



**Interview with:** Doris (25)  
**Interviewed by:** Nomkhosi  
**Date of interview:** October 2016  
**Travel:** Ndwedwe - Durban

**Nomkhosi:** We can start talking now, Doris. You can begin by telling me who you are.

**Doris:** My surname or ... ?

**Nomkhosi:** Please tell me all about yourself.

**Doris:** *Habe!* (Laughs) *Webakithi!* I am from Ndwedwe (Laughs). I don't know whether you want me to continue talking?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes, Doris, as I said, tell me everything about who you are.

**Doris:** What will I say now?

**Girl:** Yes, Doris, you have to introduce yourself just like she introduced herself to us. She told us her name and surname, maiden surname, where she lives and how many kids she has.

**Doris:** *Habe! Ubaba yini?* I just told her that I am from Ndwedwe.

**Nomkhosi:** Is that where your history ends? Did you get married? Do you have kids?

**Doris:** Yes, I got married and yes, I have kids.

**Nomkhosi:** Please tell us the story of your life.

**Doris:** I got married at Ndwedwe. I have kids but their father passed away a long time ago. I remained and took care of my family through this work that I am doing (selling household cleaning materials) here at the hostel.

**Nomkhosi:** What work do you do?

**Doris:** I sell Jeyes Fluid. I sell to the Indians in Chatsworth. I leave this place and take my luggage to Chatsworth. There is the [box]—do you see it?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes. When did you start doing this work?

**Doris:** *Uh wemah! Webabo webabo!* What is she saying? I've been doing this work for something like 40 years. I raised my children with this job. Today they are grown up and the last-born has kids. Their father passed on and I have relied on this work of Jeyes Fluid.

**Nomkhosi:** Where do you get Jeyes Fluid?

**Doris:** I buy it and then I sell it. With that money I buy groceries. I go home and send food to my kids.

**Nomkhosi:** Continue talking, I am listening ...

**Doris:** I have spoken now. I have told you about the work that I have left home for. I left home because my husband passed away. Then I had to leave home.

**Nomkhosi:** You never used to work when he was alive?

**Doris:** No. I used to work at home, farming.

**Nomkhosi:** Where do you get *shibhoshi* (Jeyes fluid)?

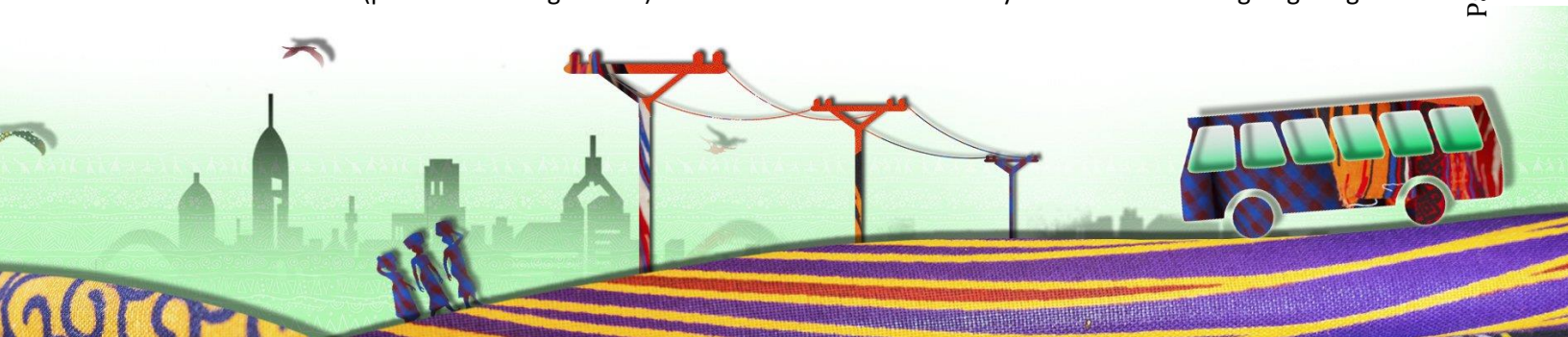
**Doris:** I buy it. I buy it close to the market and go sell it. Then I send food to my kids.

**Nomkhosi:** Continue talking, I am listening ...

**Doris:** I have told you the reason why I left my home and what work I came to do. I left my home after I lost my husband.

**Nomkhosi:** You never worked while he was alive?

**Doris:** I never worked. I was working in my own home. I used to do farming, growing maize meal and *amadumbe* (potatoe-like vegetables). So when he died I asked myself: "Where am I going to get





paraffin and sugar?" You know what I mean? I had to leave home in order to be able to take care of my kids. They need clothes; they go to schools. Who was going to educate them since their father was no more. It is me. But I do not want another one (Everyone laughs).

