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Name of Interviewer/s: Dale McKinley & Ahmed Veriava
Name of Interviewee/s: Rabase Lehlohonolo
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INTERVIEW WITH RABASE LEHLOHONOLO

DM: Dale McKinley (DM): When were you born?

RL: Rabase Lehlohonolo (RL): I was born in 1988.

DM: And where were you born?

RL: I was born in the farm, Glen Morr.

DM: How far is that place from Rammolutsi?

RL: It's not that far, about 6 kilometres.

DM: Were your parent's farm workers?

RL: Yes they did work at the farm but not anymore.

DM: What kind of work did they do on the farm?

RL: My mother worked in the kitchen and my father was a tractor driver.

DM: Can you tell us a little bit about how it was growing up on the farm?

RL: It was great because we learned so much at the school.

DM: Did you go to a farm school?

RL: Yes.

DM: Did you enjoy growing up in the farm?

RL: It was not bad, but for grade 8 we had to come to the township.

DM: How far have you gone at the school in the farm?

RL: Up to grade 3.

DM: Did your parents have a good relationship with the farmer?

RL: Yes they got along very well.

DM: What kind of house did you have in the farm?

RL: We used to stay in a four room house.

DM: What about the food and the basics?

RL: We bought ourself food, we got mealie meal from the farmer, and we did not have electricity.

DM: As a child at the farm, did you have a happy childhood?

RL: Yes it was good; we used to draw at school and at home in the farm.

DM: Did you as a child get mistreated by the farmer?

RL: He did not treat people so good. By the time when we moved he treated my parents so badly.

Ahmed Veriava (AV): Can you explain a little bit more about what happened that caused you guys to move out?

RL: My parents had a fight, someone took it to the farmer. It involved my uncle, and then we were ordered to move out of the farm within 5 days.

DM: How long had your parents lived on the farm?

RL: 15 years.

DM: You said you came here to Rammolutsi from the farm to attend school. How did you come to school everyday?

RL: I was staying here with my aunt.

AV: When your parents moved out of the farm, where did they go?

RL: They came here in Rammolutsi.

AV: Did you guys have a house here?

RL: We had a stand and my father built a shack.

AV: Are you still living in that shack?

RL: No, we live in an RDP house.

AV: When did they build that house?

RL: 1999.

AV: What year did your parents move out of the farm?

RL: 1996.

DM: What year did you come here to school?

RL: 2000.

AV: What grade was that?

RL: Grade 3.

AV: Was there any differences between the two schools?

RL: Yes, there were a lot of changes ... the periods, lot of work and the teachers; each had a subject to teach unlike in the farm.

AV: Did you find the work very difficult?

RL: It was difficult.

DM: Being born in 1988, you were 6 years old in 1994; do you remember anything that happened in that year?

RL: There have been many changes. I remember our parents going to vote and we children remained in the farm.

DM: What do you remember as a child?

RL: They were happy because they voted for the party of their choice.

AV: When you think of 1994, what does it mean to you?

RL: It is the year we got democracy, we have equal rights.

AV: Why is that important to you?

RL: Because we got freedom and we have equal rights.

DM: And you are still at school, what grade are you in?

RL: Grade 10.

AV: Was the way you were disciplined here at Rammolutsi, different to the way you're disciplined at the farm school?

RL: Yes, there are differences. Here the teachers will sit you down and have a close talk to you unlike in the farm.

AV: How many were you at the farm school?

RL: We were about 46, and because we were very few, we used to have other kids from other farms as well.

AV: I hear you are a member of COSAS, is that true?

RL: Yes.

AV: When did you join it?

RL: I joined this year in February.

AV: Was COSAS there at the school before you joined?

RL: It was there.

AV: Why did you join COSAS?

RL: There are a lot of things I wanted to do with them that happen at school and outside school, and I want to experience lot of things with them.

AV: What did you know about COSAS before you joined them, their history or anything?

RL: I read a lot about their history.

DM: What did you think of their history, did you like it?

RL: I liked it so much that I wanted to be part of this organisation, to go forward with it.

AV: What do you mean go forward?

RL: I mean to go forward helping other schools that don't know anything of this COSAS, like the farm schools.

AV: If you were to meet one of learners from farm schools, what will you tell them ... why should they join COSAS, and what will it do to help them?

