

Xhosa – English translation

C: Convener

I: Interviewer

R: Representative

C: Introduces the interviewer to the committee meeting members and discusses the purpose of the meeting. Which is discussing how people in the village are living with water.

I: As a first question, I would like to understand how water is used in the village. What are the main sources of water? If applicable, whom pays whom for services?

R1: I refer us to another matter now. I would like to discuss the incident that occurred this month at the Headman's home.

C: No Sir, you're mistaken. Right now, we are discussing the water matter. Where do you find water in your village administrative area, when the river Qwaninga is dry what do you do?

R1: Oh, well we don't have water in our area.

C: Exactly.

R1: What helps us the most are the rainwater tanks. When the tanks are dry, we talk to the local businessmen who have trucks, we buy water from them. This water is sourced from the Qwaninga or Qora rivers and we pay R50/ 100 L. This is how we struggle here; we don't have water. When that runs out, then you must search your pockets for more money, there is no alternative. We're on the water issue now, is there anything else?

C: No there isn't. Another will describe their experience. (Refers to R2) Member, please proceed.

R2: In our region, we struggle with water. Even when there is water, it's difficult to get. So we manage because of the RWH. When the RWH tank is dry, it's then necessary to go to the river. When the little streams in our area run dry, we must then hire these trucks. A truckload will cost you R400. We then transfer this water into the tanks or the plastic containers. When there is drought, we don't have water at all, we struggle. Our livestock also struggles. We give up and end up herding the cattle all the way to Qwaninga river, the further and more distance parts because there is no water. The Mhlahlane river can become bone dry, what helps us is Qwaninga, even though at times it also becomes scarce. You can see it because the bridge then no longer has water running over it. So, this is the life we live. We have no water. We survive because of the tanks. Then when that runs out, we hire these trucks.

C: (Refers to R3) Member, please.

R3: In our region, the water that we use to live comes from the rivers, streams and swamps

R4. I'm from X. I'm from the area where there is groundwater and that is what we use because our area still hasn't received any government services. We do have swamps, but in periods of drought these might as well not exist. Because we have no dams(pond areas), when there is drought, then the water goes underground and we no longer see it. We can't drink it even if it is there. Then the livestock also suffers. Because when Qwaninga runs dry, we then stuck with question of which way to go. This is why the way we live with water can be said to be a

struggle. Especially there in our region, if it was somehow made possible to access / dig for pond areas, there is a lot of water there that we could use. It's just underground. We struggle during drought. Thank you.

R5: eGuyeni, there is one tap. The people who live on top cannot access the tap. That just shows how the tap actually supports nobody. Now, it might as well be like there is no water there, because old people cannot go there. Only the youth can access the water from that tap. That just means that there is no water. That is our situation.

R6: eMshayelweni, there is no water we are helped by the tanks. When the rain is scarce and there is absolutely no water, it's dry the rivers and the small streams become difficult to access. The land is barren. The people who go and fetch water in the river during scarcity are the women. Now they are unable to go through the forests and the river is far. There are no streams because the region is badly located on the highlying ridges. There are no rivers and streams, the livestock suffers. Even the river, Qwaninga the deepest parts of the river are dry, the deep pools, are visible and exposed. The livestock have nowhere to drink, our stocks are depleted this way. That goes to show that there is no water, in our area eMshayelweni. Thank you

R7: Greetings, Members. I represent the KuloNyanga area. There is no water there. We have no water; our village is struggling. Water, Ay – It's difficult. I live particularly in the Nkonkwane region, our livelihoods are difficult. There are others without water tanks, like me. I have no water tank. It's even worse because the water that I manage to get tastes sour. People recognise this water as the one with (small insects that sit on water when its dry / tadpoles), it gives you diarrhoea. The livestock even dies from drinking this water. The way that we struggle so much without water, we really suffer. The livestock dies. We have no water.

C1: (Refers to another Member). There are eight representatives on this board, have they all been represented? I don't think that there is.

R1: X member isn't here.

R3: I came in a little later and would like to discuss another matter. The incident of the young men.

C1: Hayi, we are not at the part of the meeting where we are reporting incidents.

R1: I also made the same mistake and was corrected. Now, you're making a similar mistake.

C1: Some members here may not be representatives, although they participate in the meeting. The board representatives here today have all spoken. The ones that are here are six, they've all spoken. It has been said. The people of this region (Thandela) are without water. They drink the water that is shared with the livestock. We would like to know from you Interviewer, what you think of this situation. Do you know of any solutions? We'd like to hear from you, we have no water. uMgwebi has been represented here by the eight representatives. The representative who says that we drink soapy water, I concur with her. This is the board's reply. There are those who are awaiting judgement and should be prosecuted, those who knowingly wash their laundry where we source our water. We have no water and there appears to be no solutions. The river runs dry. Let's hear from you.

I: Well I have another question, Convener. When projects are said to be brought to the area, specifically water projects. Do these projects reach this region? If not, why

don't you have any developmental water projects? Are you able to communicate with those responsible for implementing such projects? Are you able to ask for help and say, please assist the Mgwebi region. Because this region struggles so much with water.

C: Okay. That's a very good question. Except I would like to hlanza ngoku. Please go ahead R1, please rephrase this question.

