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INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH MOIME MADIMABE

Dale : First of all thank you very much for agreeing to talk with us and we appreciate the time. For the record, if you can say your full name and your position

Councillor: I am Moime Madimabe Joseph, I am a ward councillor in ward 10 Tubatse Municipality.

Dale: Thank you very much councillor. What we are going to do is we want to start by asking personal questions as we are doing with all our interviewees. Were you born here and raised in Maandagshoek?

Councillor: Yes.

Dale: What year were you born?

Councillor: I was born in 1964

Dale: When you grew up here can you tell us a little about how life was in the 1970s and 80s growing up as a teenager. Were things very hard for you? Give us a sense of how people lived during those years. What were most people doing, were they farming or was it difficult?

Councillor: Life was very difficult during that time because there were no facilities. We had to travel from Malotsane village there to Maandagshoek village for school but farming was going on here, the whole people used to farm some crops but life was very difficult during that time because there was no infrastructure, things like electricity, and things like that.

Ahmed: Your parents, what did they do to make a living?

Councillor: It's a very personal question, my father died in 1978 and I was still young, my mother was not working at that time and so she was just selling fruits.

Dale: Was she growing the fruits herself?

Councillor: Yes she was selling to various houses fruit like bananas, apples and oranges

Dale: How far did you go in terms of your education? Did you go to grade 10 or did you go all through the year?

Councillor: I did my primary senior teachers diploma in 1993 Thabamookwa college in Lebowakgomo.

Dale: Can you tell us a little bit especially in the 1980s, with the political situation because that's when a lot of people were struggling, when the UDF was around. How was it in this community ... the struggle against apartheid?

Councillor: Things were very tough in 1986, especially because the whole community was involved in a lot of activities things like burning of other people who were called witches and a group of people who called themselves comrades from some political organisation if there were any political comrades banned. A political organisation even if I was not political that is the UDF, they used to go to school and mobilising the students so that they must be against the apartheid government and even the communities through civic organisations.

Dale: And were you directly involved with the civic and the organisations at that stage?

Councillor: No I was involved in the youth when I was still at school but not deeply in politics but that time there were comrades who used to collect us from the houses to go to the mountains and have meetings so that they can give us the direction of what we can do to make sure that the apartheid government was ungoverned.

Dale: Would you classify this area of Maandagshoek as a fairly ANC area?

Councillor: Yes.

Ahmed: Were there any other organisations that were part of the liberation movement like maybe PAC?

Councillor: Up to so far statistically speaking only 7 individuals from PAC but there is no formal structure of the PAC here, but certain individuals used to call themselves the PAC indigenous from that other section but some of them relocated from Maandagshoek to other areas up to so far there is no formal structure for any parties except ANC.

Dale: How would you describe the relationship at that time in the 1980s with the homeland government because I understand that this area fell under Lebowa, right? How would you describe the relationship with the homeland authority?

Councillor: In my experience I have realised that the homeland government was just being too much in urban areas like in Lebowakgomo, they were neglecting areas like Maandagshoek in terms of development, they just come here when they want us to vote for them after that they disappear and come again after 5 years for what we call elections.

Dale: Just to shift a little bit to the 1990s, when things began to change ... the negotiations, liberation movements were unbanned and April 1994 elections happened. How did you feel when things began to radically change in South Africa ... I know you have been a councillor for awhile but how did you feel at that time?

Councillor: I was very happy, I knew that we were going to be liberated, people are going to live freely without and people are going to have freedom in terms of development, making sure that the construction and development are maintained by a new government.

Dale: As a resident of this area, when were you first elected as a councillor for this ward?

Councillor: In 2000.

Dale: Before 2000 as an ordinary citizen here active in this community from 1994 to 2000, what kind of changes did you see in this community?

Councillor: Yes there are a lot of changes, no.1 is in our area before 94 things like and those things, electricity in the section came in 1992 and before 1994 people used to fetch water far but after 94 up to now things are slowly changing because communities are no longer getting water from far, they are no longer getting water from the rivers they are getting water near just 200m.