RL: I will tell them about the history of this organisation, the things it does at schools, and what it already done to help other schools. I will also tell them about their rights as school kids.

DM: What are those rights that they should know about?

RL: The rights to listen in class, not to fight the teachers.

DM: Has COSAS here in Rammolutsi taken up any campaigns?

RL: Yes, they have done a lot last year, and since I joined we met one school in campaigning.

AV: Are you a good a student at school?

RL: I am a good student.

AV: Give us some example of things that some learners do at school that are not good?

RL: They disrespect teachers, they carry knives at school, and they smoke in school toilets.

AV: Are there many fights at school?

RL: They formed groups, from home and they are fighting with one another, the fight may start at school, so one must always be prepared to fight at any time.

AV: Why do you think there is a lot of gangsterism in the community?

RL: This thing is affecting the community so badly that you may get attacked, while walking to the shops or just going anywhere.

AV: What is your opinion, on why these people are doing this?

RL: I think as friends they mislead each other, and if one says we are going to do this, they all think they don't have a choice but to do it.

AV: How does this affect you at school?

RL: It is very bad at school. When they have started they even come into classes looking for their opponent, and when find them they will fight right in the class.

AV: Have any of your friends died or seriously injured as a result of this gangsterism?

RL: It's only one that was killed while I was at primary school.

AV: Besides gangsters, are there any other bad things that are taking place at school?

RL: They are smoking dagga in the toilets, but with beers they mostly drink on Fridays during breaks.

AV: In terms of school, do you have all text books?

RL: Yes we do have them.

AV: What do the teachers and the principal do to solve these problems you already explained?

RL: In terms of dagga and drinking, they call the police, to come and to talk to learners.

AV: Do the police act against learners?

RL: They'll take them with, but the following day we see them at school.

DM: Just to go back a little bit. Since you moved here to Rammolutsi, what are your parents doing?

RL: My mother is a domestic worker, and my father has no job.

AV: In terms of electricity and so forth, are you on pre-paid?

RL: Electricity is on pre-paid but water is paid monthly.

AV: Have you ever had to go without electricity at home?

RL: It happened, but not for a long time.

AV: What's the longest that you had to go without electricity?

RL: For two weeks.

DM: What do you do after school? Just your ordinary day?

RL: When I get home I'll rest a bit, and then go out to my friends and later I go to school to study.

AV: Do you go to school every night to study?

RL: Yes, every night.

AV: In terms of at home ...do your parents expect you to help with anything?

RL: Yes, with garden and cleaning the yard.

AV: As a hard worker at school, what do you want to do when you finish school?

RL: I want to go and further my studies at the university.

AV: What would you like to study at the university?

RL: I want to study medical doctor.

AV: Do you know anyone who studies at the university here at Rammolutsi?

RL: No.

DM: Do your school offer any extra curricular activities such as sports or club, and there are

you involved in those things?

RL: I am taking part in cricket and I'm an athlete.

DM: Does the school have the facilities like for cricket and stuff.

RL: Yes, but not as much, we get some from love life.

DM: What do you see as bad things and good things here at Rammolutsi?

RL: Bad things, there are no lights for some people, and some don't even have places to stay. Good things, we no longer going to use the bucket system because they are building us flushing toilets.

DM: What do you do for fun on weekends?

RL: We go to someone with a computer, and then he'll show us the stuff of the computer, from there we watch TV.

DM: Are there any clubs that you go to here in Rammolutsi?

RL: I don't drink, I don't smoke and my parents don't want me walking out late.

DM: What do you think can be improved for your schooling?

RL: If they can build us a place to play cricket, because we wait for soccer players to finish then we go in and play. If they can make every field for every sport.

DM: Lastly what would you say to all the young people who might watch this, about the future?

RL : I would like to say, gangsterism doesn't pay, drinking and walking out in the nights is just a waste of time. Most all they must focus on their school work, education can brighten their future.

AV: Is there anything that you would like to say that we did not ask you?

RL: We don't have a person who can organise us matches, who can organise the competition for us because we just play but we don't go anywhere? We like drawing but we don't have anyone recognise our talent.

DM: Okay thank you.

RL : Thank you.

Minutes: 38:16