R1: Let me try and speak to this. There are some supportive elements that provide assistance. I would like to speak for myself when I say, I do not know how important we are where we live. The reason that I say this is because those that we vote for always say that they will help us. They will address all our challenges. When we vote for them, we have the hope that they will be able to fulfil these promises. But, we find them coming back empty handed. Even as we speak we are waiting, with that hope. I also don't know if it's because our community spirit is not a united one. Because I have not heard of them since they were preparing for elections. They have not come back to us with any solutions. If you live together and have differences, and you are not thinking together then we will forever be waiting for some solution that we do not know. I think MamTshawe, that is where we are. Perhaps our knowledge is insufficient.

C1: Phakamisa ishlanza now (11:02 min). Have you forgotten what you had wanted to say?

R?: No, I have not. I'm just trying to elaborate on the question. What MamTshawe has raised is relevant. Regarding the projects. There was talk years ago about possible water supply projects coming to the village. However, currently we are still waiting and watching. There is talk on the other side of the mountain (neighbouring village), Mhlahlane there has even been a construction site created there. They say they are installing water. We are still waiting because the project is recent, beginning only over the past few weeks. They have a construction area, but we are still waiting for something to begin. So that gives us a little hope. They say that this will bring water. I thought that would need to be mentioned.

C1: I would like an opposing opinion, because now you are agreeing with one another. I am asking for a differing opinion.

Silence.

C1: That then answers the question. These men say that water projects are promised, however are not realised. That is what it says.

Youth joins the meeting.

Y: I think to summarise this whole matter – services. It's difficult to access services in these areas. They don't come here, they are only delivered in places close to town. We do not get any services, that is why nothing is ever realised here. If I remember correctly, there is the village eMafeneni. A plan was made for them. There is those things that are driven ...

Woman r: Roll tanks (50 L – instead of the big tanks)

Y: Yes. They were helped by those roll tanks, however it's also useless because the water that they use to fill these tanks aren't coming from a delivery truck. They still have to go fill them at the river. They still have to climb these hills and the rivers have a tendency to run dry. So, I think that service delivery in the form of water projects, do not reach us.

I: Uh ...

C1: Go ahead

I: One of the men who have spoken mentioned something about how people vote and are promised all sorts of things. Do you then not ask these elected officials, councillors what they do with your votes. What are they doing about the water situation? Or are they unable to provide satisfactory responses.

C1: That is the second question.

Youth: We do not see the councillors after they have been elected.

C1: Exactly.

Y: They call us to meetings and ask for our votes. Once they've been elected, they will never call another meeting. You'll find out that the only meeting the Councillor ever calls, only the Ward Committee is invited. The Ward Committee acts has representatives and can take decisions along with the councillor. They will never call another community meeting, where everyone is invited. Where they thank the community for their votes and outline their vision and promises. So the last time that we see the Councillor, is after we have voted for him. After elections, he disappears.

C1: Did you get that Sisi?

Another member enters.

C1: Member Nqosini. This lady here in the meeting today is the one that is said to work with water. Her parents are will join us later. They are in the other house and have asked us to continue with this matter. The meeting is still yet to begin. She is the one Daliwonga said works with water where she is. Just so that you are not in the dark about what is taking place.

R?: I did try to update him as he sat down.

C1: Thank you

NewR: It's good that you have done so Convener. My ears are old. When something is being whispered to you ...

C1: It requires extra effort

NewR: It takes effort to hear, the ears do not work as they used to. And the eyes as well. So when one speaks ...

C1: The voice should be audible

NewR: One needs to have a speaker. Others are also just naturally hard of hearing, and they are not even old like me. I've understood Convener and I will follow along and participate when appropriate.

C1: You may continue answering the question raised by loSisi.

WomenR: I was going to speak to what this young lady was saying.

C1: Okay. Let somebody else respond.

R?: I was also going to repeat what has already been said. The challenges that we have with the Councillors is that. Before they are appointed to their positions, they are still working under other people's budgets. That is when they are the most diligent and attend to us. They promise that they will do all in their power to assist us. We stay with this hope. However, once they are appointed to their positions, that is when we lose one another. We don't know if this is the way that things work. We don't know what we must do.

C1: This is how we lose one another with the Councillors.

Unrelated matter...

R?: Daliwonga's child, as the matter is raised. She should think along with us. We are in trouble. We are in trouble in your father's area.

Rold: We have been watching for a long time. You see here kwaMgwebi, we are at the end of the world, where nothing ever comes. We are too far from services. The

Mnquma Municipality was where our Councillor was from (a great distance, nearest town Butterworth). But we asked to be a part of the Mbashe municipality and hopefully bring promising change (Close to Willowvale). UManchosi came here canvassing for votes, promising heaven and earth. At the end of the day, nothing has been realised. Even us as the community, we have Ward Committees that have been put in front to represent us. That we should actually ask, if we were anxious for things to happen, to ask the Ward Committee along with uManchosi, Ward Committee what are you doing? Demand that Manchosi comes to the community on a particular day, summon him here because there is nothing that he is doing. That other side, they are blaming one another. When it is time to go and vote again. And we are being asked to vote, he won't come close. Here there is no water, roads, clinics, there is nothing. We are just living. Just like as the heavy rains we've had recently; people are getting hurt on these roads. It's exactly the things that we are hearing in the papers. The bridges collapsing and hurting people. We have one challenge, there is nothing driving us to urgency. Anyone who comes to this region, life is easy. Nobody follows up and asks questions. There was a man contracted to construct the road to Mtonjeni. He left here without reporting that he has 'completed' this road and failed to pay some workers. The Chief has tried repeatedly to contact the Mayor and eventually got tired. When we ask Manchosi about this matter, he just says to us that we agreed. He was at the meeting at the school and so was I. "You all agreed, why did you let him leave?". We responded that there was nobody to monitor the construction site. The Chief lives on the other side with his wife. We also have no right to just ask what is happening at the construction site. We are in trouble.