Dale: So when you were running on the ANC ticket, what was the platform that you ran on? ... The general platform of the ANC or the service delivery, what did you tell the community what was going to happen after you are elected?

Councillor: No, according to my political organisation ANC, what we do is we are nominated as candidates from the community then ANC which is campaigning for us. They are just used to going up and down and campaigning even if we are part and parcel of the campaign but we campaign in the form of political organisation.

Ahmed: And what are the main issues which the ANC was campaigning on, what were the issues that you or the ANC were promising the people?

Councillor: We campaign by using manifesto of the ANC, as SA citizens I think we all know the ANC policy that ANC wants to a better life for all as soon as possible.

Dale: Since you have been elected as a councillor and this is your seventh year and you mentioned that since 94 there have been some changes, since you were elected what are the improvements that you have made as a councillor?

Councillor: When I arrived in Maandagshoek, there was no water and now the community has water and there was no electricity in some villages here and now most people have those facilities and the RDP houses have been built and schools and other things are busy being built, soon or later the issue of roads would be constructed.

Dale: In our discussions last week with some people in this community, we have come across one of the big issues that they have been speaking about is the mine that came here in 2001, the Modikwe mine. What did you think about the arrival of the mine and the situation in this community?

Councillor: Since the arrival of the mine in our village there were a lot of problems. Since the mine started in 1999-2000 many problems began, some groups of the community supported the mine and some group was against the mine since then the situation has not been good.

Dale: When you say the situation is not good can you give us an indication of what you think the problems are?

Councillor: Since the mine started here there was a question of BEE I think you understand that the mine is controlled by Anglo Platinum and there was a company called ARM the main aim of ARM was to make sure that people participate in the mining activities in terms of helping the blacks and the disadvantaged people who were neglected by the mine long time ago. That was the main aim of the formation of the joint venture. But after the elections of the representative directors of the mine, the problems were not solved by then and there were problems of satisfaction in terms of service delivery and social labour law. According to law the mine must make sure that the community in which they are mining the lives must be improved in terms of building schools and improving their basic needs that is water, assistance in terms of building infrastructure, so that is the role of the mine in the particular community, they are to abide by the law to make sure that they improve the community where they are mining. Up to so far if you can check only little things were done like erection of the pipe there which is no longer working here and they built one school with 4 classes, one block and instead of making sure that the road from here to Matimatsatsi then that road was not good the mine spent R 600 000 but if you can go there now you can not tell that there was a project. The mine has done so little for this community there is no improvement that you can just point and only little was done.

Ahmed: Apart from the little that was done in terms of the development, do you think that they have been successful in empowering people from this community?

Counsellor: In my view I don't see any improvement here or any empowerment because most of the community members are still living in poverty if you can check. The only empowerment is employment of the people. Even if most people are still unemployed, there were supposed to take a lot of people in the community but vice versa they were taking people from other areas like if you can go to the mine you will find most people who are not from here but the community here is full of unemployed people. In terms of upgrading the community it is not enough.

Dale: We have heard about the section 21 which is part of the social development plan. What do you think of section 21?

Councillor: Since section 21 was established here in the community, there was no full report to the community saying here is the money donated to the section 21 in terms of shares in the mine, here is the amount in which the community must see to it what they do with that amount. Up to so far there are no full reports to the community. Since the section 21 was formed there have been people in the community called directors to bring reports but up to so far any big project in the community which was done by section 21 cannot and when we used to ask were is the money from section 21 then they will say the community is owing certain trusts from the mine. It's a huge amount that is why section 21 cannot bring money to the community, up to so far there are no benefits.

Dale: Can you tell us the kinds of things that you do as a councillor on a daily basis? If someone were to ask you to give a job description as a councillor, what would you say your job consists of on a daily basis?

Councillor: My job is to make sure that the lives of the community people is improved in terms of bringing projects from the municipality to the community and taking the views of the community to the municipality and bringing them back to them and addressing some of the problems ... water problems if they are, I have to take them to the municipality so that they can come and fix them. And even the projects of this community the municipality must make sure that they improve this community.

Ahmed: In doing those things, what are the main challenges that you face as a councillor?