**Nomkhosi:** You did not want another one?

**Doris:** Yes, I did not take another [husband].

**Nomkhosi:** Why, Doris, because [a husband] would help you take care of the kids?

**Doris:** No, he was going to *hlupha* (be troublesome to) my children. I would rather do that myself.

**Girl:** He would also remind them that he is not their biological father.

**Nomkhosi:** When did your husband pass on?

**Doris:** He passed away long ago ... but I do not know the dates ... *asifundile* (we are not educated). We have never been to school.

**Nomkhosi:** So?

**Doris:** It was a very long time ago since he passed on.

**Nomkhosi:** Had we reached democracy by the time he died?

**Doris:** No, it came after he had died. They were already gone by the time of democracy.

**Nomkhosi:** How many children do you have?

**Doris:** I have five children.

**Nomkhosi:** Are they all still alive?

**Doris:** One of them passed on not so long ago, and I have four remaining children.

**Nomkhosi:** Please tell me about your children.

**Doris:** What about them?

**Nomkhosi:** Anything you would like to share with me about them: if they are married, if they work, if they have children ...

**Doris:** *Uyasebeka ... Nantundendende ntombi kaCija* (that is a whole other story!)

**Nomkhosi:** What was that, Doris?

**Girl:** *Nantundendende ntombikaCija*. Her father was Cija.

**Nomkhosi:** Are you related to Doris?

**Girl:** No. I always hear her say that.

**Doris:** *Uyaphika, uyaphikantombi* (this girl is denying it). Yes, they are married. The two girls are married. The two boys are not married but they have their own children (Laughs). Why are you looking at me like that?

**Nomkhosi:** I am listening to you and waiting to hear more from you about your children. You know I have three small children and I always have a lot to say about them. Yours are grown up so you should have a lot to talk about. You only have to say that they are old and they are married and have children?

**Doris:** I won't be able to stand this long conversation long (*undendende lwezinto*). I told you how many kids I have and that they are married. What more should I say?

**Girl:** Do they live at home with you?

**Doris:** Ha! Why would they be at my home because they are married? They are in their own houses.

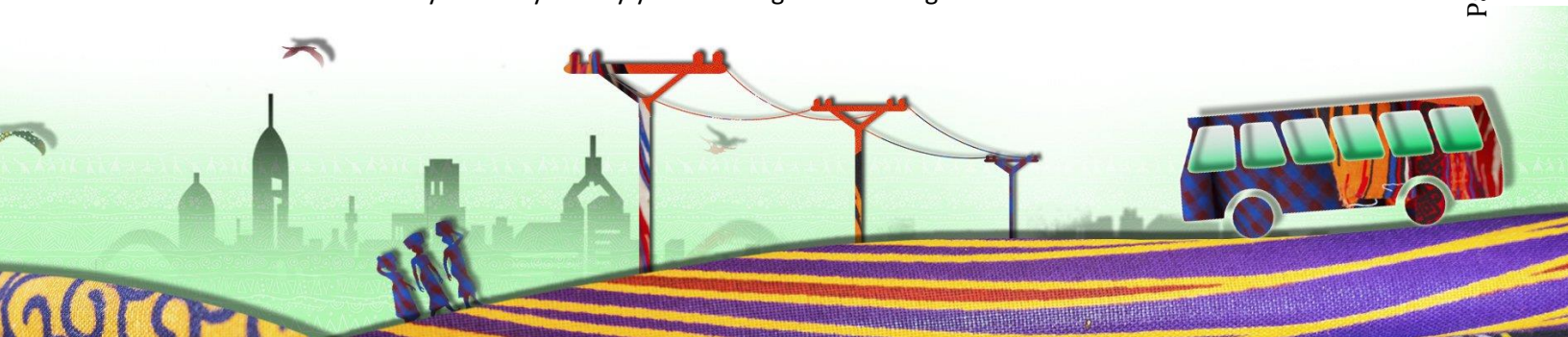
**Nomkhosi:** But you said only two are married. How about the unmarried ones? Did you chase them away?

**Doris:** Those are the boys and they are at home. It's the girls who are married and in their houses, because they are the older ones.

**Nomkhosi:** What are the boys waiting for?

**Doris:** *Hayibo!* It's money that is needed. Have I not told you that their father has passed on?

**Nomkhosi:** That's why I asked you why you did not get married again.





**Doris:** And I told you that I do not need another one.

**Nomkhosi:** How old are you now?

**Doris:** I have many years.

**Nomkhosi:** Around how many years?

**Doris:** Around 66 or 70 ... it's about 76 years.

**Nomkhosi:** Okay. Who do you live with at home?

**Doris:** I live with daughters-in-law, my darling.

**Nomkhosi:** Oh, so you already have those?

**Doris:** Yes. They are the ones who live at home while I get up and come here to work. Yes, I have a home and there is no problem. Where do you come from?