C1: that's it

I: I have heard. I have a final question. What are your expectations from the government? If government said that they would like to assist, what are your expectations? How would you want to be assisted?

C1: There we go. That is the final question. A nice one.

R?: This is a nice question. In actual fact us here. We are stranded here. From water to roads, clinics. No infrastructure. There is nothing here but us.

C1: Go ahead Member

R?: To be honest. We do want infrastructure. We have recently received electricity. Roads are what we do not have. We also do not have water. The other thing that we do not have are projects that other areas get. We do not have any projects that employ our many unemployed youths. Crime is on the rise, especially amongst the youth. They show their strength by harming others, it's a township mentality and no longer a rural one. This is why if we got projects that would employ people. Such that they go to work.

C1: I think that your question has been answered.

I: Well, the water that you want. How would you want it to be implemented? As taps, boreholes? What are the expectations when people say that they are waiting for water?

C1: We've heard.

R?: Water should arrive in the form of taps that never run dry. Just like the other villages have water, as taps.

R?: I go along with what the gentleman is saying. A suggestion that I have previously made is that if government were to make a plan. Perhaps in some places, I will use Qwaninga as an example. When Qwaninga is dry. The region that I come

from, we don't run out of water, the water isn't gone its just underground. They should find where to extract groundwater. This water can be used to feed the areas without surface water. Perhaps this is a possible solution, with the limited knowledge that I have. We don't have boreholes. Perhaps that would bring hope. This water can be used to feed dry times.

C1: You are agreeing with one another. You want taps. Taps that stand in front of people's homes.

R?: Here kwaMgwebi, what we want are taps. That stand right in front of the houses.

C1: Exactly, just like in the adjacent village, the one close to Qora, there by Centane.

There the taps are placed in front of the houses. There isn't a need to worry about dry rivers. You walk out your house and the tap is there. No one will say that they contain any urine. Go ahead.

Woman: We concur. We want the taps that stand in front of people's yards.

C1: I'm looking for another.

R?: We all agree on what is being said.

C1: It's back to you now, they've answered your question.

I: Thank you Chair. Thank you for this opportunity. There is nothing else that I would like to ask. I am done.

C1: Is there anything else that you would like to ask? There's nothing.

R: We don't think so

R: If its water related then no, I don't think so.

C1: She says that she is done. Oh it seems like there is a question.

R: I would like to understand whether she is making us any promises.

C1: This question is directed at you..

I: Yes, I have understood. No brother, I am not promising anything. The thing that I am concerned with is recording your concerns. Perhaps it can be used to help those that can assist you, to understand the local problems. I am writing a report that explains how the local community lives with water. Just as you have outlined, infrastructure seems to be limited to the urban areas. I would like to collect your concerns, put them into a report and those that can assist. That is what I am doing. I am not claiming to have powers that I do not have. But what I have is knowledge about how to possibly direct these concerns to.

C1: Is this the response that you wanted?

R: Yes it is.

C1: This is what is needed. Our worries need to go to somebody - if possible.

R: MamTshawe, even if you do not write all of this down. Because when you are old, things repeat themselves and you relive them. The thing is that people here kwaMgwebi are not unable to express their frustrations, it is just that in order to be able to. (stressing) ... to do something. Mama: 26:39. This is why we say that water is the first thing that we need. We are going to now tell you all the other challenges that we face here kwaMgwebi. We have nothing. We are 26:49. You see now, as we speak, I was meant to be on my way to the clinic. I have high blood pressure. Inyabuzele. 26:57. Even if you do manage to get to this clinic, there are no medicines. You're going to roll over and die. We don't even have the money to travel to Gatyane (nearest town). There aren't even enough hospitals. You have to go all the way to Tafalofefe. There is no chance. There transport is there, if you consider the cars that are even unable to go up these roads to the hospitals. Tuu. We are living, while dying. Ndizabu'dubeka, I am going to tell you all of the stories, even if you do not note it, sister of Home. It's just that ... It's

dark, you understand? It's dark, when I hear what is being said . The people who die here at St Johns. They travel in aeroplanes that deliver water .. 27:42. You hear people say, we've fixed the you roads. Even in Gatyane they say that, we've fixed the roads in Gatyane and Dutwya. Where? We are in the places nobody knows about, we are in the darkness. They indeed say, "We've 28:05. Sportsfields to play soccer, "Heeh".

C1: I think that we have concluded.

