards but now you were moving back and then the Herz then came as well and that is how we all ended up coming back.
- PR: TRAC helped us with trucks to move us which were the Herz. I am sure the papers are still available with these and they would move us and the white people saw that we were going back to where we stayed and we had won the case. They saw that in 1985 we had opened a case and we had won this case.
- ES: There was a way to come on the other side by the veld. The Herz, they had been blocked in the afternoon but in the evening we would come in and when they looked it was the whole clan that had come back to Mogopa
- TM: So finally you are home and there is a new Government and you spoke about the project that Nelson Mandela had to build houses. To go back to the way life was before, where you used to farm and make a living from this, were you able to do this again when you came back?
- PR: Yes, we did try it but the problem was the community: we killed ourselves, because we bite ourselves with a snake which was alive. We let the Government help us and they sent five tractors to farm and then we took half a million and we used that and the men would farm with these and this was done for three years and in the first year they gave us seven bags which were 50kg of maize meal for each house and the other year they gave us six and the third year and they gave us about four or three when there were problems. Where there is no white person, there were problems. You could do things with your own tractors. This is when there were problems. We got here and they would farm and they would not give us anything, and there were problems. This is when the white people heard that that we did not want them and they took and they were farming and this was all happening because we do not understand each other and there was a lot of conflict which was raised.
- TM: However with these two parts, who wanted to do what?
- PR: There were trustees and there was a chairperson of the trust
- TM: Oh, this was after the first Trust?
- PR: Yes, he tried to get us houses, schools but now the problems came about when you see them driving certain cars and they had other plans and that is a problem and that is when the problems came about. The Trust was there and we did not really see their purpose anymore as the money was going to lawyers now. Every month was paying the school children as the children finished school up until matric only that they could not go further and the money was from the mines and it is about R78 000 for the mine being run here and this money we thought would be able to send the children to school to further their education after matric .However there were problems that came about. They pay the lawyers, the Trust that came in now has their own lawyers and the Trust is only looking to the money only.
- TM: Esther you wanted to say?

[TIMECODE: 01h:16m:42s]

ES: The problems are rising; it is because of the mine of the diamonds there and we do not know anything about diamonds as a community. We do not know where the diamonds are sold and the community do not know what happens with these diamonds. We do not benefit as a community. The people that are benefiting are there but not the community and the mine is doing nothing for our children. The agreements of the community it was that they had to educate the children. The children had to learn where it is going to but they do not know anything. The mine works and the diamonds go out and it happens in that way and there is no child here in Mogopa that knows what happens with the diamonds: where they are sold and what happens to them.

TM: How do people live today, what do they survive on today?

ES: The company has its own people; they have not used any people from Mogopa

TM: Which company is this?

ES: The diamond mine there. I am sure they only employ only 10 people from Mogopa and this was a fight as well and this is what is causing problems here as well.

TM: Are there people that are farming though here in Mogopa?

PR: No the people are still farming; those that can. If you cannot then you do not. It is done as a community, it is at the bottom.

ES: The mine that is set up there, it has been built on people's farms and they are running the mine on someone's farm. This is what other households used to live on.

PR: When they started, the agreement with the old Trust was that if they find a diamond here and it is on your farm and you would get something from that as per the agreement and the other thing was that first priority if there was employment, they would take the children from here to get a skill and the third thing was that if you passed at school, another person has studied to be a doctor, agriculture or whatever it is, the mine would educate the children. But now we are just sitting but the agreement was like that and this was done for 15 years with the mine. The people are fighting. It is the white people, they are proceeding and they don't care and the lawyers are not worried they are getting paid, but they are not working. They get paid every month.

ES: The money that they are giving to the community of R78 000 is not for anything else really but more for the water that they are using so they are paying for the water that they are using.

TM: Oh, okay so they are paying the water that they are using?

ES: Yes

TM: So this money goes to the Trust for the development of the community?

PR: No it does not develop anyone but you have put it correctly though, it was set up to develop the community of Mogopa but it is now paying the lawyers that have been selected.

SM: The lawyers are being paid because they are making them hold something, they will not just pay them for the sake of it but they are doing something that they all know.

PR: Yes, that is true, they are all working together

TM: It is painful as you come very far with this issue

ES: It is painful as the tar road is here and the houses are there but the mine is there is and the children are not able to learn anything about the mine and what happens there.

[TIMECODE: 01h:21m:44s]

However nothing is happening and that is what is painful, is that the only one that benefits is the one that is in the office but the money is for the community but the community does not get anything then they should not call it the money for the community but more the money for the individuals that are in the office.

TM: Okay, I see that this is a project here, where you work what is it called?

SM: It's a woman's project

TM: When did it start as I see you are doing fences and other things?

SM: It started in 2000

PR: I would say 2000

SM: I would say 2006 and the Government started funding us last year July. They would give us machines and this is used here.

TM: Is it only women that work here or are there others?

ES: It is a few women that work here

TM: Okay, so it is only women?

ES: Yes

SM: Even when the money comes you cannot do everything that you want to do and the money is finished now and we have not got everything that we needed to do and now we need to go and request more money.

TM: But that is what we are doing so that when someone else sees it and they can help, you never know where help can come from

SM: Yes

TM: But would you say that there is light at the end of the tunnel?

SM: There is light and we believe that it will be okay

TM: Thank you very much ladies and Ntathe Rampou and we will meet with others to get other view as well. It was interesting though to meet with you. I must just ask you though as you were part of the youth in that time, were there any political groups in that time for the youth?

ES: No there was nothing

TM: The school was it a High School or what was it?

ES: It was a Primary School; the High School came in when the Government built the school

SM: Khutlwano was there though?

ES: But he is saying when we came back

TM: Before you left, was there High School and a Primary School?

ES: Yes, there was the High School ended off on Standard 8 [Grade 10]

TM: Okay, and what standards were you doing at that time?

ES: I was doing Standard 5 [Grade 7]

TM: Okay, so that was higher primary at that time?

ES: Yes

[TIMECODE: 01h:25m:39s]

TM: Me. Salamina you mentioned something about you came here in 1977, what made you move here?

SM: My father had bought land this side

TM: Okay, so that is why you came here and you found the removals this side

SM: Laughing

TM: But I think in Focheville there were removals as well?

SM: We used to live in the rural areas and not in the townships on that side

TM: Okay, we will put this all together and you will also be in the history books as well.

SM: Okay.

[TIMECODE: 01h:26m:27s]

[END]