**Nomkhosi:** I am from eMatendein eNanda. My father is from Mtubatuba.

**Doris:** *Hawu bandla!*

**Nomkhosi:** But my father passed away a long time ago.

**Doris:** And your mom?

**Nomkhosi:** I have my mom and she also opted not to get married again. She said exactly the same thing that you said.

**Doris:** So you know the story ... why are you asking?

**Nomkhosi:** I can't come here and think that everybody's story is the same. I have to ask people about their lives.

**Doris:** Things are exactly the same, my darling. Don't be scared. Because your mother also took this decision and she raised and educated you. That is why now you go around trying to educate us in I don't know what. We do not know anything (Laughs), am I right? She is the one who gave you these brains.

**Nomkhosi:** Doris, why are you saying that I am educating you in nothing?

**Doris:** It is nothing to me. I will not do anything with this thing.

**Nomkhosi:** Why are you saying your history is nothing? This is something that will help me in my work.

**Doris:** Now I am only waiting for death. There is nothing else. What is this history you are collecting?

**Nomkhosi:** You were waiting for death?

**Doris:** Yes (Laughs). When other people die, why would we remain behind?

**Nomkhosi:** Please tell me why you say that you are now only waiting to die.

**Doris:** Yes, there is nothing else. Do you think I wanted my child to die when he did? No, I did not want him to die. So I also expect to die.

**Nomkhosi:** So why are you still working?

**Doris:** I still need to work. I don't mind. I can work today and in the night I die. At least my children would be left with food to eat.

**Nomkhosi:** You are talking about adults as if they are small children. They even have wives.

**Doris:** The fact that they are old does not help anything because you also know that there are no jobs (Laughs). I am sure you know the story. Sometimes it does not matter how educated you are, if you are unlucky, you will not get a job.

**Nomkhosi:** Are both of your boys unemployed?

**Doris:** They work stupid jobs—you know the jobs called securities. There is no money there, none at all (Laughs). They need money for clothes and for food, and they also have children. So I have to look at that situation and see what I can do. You will find them giving me R100 saying I should see what I can





do with that. What is R100? What can you do with that? I must leave my house and know that I will get money out of that.

**Nomkhosi:** Do your daughters-in-law work?

**Doris:** No, I don't want them to work.

**Girl:** They are looking after their home.

**Doris:** No, they can't work.

**Nomkhosi:** Doris, what will they do when you die? The two of them?

**Doris:** I should work and they should also work? No, no, no. I don't want them to work.

**Nomkhosi:** You should retire and rest because you are old now.

**Doris:** No, I don't want to. You know when you leave your house to go out, there are people who are always on the lookout for you and they would call you and deceive you.

**Girl:** And then your daughter-in-law would leave you (and their husbands).

**Nomkhosi:** Wow! Is that the reason why you don't want them to work?

**Doris:** (Laughs) *Yehheni*.

**Nomkhosi:** I am curious to know why these people are so lucky not to work when some of us are forced to work, especially because we also have kids?

**Doris:** Maybe you just like to work.

**Nomkhosi:** No, I am forced to work. I told you I have three kids.

**Doris:** Where is your husband?

**Nomkhosi:** He also has the problem of being in a bad job, as you were saying.

**Doris:** So where is his mother?

**Nomkhosi:** She is late. He only has an old granny and she is at Nongoma.

**Doris:** Oh, so you are the one who has to look after her and buy everything she needs?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes. We can't rely on the R100 that the security [job] brings home.

**Doris:** It's better when the granny is still there. You must not be looking in all directions.

**Nomkhosi:** It is impossible for me not to take care of her. She is the only one I have.

**Doris:** Yes, you must because she is the one who will help you.

**Nomkhosi:** She is helping me even now. She is the one who raised my husband and I will never forget about her.

**Doris:** Well, we do not know. Some people forget.

**Nomkhosi:** No, I will never do that.

**Doris:** Yes, you must do right because our pension gets finished in the air. But I am not complaining.

**Nomkhosi:** You are not complaining?

**Doris:** No, I cannot complain because I know that it gets finished on my children and on my grandchildren. I can never complain.

**Nomkhosi:** Really!

**Doris:** Yes, because I am selling. I have specific aims for what I want to achieve in my yard. There is no one that I can ask for help or advice.

**Nomkhosi:** Do your girl children take care of you in any way?

**Doris:** Why should they take care of me? They already have their own houses.

**Nomkhosi:** But they are your children?

**Doris:** No, no, no. I don't want them to leave their new homes and come to take care of me. Even their husbands will complain that they are working for my house.

**Nomkhosi:** So where are they based?





**Doris:** They are also in the farms.

**Nomkhosi:** They got married into homes far away?

**Doris:** Yes, they are far in their own places.

**Nomkhosi:** So when you allowed them to get married you were basically throwing them away, saying they should just go?

**Doris:** I was not throwing them away. Their husbands paid for them so it was fine that they should get married and go to their homes with their children. You think they should come back again to look after me? No, I do not like that. When the in-law family sees me, they would say: "This is the woman ..."

**Nomkhosi:** But they are your children which you carried for nine months.

**Doris:** If they give me R10 or R20, I would say: "Thank you, my child." I do not have a problem with that. But I do have a problem with them leaving their houses to come and support me. I would ask them if the children are all well, they would say yes.