25 April 2019

I: I have a few questions. I am doing a project at school about water. I would like to understand how you live. When there is no water? So my first question, I'd like to ask how you use the water. What do you use it for? Where is it sourced? Who pays for it's use?

W: Let us share our stories.

W1: Well, I get water from Qwaninga there at the bottom because water is scarce. I source it from Qwaninga, far, at the river. I don't have any water that is paid for, I've personally never paid for water. I've always just made my own means. I send the children down to fetch water. I carry the container on my head. The children fill the XX at the top. Because we do have have any water. We even drink dirty water.

MishMish: EZADUKWENI 00:52

W1: That smells foul, I smell that I cannot even recognise. You have to boil it. You have to boil it in order to drink it, you just let it cool. Then there are those that have rainwater tanks. We even go to them to ask them for a pale (25L), just so that you can quench your thirst. You see that? We have no taps, we have nothing. It's over with the tanks 01:17, there has been rain. We're going to the rivers, with the dirty water. I am standing on that point.

Auntie: Here, we don't have water. We get it from Qombe, in the forest. As we get it from Qobe 01:30. Some of us are unwell so we buy it with money from Dankie. From those who rent their vans. They bring this water back in drums. That water is sourced from Qwaninga, where people bathe. You understand? We pay for water, because you see we pay for these cars, with this money from Dankie.

MM: Next. When we buy this water with Matekula 01:55. If you want the tank to be filled, you pay R1 200 (Euro100). This is what you pay to fill your tank. You know how big our tanks are (5000L). If you want those containers, R100

W: No, it's R120 now.

MM: Exactly it's like that Tshawe. If you buy four it will cost you R480.

W1: On top of that the water does not even taste good.

MM1: It has ujubalala - those things.

Auntie: That is because it is collected from the same place where people bathe.

I: Who collects this water?

All: The cars. These people that we hire.

W2: Personally, I am from the other side close to eQombe. I source my water from eQombe. Currently, I shouldn't strain my back it hurts. I don't have money to buy water, I live off the social grant money, which I earn from having two young children. In September of this year, I will stop earning money for the second child because the child turns 18. Then I will only have social grant from one child. I don't even have this money to buy water. I have to go to the river. I've worked too hard recently that my back hurts from collecting water. Then I have to boil it. The water has bubbles

All: Hmmm (in agreement).

W2: The water has bubbles it smells like soap. When you boil water for tea, the tea tastes stronger although you know that it isn't. We are living harshly. Taps, dololo (non-existent). We live with struggle, don't see us sitting here with you. But we are not the same. Another who is living better will not agree with what I'm saying and think that we all live decently. We survive by what we farm

ourselves. We live off our everyday labour (Gestures to arms). We collect firewood and carry it on our heads.

W1: Yes, honestly, the way that we live is difficult. We suffer in silence, we carry on. We just look ahead to where we are going. Because even the places that we live in, we live in the rondavels made from earth because we do not have any money.

W2: Well, I built a shack because the money isn't there.

W1: Water, we don't have that my child.

Auntie: We struggle.

MM: Your mother knows how we struggle.

Auntie: Well some of us cannot even walk far anymore.

MM: You should see the place with the uphill, eQombe. I carry my 5 L and go down to eQombe.

Auntie: She comes from there, with Nolusapho (The Chief).

MM: Nolusapho knows the journey.

Auntie: In the Forest.

MM: She brought us the tanks. Others ask water from us and we give them.

Auntie: Yeah, she gave us.

W3: She helped us.

Auntie: However, the challenge is when it doesn't rain.

W1: Apha zimbacu (?).

W2: You see it wasn't raining here at all, it's only recently that it has rained. There was no rain, you were here, you know that.

W1: This is an area that often does not have a lot of rain. We were struggling.

Auntie: Etakataka (?).

W2: So tell us Mam'Tshawe, what would you do if you did not have water? Is there anything that you possibly do?

W3: Water is life.

W2: You bathe, you eat, you drink, you clean your home with water. There isn't a single thing that you can do without water.

W1: The next question then Sisi?

Auntie: Even the seeds that you have planted.

I: Another question is about the arrival of these water projects. Other villages seem to be receiving water. This village...

W1: We haven't received this water yet.

I: Is there anybody who can help you hold someone accountable? The councillors, or anyone else? Seeing as others seem to be receiving this water through projects. Why are they not reaching this region?

W1: That is exactly what we want to know. I am hearing of these other places that receive water. Big trucks come in and give everybody water. Us in this place, all around kwaMgwebi. A truck has never come here to give people water. The only services that we have received are these toilets.

W2: We are just voting nje

Auntie: We just vote for fun.

W1: The only thing that we have gotten are these tanks.

W2: You see eQombe. We made that road ourselves. It was dug with our own power, our ankles were on fire. That is why now cars are able to reach the river. Before then it was inaccessible. However, it is also useless because its inaccessible when it is raining.

W1: It is too slippery.

W2: We dug out rocks this big (shows with hands).

W1: The trucks that go down giving people water don't come here.

W3: You see even when we have special occasions, like funerals. Where you can phone and ask for water, we've never had that.

Auntie: We do nominate people to represent us.

W2: Nolusapho's role is to be the Chief, there should be those nominated who do their jobs. So we can't possibly hold her accountable.