Councillor: Sometimes you take problems of the community, like issues of the road, then you find that due to the challenges, of service delivery and changes for the whole country the challenges in terms of deliveries you cannot do all things in one day, then you must make sure that the little budget that you are having and give it to the community. That is a challenge because sometimes when you ask money you find that somewhere somehow there is no budget to make sure that some of our plans are implemented.

Ahmed: I want to ask you about the water, you said that with the RDP there must be a stand every 200m but for instance we have been here a couple of days and we went to where people collect the water still from the stream and from the houses that side of Maandagshoek there is no 200m in those houses.

Councillor: No, there are taps every 200m but somewhere somehow we are having problems maintaining some of the schemes maybe the pipe can be broken, I think you understand that there is a public strike and the municipality are part of the strike and when we report things it takes a long time for them to come and fix that broken pipe. It is not that you use a phone to call them and they come and fix it at the same time, some times they take two to three days depending on the work load and the places where you come from. You may find that the community do not have water and they are still getting water from the stream, you may find that in those areas there is a problem of maintenance somewhere and the pipes are broken somewhere at Maandagshoek dam - that's why they are not getting water now but this thing of maintenance we are busy addressing it.

Ahmed: How long is this infrastructure needs to be maintained, how long have you been waiting to fix it now?

Councillor: As I have said somewhere somehow it depends on the type of pipe you are talking about so it depends on that, because we have different kinds of contractors and some contractors come from water affairs but now they were transferred to the municipality and maybe they can take the consultant. If the issue is still under consultant, it can take two weeks or maybe three weeks it depends on that consultant he has no job somewhere, then he can come quickly and fix the pipe.

Dale: In terms of your service delivery backlogs in this area, how big are they?

Councillor: Now we are having a little problem as I have said that some communities are getting water from 200m but we are still having problem of the scarcity of water on the ground because we are using the boreholes. We don't have the source but up to so far if you can go to that side of the mountain we are creating some reservoirs two of them there were constructed from the pipe that takes water to the mine.

Dale: In terms of your backlog?

Councillor: Somewhere somehow as you have already said if the communities, if the machine is broken we give some few days before it can be fixed and during the waiting time the community will not have water. They used to buy but the backlog in terms of water is not used since 2000 up to now things have a little bit changed in terms of the backlog. As I have already admitted that maybe if those reservoirs can be constructed then we get water, the whole community no one will be crying because they will be having water.

Dale: You mentioned that one of your challenges that you are facing as a councillor was that when you take a request from the community to the municipality that is not in their budget. We are aware of the project from the national – Project Consolidate - which is to try to empower the local municipalities that are weak, How would you describe this local municipality in terms of meeting the needs of this community?

Councillor: The problem is resources as our municipality is still new – they were started in 2000 - then we don't have a lot of resources in terms of the implementation of other projects in the community. As you have already said that we are under Project Consolidate, there must be a lot of people who must be deployed from national to come and assist the municipality in the path of technical, like engineers and so on, project like road and so on must be implemented quickly. We have been waiting for the consultant. Now we use consultants in some of the projects because of lack of the skills.

Ahmed: I noticed here that most of the houses are on prepaid electricity, like in urban areas there are some illegal connections, do you find the same problems here?

Councillor: Yes some people have used that connection.

Ahmed: And how do the councillors and municipality deal with those kinds of problems?

Councillor: We used to meet with the Eskom people so that they can speed up the post connection. It is up to that individual to go to Eskom and fill the forms for post connection and if that person fails to go, we must make sure as the councillor that we go to that person and remind them to apply because we can't afford to lose the connection.

Dale: I know that free water does not apply here since there are people who get water connected to their houses, do people get free electricity?

Councillor: Yes there are some people who get free electricity.

Dale: The free national amount?

Councillor: Yes.

Dale: Where do you see things going for the community in the next five years? In other words what do you feel about the future?

Councillor: When I observe a lot of things in this community, I can see that if we can get a lot of infrastructure in this community, it will be developed so if things like infrastructure can be implemented, things will go well.

Minutes: 35