**Nomkhosi:** How many grandchildren?

**Doris:** In my house?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes.

**Doris:** There are five of them. The older one has three children and there are two for the younger ones.

**Nomkhosi:** How old is the oldest grandchild?

**Doris:** He is doing Standard 3.

**Nomkhosi:** No, they are still young.

**Doris:** Yes, the daughters-in-law are still very young. *Basewomakoti nje.*

**Nomkhosi:** But do they do their job?

**Doris:** What job?

**Nomkhosi:** Taking care of you.

**Doris:** Taking care of me? What can they do with me? *Webabo!* What can they do with me? You mean wash for me and cook for me?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes, do they do that?

**Doris:** Yes, when I arrive home, I find it clean. I don't have a problem. I find my place in perfect state. Even the kids are really happy when I come because I am always carrying packets. I carry all sorts of things that they need. They are overwhelmed with happiness and it's really nice. There is no problem my dear. It is really good.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you not suffer from chronic diseases like high blood pressure and arthritis, the diseases that most people your age group suffer from?

**Doris:** No, I don't have that problem.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you go to the clinic every once a month?

**Doris:** I do go but I do not have BP. I do not have diabetes. I do not have arthritis; otherwise how could I heave this box with Jeyes Fluid? *Hawu*, what is this child saying? You can't carry a box when you have BP?

**Nomkhosi:** How many days do you spend here and how many days do you spend at home?

**Doris:** When I see that it's difficult, sometimes I stay a month after selling my stuff here.

**Nomkhosi:** Spending the whole month here?

**Doris:** Yes, if I see that there is still something that I want to achieve, I stay here and they remain at home.

**Nomkhosi:** They stay at home while you work for them here? These children are very lucky. I wish I was your child as well so that I would not have to work.





**Doris:** Yes, you would stay at home and I would post you food. You would send a message that you do not have this or that and I would send you that. I post and they stay at home. I do not have a problem. I am happy. It is very nice when I get home and they are happy and I continue selling this side. There is no problem with that.

**Nomkhosi:** So when you go home, how long do you spend there?

**Doris:** I stay for whatever number of days. I do farming.

**Nomkhosi:** You still do farming?

**Doris:** What do you think?

**Nomkhosi:** You sell this side and farm that side: sell and farm?

**Doris:** When I get home, I need to do farming. I grow my own beans. I also have mealie meal. What kind of a granny would I be if I do not work the land?

**Nomkhosi:** You are also working this side?

**Doris:** Yes, I work but I also get time to rest, like now. As you can see I am not doing anything. But when I get home I must take my hoe and work my land. What will my children eat? They must eat mealies.

**Nomkhosi:** Who helps you in working the land? Do you daughters-in-law help you?

**Doris:** Once I have also worked the land they follow me.

**Nomkhosi:** Does that mean if you did not go they would also not go?

**Doris:** They have to see me first doing it.

**Girl:** They must learn from her.

**Doris:** I am the one who has to decide where to start. Once I have started, they have to follow me, you see. When I am gone, they can continue where I left off but only once they have learnt. There is no problem, my child

**Nomkhosi:** Have you had a child live with you here at the hostel?

**Doris:** My child?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes.

**Doris:** Just those girls.

**Nomkhosi:** They stayed with you here?

**Doris:** Yes, but now they are in their own houses.

**Nomkhosi:** You lived with them?

**Doris:** Yes. It was difficult (to be a household head). We used to help each other carry the cardboard box as we went around selling.

**Nomkhosi:** With your girls?

**Doris:** Yes.

**Nomkhosi:** How long did they stay here for?

**Doris:** Who?

**Nomkhosi:** Your girls

**Doris:** They did not stay long because they had to get married. When you are married you can't live in the city. You are married.

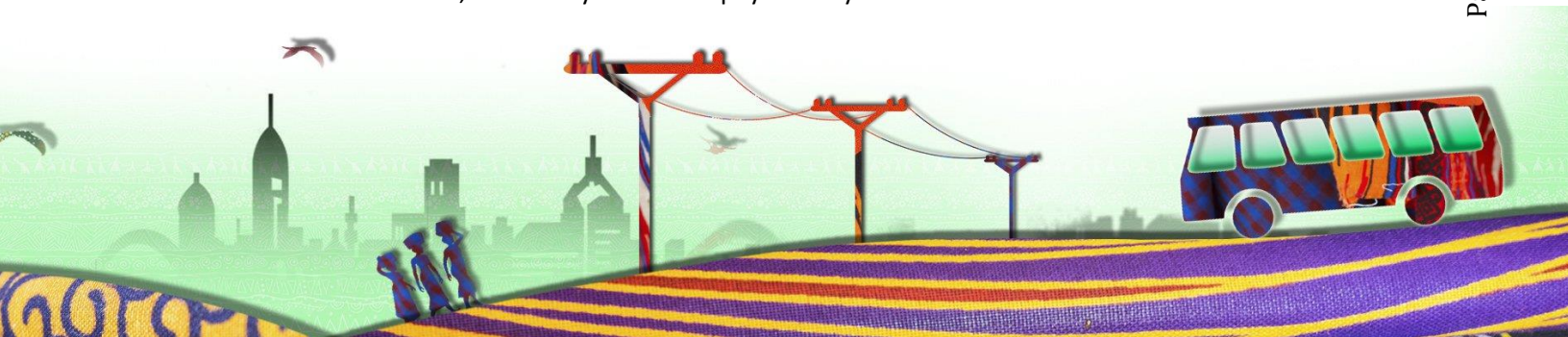
**Nomkhosi:** Where did they get married?