W1: What we don't have here are roads.

MM: Don't forget about the clinic.

W1: We do not have clinics. We do not have a nearby police station. People get hurt. When you phone the police at night they say that they will not come so late. They come in their own time.

W2: There isn't even a patrol car here.

W1: We don't have any security, amidst this violence. Those things do not exist here.

W2: Someone could just kill you.

Auntie: Sisekangala (?)

W1: Those are the things that we do not have. Roads, police, clinics – we do not have.

MM: You see here eQora ... Sorry continue

W1: The school that is meant to be educating is ixaxa (?). It's not a school. If you went now to have a look, you would see for yourself what it looks like. It is broken into so often. The staffroom gets broken into, it doesn't even get locked. We are living this way. We don't have teachers in these schools.

MM: You do not have teachers.

W1: You see. Ababinqileyo abane. Those are some of the first things that need to be fixed. Some teachers that are meant to be teaching in this school we do not see.

Auntie: However, they are still earning salaries.

W1: They are earning salaries.

I: What about the principal?

W1: The principal is there.

MM: There is a principal there, a woman.

W1: There is a principal, however what isn't there are teachers.

W2: She is there but she has no support.

Auntie: The principal?

W1: That school gets broken into quite often. The food meant for the children is stolen.

W2: The poor principal calls meetings all the time. It doesn't help anything at all. There really isn't anything that she can do.

Auntie: However, this principal why doesn't she just hire some form of security to guard the school?

W1: It is the government that is meant to be looking after us.

Auntie: She could still hire somebody to guard the school.

MM: Nombulelo, wait now.

Auntie: I'm sure money can be taken out to pay for security.

MM: I'm more worried about the forest that these children walk through. Personally, I do not have a child that goes to high school. But you see that forest in the Mente region? Especially now in winter. I hear them walking at 04:00.

Auntie: Some are raped.

W2: They can't possibly be paying more money, they cannot afford it. It's R800.

Auntie: The one who was raped by that boy eMhlahlane. She comes from that high school.

MM: The one who was arrested? He really hurt that child.

W3: Yes, I heard that he was arrested.

Auntie: I wish I was there I would have beat him myself.

MM: That is another thing that we do not have here. A bus for school going children.

Water. Clinics. Police.

W2: Roads.

W1: We don't have water.

W2: eQombe we tried to build a road. After we tried to remove the rocks, it rained. It's better when its dry because at least cars can use it for that moment.

MM: Their road (yilidongwe). Even when someone has passed away.

W2: When someone has passed away, people will have to carry him down to the road. It is even difficult for the bulls. There is no road. We living in a really hard way there eQombe. Even the money that we get cannot be compared to others. There are no roads. People's cars get worn out.

Auntie: Yes, really we are struggling. We go into that forest.

MM: I have a 5 L.

W2: It's worse in our area because when Qombe is dry, we have to go to Qora.

MM: They have to climb that hill to get there.

W2: We have to cross and go to Qora.

I: Do you think that the government can help you with water? What would it be that you want? What would these services look like?

W1: We want water.

I: Yes, but in what way? In a tap or ...

Auntie: We want taps.

I: Or tanks?

Auntie: We want taps.

All: We want taps.

W3: These taps also get blocked. I mean sometimes the water runs dry in them. So I don't know.

Auntie: I think that the taps are better.

W3: Okay, then it is better than when they are there.

I: Where do these taps stand? Outside or inside the home?

A: They stand outside.

ALL: Outside

I: Does everyone get their own tap?

All: No

A: They choose sites

W3: Yes, they count and after every regular interval they put a tap.

W1: When will this village get houses like the others?

MM: These two room houses. My sisters child told me that they received these houses.

W1: In Port St Johns as well. In Centane as well.

A: Does Centane have these houses?

W1: Yes, you see them on your way to town.

MM: No, that built up area is a location. It's not one in the same as the houses. I am from that area. When you enter Centane, it a location on either side. The houses are at the bottom. Just like Gatyane here. You see that it is a location. It's a similar situation, those are not houses.

W1: Well we want the houses regardless. We've been voting all this time.

I: When you vote, who do you complain to? The 8th of May is coming. You will all go and vote. 25 years of voting and still nothing has happened here. My question is whether you actually complain about services at all.

W1: We complain all the time.

I: Other regions are on strike. This results in them getting services. However here it seems like nobody ever complains.

All: Talking over one another.

W1: We complain all the time?

I: To whom?

W3: Who do you complain to?

W1: We complain to the government.

I: Who is this government that you are complaining to?

W1: The councillor.

A: We've never been to him. Have we?

W1: Yes.

A: No, we've never gone to strike at the councillor.

W1: He was here. Manchiosi.

MM: Yes, Manchiosi.

W1: Many councillors have come here.

Others: uLubeko.

W1: Lubeko is the one who told us.

MM: He died without doing a single thing for us.

W1: Lubeko brought nothing. Even that other one from Centane.

I: And then you vote for the same person again?

Others:

A: We do not want councillors anymore. Even these ward committees. There is nothing that they seem to do. They just attend meetings and do things behind our backs. They choose those that they'd like to listen to. And tell them what is happening.

W1: We actually shouldn't even vote now.