**Doris:** eNdwedwe, both of them. We use the same court even though we are all scattered about.

**Nomkhosi:** Since you left Ndwedwe have you lived anywhere else other than the hostel?

**Doris:** I have never lived anywhere else. We came to the hostel when it was still a tickey. Do you know cents? Have you heard people talk about this?

**Nomkhosi:** I know cents, Doris. So you used to pay a tickey?





**Doris:** How many cents made up a tickey?

**Nomkhosi:** I do not know about tickies, but I know cents.

**Doris:** A tickey was two and a half cents. That was a tickey (Laughing).

**Nomkhosi:** You came here when you used to pay only two cents and a half. That's what you paid for rent?

**Doris:** Yes, that's what we paid to sleep here.

**Nomkhosi:** Was that for one night?

**Doris:** Yes, that was for one night. You would go to sell and come back and pay another tickey. That's how we did it.

**Nomkhosi:** So it was a tickey every day?

**Doris:** Yes. Then the price increased to five cents (laughs again) until it went up to *sheleni* (10 cents). Then it became 15 cents: one *sheleni* and *nozuku* (five cents). Do you know the *sheleni*?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes, I do, Doris.

**Doris:** Then it was R5.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you still pay rent?

**Doris:** Yes, now we pay a lot of money.

**Nomkhosi:** How much do you pay now?

**Doris:** R50.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you really pay that?

**Doris:** Yes.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you continue to pay even when you have to go home?

**Doris:** Yes, we have to pay. We have to pay for the room. We have to pay for the bed.

**Nomkhosi:** When did you first get allocated to this room?

**Doris:** I started by living upstairs and later they changed us.

**Nomkhosi:** So you did not change on your own? You were told that you had to change rooms?

**Doris:** Yes. But I wanted to come and live on the ground floor.

**Nomkhosi:** Why?

**Doris:** Because I did not like walking up and down the stairs with all my luggage (merchandise).  
(Girl answers a ringing phone.)

**Nomkhosi:** Doris, do you know this girl's name?

**Doris:** Eh, I really do not know her.

(We all laugh.)

**Nomkhosi:** You do not know it?

**Doris:** No, I don't,

**Nomkhosi:** Is that true?

**Girl:** Yes, it's true.

**Nomkhosi:** Doris, how come you do not know her name when you live with her?

**Girl:** I am not full-time here. Maybe I come for two days and then I go back home.

**Doris:** She only comes to visit and she only came yesterday.

**Nomkhosi:** Who are you visiting?

**Girl:** My sisters.

**Nomkhosi:** How many of them live here?

**Girl:** Two of them. One of them is the one who left as you came in.

**Nomkhosi:** Oh, that was your sister?

**Girl:** Yes.





**Nomkhosi:** Does the other one also stay in this room?

**Girl:** Yes.

**Nomkhosi:** So you share a bed?

**Girl:** Yes.

**Nomkhosi:** Doris, do you know about this thing called retirement?

**Doris:** No.

**Nomkhosi:** *Hayibo* Doris!

**Doris:** I really do not know, my child.

**Nomkhosi:** It's time to rest after you stop working.

**Girl:** It's when you get paid without working.

**Nomkhosi:** I actually want to ask you when you are planning to take the retirement?

**Doris:** Getting paid without working?

**Nomkhosi:** Yes.

**Doris:** Okay.

**Nomkhosi:** So when will you do that?

**Doris:** *Hayibo!* Why would I do that? Who said I wanted that?

**Nomkhosi:** The government feels that women should take retirement at 60 or 65.

**Doris:** Oh, I will do that one day. When the government increases money, I will do that.

**Nomkhosi:** But government increases it every year in small percentages.

**Doris:** You know, one day, when I really feel that it has gone up and it will be enough, then I will stop working. Right now it does not satisfy me.

**Nomkhosi:** What amount do you need before you decide to retire?

**Doris** (Long laugh) I want it to be 5.

**Nomkhosi:** 5 what?

**Doris:** R5000.

**Nomkhosi:** What would you do with such a big amount of money?

**Doris:** Yes, R5000.

**Nomkhosi:** Are you even able to count that amount of money?

**Doris:** Do you think I won't be able to count that amount of money? Do you really think so?

**Girl:** She is so smart.

**Nomkhosi:** When it is all in front of you?

**Doris:** R5000 is not a lot of money, my child.

**Nomkhosi:** From the money you generate from you work, how much do you make per day?

**Doris:** *Hayibo!* There is no money.

**Nomkhosi:** How much is no money?

**Doris:** Is R100 money? Is that money? Do you think R100 is money?

**Nomkhosi:** Per day? What size is the Jeyes Fluid? How much do you sell it for?

**Doris:** It's expensive.

**Girl:** How much is *niphi*?

**Doris:** R12.

**Nomkhosi:** So if you come back with R100, you would have sold something like 8 to 10 bottles?

**Doris:** Yes, you would sell that and the following day you would go there again and sell.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you buy only a small amount?

**Doris:** Not really. When I buy, I need to buy for R200. I know them.







**Nomkhosi:** You know them? Please tell me about it.

**Doris:** You want me to tell you as well?

**Girl:** Let's say she also wants you to go sell.

**Doris:** In a week I am able to make R500.

**Nomkhosi:** So if you buy for R200, that means you make R300 profit. Then you are able to buy milk and bread. So how do you keep your money? Do you have a bank account or do you hide it somewhere on your body like in your hair?

**Doris:** Why would I put it in the bank?

**Nomkhosi:** How do you get your pension money?

**Doris:** I get paid from *isikhungo* (the government centre) by hand.

**Nomkhosi:** At Ndwedwe?

**Doris:** Yes, I get paid at the farm.

**Nomkhosi:** So when you are this side you wash and cook and clean for yourself?

**Doris:** Yes, I do everything for myself. Now that I have been sitting with you all this time, it's getting heavy on me. I can't just sit and do nothing while people do everything for me. "Help me, my child." "Take that thing for me." "Do this for me." I can't do that. As you can see I am also busy doing beadwork because I am still able. I have the strength. I do everything for myself. If I rely on people and send them [on errands] I will not be able to sell.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you sell to people at home or do you sell in the market?

**Doris:** What would I do at the market, my child?

**Nomkhosi:** How do you sell? Do you knock on people's doors?

**Doris:** Do you know Chatsworth? I go to Chatsworth to sell there.

**Nomkhosi:** I do know Chatsworth.

**Doris:** I walk all through Chatsworth.

**Nomkhosi:** How do you get there?

**Doris:** I take a taxi and jump off when I have to and I walk until I get to my destination.

**Nomkhosi:** Oh, this means that you know how to speak English?

**Doris:** Indian-English. (Laughs)

**Nomkhosi:** What is *shibhoshi* is English?

**Doris:** Eh, there is no such thing. (She walks out, probably to the kitchen with the beans that she started picking over in the middle of our conversation).

**Girl:** It seems you are interviewing a tricky one this time.

**Nomkhosi:** (to the girl) Please tell me more about this old woman. Is she full of herself?

**Girl:** No, she is not.

**Nomkhosi:** Does she not want to talk?

**Girl:** She only wants to talk when it suits her.

**Nomkhosi:** That's not being full of yourself?

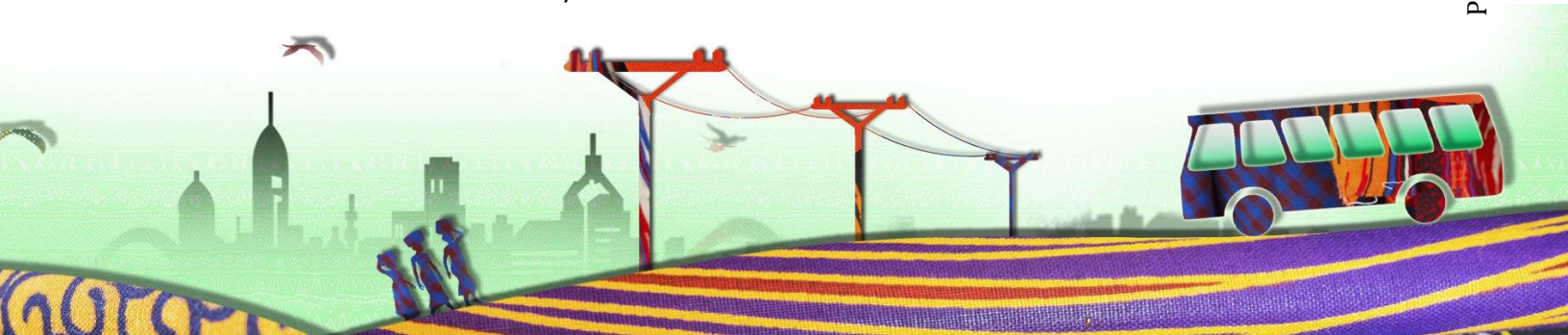
**Girl:** She does not like it when somebody asks her a lot of questions. You see she is going here and there. She does not want to speak straight.