MM: We should close this voting thing.

W1: You beat the children when they propose the same thing.

A: There was a year when we were meant to vote and the youth decided to strike.

All: And we beat them for it.

W1: We called the police on them.

A: We called the police when in actual fact these youth had a point. They wanted these problems to be fixed.

W1: Well in order for things to start correcting themselves it always starts with the youth.

A: Us too! We could have also joined them in their protest.

W2: If they were to protest again would you join them?

A: I would. Even the old men join in protests in other places.

W3: What is needed here is the truth. People in this area sell one another out.

I: They sell each other out?

A: Even there at the school. When there is a meeting being held, you keep quiet when you see that you've spoken something that other do not agree with. Even when you yourself can see what is being said is not the truth.

W1: Well, that is because we know what is going to be said.

MM: Now I am speaking for the high school children. They need transport because they are travelling in the early hours. I do not have a schoolgoing child. I am not going

to attend those meetings. The parents of those children have to raise these concerns. My youngest stopped going to school. When I hear them in the darkness, I think, "My goodness, at 05:00". You see now it is winter

W1: This granny here beside me lives alone. You see the condition that she is in? She lives alone. Anything could come and do whatever.

A: None of us would know.

W1: It would be difficult for her to do anything. She has no phone where she lives. Someone could kick the door down. She's isolated in that place.

MM: That is because she is a person without a next of kin. She is a person who belongs in a home.

W1: I am just talking about the conditions that we live in. The fact that we do not have police nearby.

MM: Well I am just saying that the government cannot give you a child.

A: The government also will not bring police to your home.

MM: When you are in need like she is, one belongs in a home.

W1: Will you go to a home yourself?

MM: No, I will never go to a home.

A: Why not?

MM: No, I will not.

W1: Why are you talking these things when we are talking serious things here? This is not the time for those things.

MM: I think we are done now.

W1: Have you recorded everything that we have told you?

I: Yes, I have also noted them down on paper.

I: So do you think that the government does not care about you?

A: Not at all.

W1: The people that they have nominated to represent us, they do not adhere to the plans. It has been long.

A: Nobody cares about us.

W1: It has been long that we have been living this way.

A: They only way that we end up getting services is through the Chief.

W1: It has been long.

A: She is the one who manages to find a way. Do you agree?

All: Yes.

MM: Isn't that the Chief's job?

A: No, it isn't Nolusapho's job to get us tanks. Those who did not get any tanks will blame her. But it is not her place.

W1: No. The only thing is that she finds a way.

A: Yes, she is persistent.

W2: The reason that we do not have anything is because she went to town to write our names down. It is almost like she is the councillor. Because even now she is the one helping us access our social grants.

A: The councillor is there.

W1: Its almost like saying MM here is getting a social grant and then they say that she cannot access bhedlenga. Because she will not be able to do anything for herself again. I also cannot earn a living. The only reason that they have taken me at the school. I still haven't received my Paye. I am still waiting for months, it's the second month now.

MM: You haven't received it?

W1: No. That is why we want the government to get closer to us. What I want is for the party

W2: Manchiosi?

W1: No man, the one with the big eyes

I: Ramaphosa

W1: Yes, Ramaphosa. I wish he could come and see the conditions that we live in everyday in the village.

A: I agree.

W1: I want him to come here and see the way that we live in this village.

The focus group meeting for the youth began in a less structured way. Generally, more reluctant to participate. The recording picks up in the middle of the discussion. Although notes were taken to ensure that the questions were asked in a similar manner.

Y1: You see, the traditional council board, the Chief's board, should not consist of elderly people.

Because they are trouble themselves. She often ends up the only one discussing issues. I have attended those meetings myself and found her discussing alone.

I: They do not contribute?

Y1: No, they do not show any added value, they do not come with any suggestions. They are afraid of speaking the truth about things, to discuss matters as they are. They discuss around the issue, they also will be reluctant to point out that what another board council member is saying is incorrect. They do not discuss matters in a straight forward manner. They are also unable to say that when they see something incorrect, to point it out and label it as incorrect and denounce it. I think that honestly the Chief needs to work with the youth.

I: The ward councillors are elected for five years and are said to bring no meaningful change. Is everyone comfortable with this arrangement, does nobody who seems to complain?

Y1: We do go to the councillor and complain. For example, when he was canvassing for votes. The councillor would regularly come to us and call for meetings. But since he was elected, he now holds his meetings closer to his own homestead. It then becomes difficult for one to leave their own house and attend those meetings in his village eQwaninga. Because you won't go and cross that big river just to attend a meeting. He should actually alternate venues weekly, one week the meeting should be held here and another week in his own village. So that we are all able to confront him with our questions. Because if you ask him now why he is not calling meetings, he will say to us that he does call them, just eQwaninga. It's far to Qwaninga. When he was looking for our votes it was not difficult to come here to look for them, now we have to be the ones running after him because now he has our votes and the money.

I: What about these ward committees? Is there nobody from this village represented in the ward committee or is the entire committee from his own region?