**Nomkhosi:** What is her problem? What kind of her person is she?

**Girl:** I don't know. She does not have a problem. You can live with her [easily].

**Nomkhosi:** Does she go to church?

**Girl:** I think they believe in Shembe. But when she is here, she does not. Probably she keeps the Sabbath when she is at her house. They don't use fire on the Sabbath.





**Nomkhosi:** What about when she is here?

**Girl:** Mostly she is not here at weekends.

**Nomkhosi:** She goes home every weekend?

**Girl:** When I am here, I only see her when he is about to go home or has just come back from home. She only comes to sell. When she gets money, she goes back home. So she only comes here to get money. She sells and gets money and goes back.

**Nomkhosi:** So how does she do it? She wakes up every morning to go sell?

**Girl:** She wakes up every morning and goes to sell. She is here now because there was rain. She does not go out if it's raining. Otherwise she leaves early in the morning and comes back in the evening.

**Nomkhosi:** Really?

**Girl:** She wakes up, bathes and does whatever she does and goes.

**Nomkhosi:** Around what time does she come back?

**Girl:** 5 or 6.

**Nomkhosi:** Does she eat in the morning?

**Girl:** When she wakes up she always prepares tea for herself before she goes.

**Nomkhosi:** Is it just tea only or tea and bread?

**Girl:** Bread and tea.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you know if she eats during the day?

**Girl:** She probably does eat because even when she does not go, she eats during the day.

**Nomkhosi:** Does she carry lunch with her?

**Girl:** She does not carry lunch. She uses the same money that she would have gotten from selling. I am not sure what she buys but, for sure, she eats something.

**Nomkhosi:** And she will come back and cook?

**Girl:** Sometimes she cooks if she does not like the food that we would have cooked that day.

**Nomkhosi:** Sometimes you share food with her?

**Girl:** When we cook, everybody eats.

**Nomkhosi:** Oh yes, as you live here with you two sisters and this granny ...

**Girl:** There is also her sister.

**Nomkhosi:** Who's sister?

**Girl:** This granny's sister.

**Nomkhosi:** How old is that sister?

**Girl:** I am not sure how old she is but when I look at her she looks much older than this one. She also spends more time at her house than here.

**Nomkhosi:** Where does she stay? Does she have another room?

**Girl:** She stays here in the bed that you are sitting on. The one I am sitting on belongs to my aunt.

**Nomkhosi:** So where is she now?

**Girl:** She is in her home in Ndwedwe.

**Nomkhosi:** Oh, okay. So they both stayed in this room when you guys came?

**Girl:** The three of them lived here with my aunt.

**Nomkhosi:** Where is your aunt?

**Girl:** She is at home in her house. She comes here occasionally.

**Nomkhosi:** Do they know each other from that side?

**Girl:** Yes, they do. Doris has a house near by my aunts' house. They are neighbours.

**Nomkhosi:** Why does you aunt still come here?





**Girl:** She comes to sell beadwork.

**Nomkhosi:** Is it your aunt who taught you how to do beadwork?

**Girl:** My mom taught me. I saw them doing it and I copied them. She comes here to Durban to sell the stuff she has produced. She comes usually on a Friday and goes back on a Sunday or Monday. Sometimes she just comes to check out things.

**Nomkhosi:** This means that you guys are also from Ndwedwe?

**Girl:** Yes, we are from Ndwedwe.

**Nomkhosi:** Your home now is in Ndwedwe?

**Girl:** Yes, we are from Ndwedwe but I did not really grow up there.

**Nomkhosi:** Where did you grow up?

**Girl:** I started by growing up at Inanda and then I went to Avoca and then I went back home.

**Nomkhosi:** Which part of Inanda?

**Girl:** Inanda Glebe.

**Nomkhosi:** That's close to where I come from. I am from Inanda Newtown which is very close to Inanda Glebe.

**Nomkhosi:** So, from your point of view, what kind of life does this Doris lead?

**Girl:** I think her life is okay. As you can see, it seems like it makes her happy. As you heard, she does not want her daughters-in-law to work. She also does not like people to do things for her. She always gets up and does things for herself. Even if you try to do something for her, like make her tea, she says: "No, I will do it for myself." She does not want to be served. As you heard her say, she still has the strength to do things for herself. Maybe one day when she does not have strength any more, she will need people to do things for her.

**Nomkhosi:** It will be a problem for her when the day comes that she can't do things for herself, especially for a person who is used to doing things for herself.

**Girl:** As you heard, she cannot sit still and do nothing. She always wants to be busy with something and she wakes up early and goes every day.

**Nomkhosi:** She is standing up to go cook now. So she does not skip days in going to do business?

**Girl:** As she said, when it rains she does not go. She says she cannot sit and do nothing in this place. She has to go and work for her children.

**Nomkhosi:** Does she really go selling things door-to-door?

**Girl:** I think that's the case, otherwise how can she get her stuff sold? I am also sure that people also know her very well now since she started this thing very long ago. They are used to her by now. They expect her to come and sell these things to them.

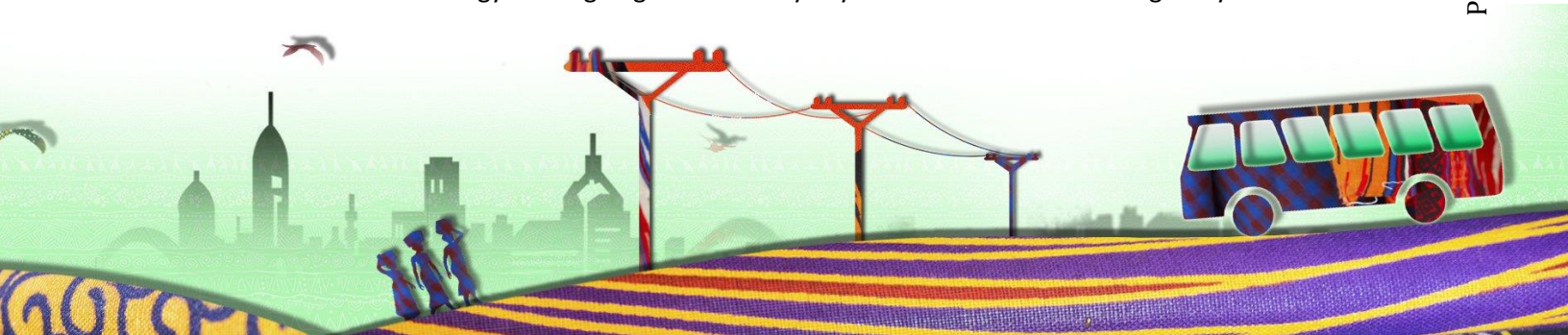
**Nomkhosi:** I remember that when we were growing up, there was always *shibhoshi* in the house. But now we don't necessarily keep up with that tradition.

**Girl:** Yes, that's what she sells. I also think she sells Jik (bleach).

**Nomkhosi:** This is my first time to meet such a Doris. While gogos always have their own things, they are always happy to share their stories and experiences. But this one says she doesn't want to talk. I am not used to that kind of thing. I once met a group of gogos in a focus group discussion; they were nice, open and happy to talk about their experiences.

**Girl:** Not the kind that you have to dig for answers.

**Nomkhosi:** I am using a methodology here called oral history. A person tells a story about their life freely without you asking many questions. If I ask a question and a person gives one-word answers, this means the methodology is not going well. But anyway there is still an interesting story to tell. What





was interesting about that group is that there were a couple of gogos who did not necessarily have rural homes and some had not been home for a very long time.

**Girl:** Yes, sometimes you find that some even die here.

**Nomkhosi:** Yes, this is the point of my research: to collect different people's stories without assuming that they are all facing the same circumstances. Not all of them have rural homes or have forsaken their homes. Their lives are different. Does Doris ever ask you to count her money?

**Girl:** No, she does all for herself.

**Nomkhosi:** What kind of help does she ask for?

**Girl:** I would be lying if I said there is anything that she asks from us. As I say, she does things for herself.

**Nomkhosi:** She never asks for anything?

**Girl:** Even if she needs something from the shop, she goes out and gets it. As you saw, she went and bought her beans. She did not ask any of us to do that for her.

**Nomkhosi:** She went to buy beans?

**Girl:** Yes.

**Nomkhosi:** How old are her children?

**Girl:** Oh, she sometimes asks for help with her phone because she is not educated. If she wants to call somebody, she would ask us to load airtime for her on the phone. I do not know about her children. But I think they are old, since she is also very old.

**Nomkhosi:** Did you say your mother is still alive?

**Girl:** Yes, she is still alive.

**Nomkhosi:** What kind of relationship do the gogos have?

**Girl:** They argue sometimes.

**Nomkhosi:** This one would say that people have to do everything for you and you can't even do anything for yourself. That one would say you have to prepare food for her—you have to do everything for her.

**Nomkhosi:** Do you prepare food for her?

**Girl:** Yes, when we are eating as well.

**Nomkhosi:** How do you guys resolve the grocery issue if you shared cooked food?

**Girl:** They buy their own and we also buy our own.

**Nomkhosi:** Do they also dish up for you when they cook? Do you think she will dish for you as she is cooking beans? Does this mean you guys won't cook because you can see that she is cooking?

**Girl:** Yes, we won't cook because she has cooked.

**Nomkhosi:** Does this mean you guys also have some kind of cooking schedule?

**Girl:** Yesterday we cooked.

**Nomkhosi:** Is that how you take turns?

**Girl:** I think that's how they take turns.

**Nomkhosi:** So you said this Doris sleeps in this bed that I am sitting on?

**Girl:** Yes, she sleeps on her own.

**Nomkhosi:** When her sister is here, she sleeps in the other bed, and you and your sisters sleep in the third bed?

**Girl:** Yes, but remember I do not stay here full-time. I am only visiting.

**Nomkhosi:** Where do you stay? Okay, let me ask you about your own life.