Y1: The eight villages are organised into two ward committees. Both of these are located far from us. One is located there, eMtshayelweni and the one eMhlahlane does not know what is going on themselves. The people only see when the person takes their bags and go to the meetings. When projects come bringing employment to the region she only contacts the people whose contact details she / he has on her/his phone. That means that if she / he does not have your details, you will not know about the opportunity or even a meeting. It's not easy. We were also there on the day that councillors were electing the ward committees. He said that there should only be four ward committees. We complained saying that there are eight villages, we cannot be organised into two ward committees. The ward councillor is a shady character himself because he

is unable to answer what you ask. He will tell you that he has bigger fish to fry than what you are raising. He does not pay attention because he does not care. You see. He will tell you how just because he is in this meeting in this particular village that this is the only constituency that he serves. So you see, once somebody gets elected to the seat, they do not care again about the people.

I: Am I right in arguing that the most educated people in the community are the youth. In a sense that they are the ones who know who can help? Where is this capable youth because I do not see them here?

Y1: They are not where?

I: Here in the village.

Y1: Well of course not. Young people are rare here because there is no work. Even in the ward committee. It is full of old people.

I: Who elects the ward committee?

Y1: Those representatives in the traditional council were there. They do not want to be hated by the community. When we try to tell them the truth, they take offence, as though they are being sworn at. They do not want to hear the truth that we are telling them. Old people do not want the truth.

I: I think that they are also old. They do not have the energy anymore.

Y1: They don't have it.

I: Tell me about the new project taking place and whether it is employing any people.

Y1: The new project is a water supply project. They have hired some people so far. There have been no complaints. The real work has not begun, so its quite clear that more people are still going to be hired.

I: What do you think would bring employment that would make people stay?

Y1: I think what would create jobs is farming.

I: But do people want to farm, especially those that need jobs? Is there enough water?

Y1: There isn't. Water is what is needed. You see that it has just recently rained, we will wait long before it rains again. The rivers that are full now will be dry again in no time. Another challenge is what is happening eQwaninga. According to my understanding the river does not belong to the community it belongs to everyone. I do not think that it is appropriate for people from another region to be drawing water from eQwaninga. But they are.

I: They are sourcing water from the Qwaninga?

Y1: Yes, I think that is why the river quickly runs dry.

I: This water is being used by other people?

Y1: We do not have taps yet. But these people are being provided with water.

I: Are these the taps that run inside or outside the home?

Y1: It is the ones outside, the communal taps.

I: Would the produce be for consumption or rather for sale?

Y1: For sale. What will help with farming is that not all of us are educated, farming will engage everyone.

With a first grade and those without. It will help people. Because then people will use their own hands to work even if they do not have education. There is work for unskilled people and there is work for those with skills. I think that farming is what would make people stay here in the rural areas. People do want to stay here, the challenge is poverty.

I: Let's start with water. What do you do with water, where is it sourced and who pays? Where do you get the water that you choose?

Y2: Most of the time my sister, we get water from the tanks. When that is dry and there is no rain, we go to the river. The taps that are there are far. There are two taps in our village, there by the sports field. I live too far from the field, my home is closer to the bridge, so I do not have the time to go to the tap. So I collect water from the Qwaninga river. I use a container, carry it on my head and go to the river when there is no more water in the tank.

Y3: We get water from the tanks. My home is also very far from the tap. When it is finished we then use the car to collect water from the river. We hire a car. A load that fills the tank is R750 (€60). That is where we get water. I really only ever need it when I have to wash the laundry. I do not want to do it at the river.

Y1: Even those tanks, it isn't the case that we all have them. We are not the same. There are those who source water from the river. The water from this river is dirty. Pigs swim there, cows drink there, urinate there. People drink that water and it harms them. So, we do not have water. Even the water that we do have makes us sick. We do not have a choice, we have to use it. It's worse when the tanks are dry. The water from the tank cannot be seen as healthy either because it has tiny insects.

Y3: Bird droppings also enter there.

Y1: So that water also isn't healthy, it's the same. We do not have clean water. The water that we have is dirty and also not enough. Cows are dying. For example, the cows in the area do not have anywhere to drink. You have to drive them to eQombe, or eQwaninga in order for them to drink. Others are sick and give up on the way and do not make it to the river. They die on the way because they have to travel far to drink.

I: I would like to ask about these water projects. Seeing as other people appear to be getting water. Why does it not seem to be implemented in this region? Does it bypass you or what? What do you think?

Y2: I cannot lie, I see them being implemented on the other side of Qwaninga river, there are taps in the villages adjacent to us. We have been asking ourselves for a long time, what is happening in our village? Why do we not get water while other places do? We have the same question. Except that it is not possible to answer it.

I: Who do you ask when you do ask?

Y2: We have councillors. We ask them what needs to happen in order to get water. Councillor, dololo (nothing). I will come, I will come. But he is never able to come up with an answer.

Y4: The ward committee then is the one that exists, but they also never come with anything...

Y1: Something tangible

I: 25 years since democracy, do you think the government, or the councillors have forgotten you? Or do you think that these water services will eventually come?

Y1: They have not forgotten us; it is just that they do not care.

Y2: They are not paying attention to us.

Y5: The only thing that they think about are the votes. All they want is to be voted for

Y1: All they want are our Xs. Afterwards a person disappears. Because they are in love with us when it is time for elections, once they are voted for ... gone. You'll never see them again. Once you phone them, because we have the councillor's numbers. For example, I phoned him recently when we had to register for the upcoming elections. I wanted him to clarify the voting thing to me, because you just hear that some people have been hired to be electoral officers. You will not hear that there was ever an application process, where people had to submit CVs.

Y3: The IEC (Independent Electoral Committee) people.

Y1: You will notice that the electoral officers from 2012 are the same ones being used now.

Y2: It's still the same people.

Y1: It is the same officers. So this like this happen away from us. One then thinks to go directly to the councillor. Phone him and ask him. "I see that the IEC is busy looking for officers, recruiting people, how does this operate." He will then say that he is not responsible for recruiting for the IEC. That we should go to where jobs are being advertised. So, that is not the kind of answer that you would give to someone that you respect.

Y3: Hmm

Y2: At the end of the day. The promises that the ward councillors make, they are unable to make reality. Over these years, they have been giving us promises. But when it is time to do them, they are unable. They are unable to fulfil their own promises. They speak the words, but are unable to implement.

Y1: They know that even if we wanted to protest here in our villages. They know that we would not be able to stage a real protest. Because for example eMthatha, the people from eMthatha they can successfully protest because they can close the roads. Here in South Africa, the only way that you will get any attention is if you are malicious. Once you do something peaceful, nobody will pay attention to you. We cannot even do anything terrible because even if we were to attempt to block the roads, there are no other cars that use them.

Y3: We would end up blocking the roads for ourselves.

Y1: You see. So we are unable to protest. I think this is the reason that they do not take us seriously.
Because they know that we do not have any weapon that we can use to fight with.

I: If they were to say that they are bringing services. What would your expectations be? What would you expect from a project that is meant to bring water? Would it be taps, boreholes, tanks? What?

Y1: I think taps,

Y2: Yes, I think that is what we desire most. Taps are what I think would be the closest to home. Because tanks, no. They are too reliant on rain.

Y5: And it is troublesome

Y1: And we already have them. We have these councillors, but we atleast have a Chief who is there to think along with us. Who is also waiting for the councillor to save us. The Chief doesn't wait for the councillor to bring services. The Chief brought the tanks. Everyone here has these tanks.

Y2: That's not true ...

Y1: Well those that do not have, it is because their representatives did not write them onto the list. So she is trying. The list was brought, everyone who wanted a tank was written down and got a tank. But still, a tank is reliant on rain. If there is a drought, you have no water. That tank might as well not be there. Because you have to go and hire a car

Y3: To put water in your tank.

Y1: This money comes from you directly.

I: If you were to blame anybody, who would it be?

Y1, Y5, Y4: The councillor.

Y2: Our municipality combined with this councillor.

Y1: The councillor is who I would blame.

I: If you were to try and organise people's concerns, what would you recommend? Because the councillor isn't working, and neither is the ward committee or local municipality. Then the concerns are not going anywhere.

Y1: No

Y2: Well we do not have anybody else that we could speak to about these things besides those that you have mentioned. If we are not heard by them then we do not know of another way that we can take.

Y1: We are in trouble.

Y2: We do not have the power, above those people that we have mentioned.

I: Okay.

Y2: So we are limited to these people. If they are unable to pass on our concerns, our matters are in their hands. If they are unable to do what we want, we are finished. We cannot go further.

I: There is nothing else that I would like to ask. Wait, it is 2019. It's been 25 years of voting, what do you see happening in the next 20 years in the village?

Y3: Yho,

Y1: Hayi,

Y5: laughs.

Y1: It will be XX, because there are no jobs. Even the children that we are raising. We are just raising them to grow up and go to Cape Town, Gauteng, Durban, Mpumalanga to look for work.

Y3: Even when they get there, they will still live in poverty.

Y1: Well we would rather be poor there then to stay here. It would have been better if there would be employment here in the village. More people would stay. So the next 20 years that you are asking about, it will just be an empty field here. People will say, "There once were houses here."

Y2: The roads are even overgrown now.

Y3: It is difficult to walk on some paths.

Y1: You see

Y3: We are unable to go to town.

Y1: Why would we stay in these awful conditions when there are better places?

I: So everyone will go to Cape Town?

Y4: Yesterday, I was coming from town. I had to turn at the river. I was thrown in the water. I was saved by the fact that I could swim.

Y1: Yho.

I: Yho.

Y1: We'd be singing on your grave now.

Laughter.

Y4: I was saved by a branch. I held on to the branch.

Y1: Where were you going? To see your person?

Y4: I was coming from town

Laughter

Y4: The clothes I was carrying were taken away by the water. I was carrying three plastics.

Y1: Yho

Y4: And my backpack.

Y3: They do not want to fix our bridges. We have been complaining for long now. Nothing is ever done about it.

I: You went to the councillor?

Y3: Who else would we wait for?

Y4: Who else are we meant to wait for?

Y3: You are welcome to give us ideas.

I: Well,

Y3: We only have this avenue to support us. That we know of. Maybe we are challenged further by our lack of knowledge. You can think along with us as well. Maybe we should be looking in other

places, for other ideas. This one doesn't seem to be ripening. When a breasts stops giving milk, you have to suckle on the other. You can suggest, which other alternatives that we should try.