

Lindiwe “Sgubhu” Baloyi (née Gumede).
Inanda Seminary student, 1960-1964.
Interviewed in Westville, KwaZulu-Natal, 12 June 2010.

So actually let's just begin by you giving me your name, when and where you were born.

My name is Lindiwe, maiden name is Gumede. Was married Baloyi and have since divorced. I was born on the fifth of April 1945, grew up at Inanda, Inanda Mission. At that time it was called Inanda Mission. Brought up under a Christian environment. My grandfather was the minister of the Inanda Congregational Church.

Yes, I've been to the church where he was minister. Mwelela [Cele] showed me the plaque.

And my father was a doctor for the area. Brought up and qualified in Birmingham overseas. So my mother used to be a teacher, at Inanda Seminary herself.

Okay, what is your mother's name?

She was Edith.

Edith, okay.

Yeah, Edith. I don't know that she was Mahonga or Gumede then, but she was, not really, she was a domestic science teacher during her times. So um, after finishing school at Inanda [Day School], I went to Inanda Seminary. In fact, the decision was that we go to the seminary because it was the only existing missionary school in the area. When we qualified in the area, at Inanda Seminary, it was our first choice for our parents because they believed we needed a good education and the only school that was good at the time was Inanda Seminary. I don't know whether because it was because it was a girls' school or just because it was a good school that was available.

Did you have siblings? Did you have male siblings? And if so where did they go to school?

Yes, we did, I had two brothers. Two brothers—we're a family of four. Two brothers and two sisters. My brothers attended school at Amanzimtoti and that's how we separated. So it was convenient for us to go there, there was no expense for walking to the Seminary and it was interesting in any case because we wanted to go to the Seminary because it used to be the local school around and we envied the girls that were there, the type of tuition they were getting, the freedom of being youngsters. We enjoyed, in fact, the environment that we saw there... We liked it because it was a Christian school and it was run by missionaries. They were very protective. They were providing a good service to the community. In fact we enjoyed seeing the girls go down to the venues to teach Sunday School...

So did you teach Sunday School while you were a student at Inanda?

Yes. In fact, I taught Sunday School once I was at Inanda, and I was part of the choir at Inanda Seminary. And what other activities did I do there?

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Did you participate in debate? That seemed like a popular—

I participated in debate, I was. In fact I became the chief prefect of the school.

That’s quite an accomplishment.

Yes, I was very active in fact. I was a spokesperson, very much a spokesperson. I played, in fact I was an athlete. Played basketball, volleyball, and tennis, which was provided at school. And this actually helped shaped my career and my also my sportsmanship. So when I came up—in fact I was also in the Debating Society, which I joined. And we had one of the teachers who had a passion for debate. She’s late now.

What was her name?

It’s Casaburri. Matsepe Casaburri... She was a minister. Ivy, yeah.

She was a teacher there?

Yeah, in 2000, Form 3.

Yeah, I knew she was an older girl.

Yes, she had a passion for drama, and she would be very, very much influential in terms of us taking up drama, being involved in debate, and things like that. She was wonderful. Very, very strong, and she actually gave us motivation for that.

She must have been quite young then, too.

She was, very young at that time. Yes, in fact the history—she was also teaching history as well. And she helped us understand more of politics at that time.

Right, was she politically engaged then?

She was, she was, although it was not open. But for the teachings, and the debates and the issues that we would bring forth and discussing, indicated that she had a very broad vision of how the political climate is and what it was and looking at other countries and also encouraging us to read more about other places. So apart from that, although it was a Christian school, it was not confining us from learning more about other things. It was creating opportunities for us to develop. For instance, for us at school, we had an opportunity for meeting other schools of our level, of other races as well, which balanced our race attitude for the time. We didn’t have a race barrier... there was no racial divide.

Yeah, and you also had staff members from different—

Staff members from all different types and they were just like other people, within the high school.

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And amongst students at that time, was it ethnically-mixed, or was it mostly Zulu students at that time?
In fact at the time it was mostly Zulu students, but they would encourage the integration, the inter-visits, inter-sports, whatever.

Yeah, because I know in the seventies and eighties it became very ethnically mixed. But I think in your time, it was still predominantly Zulu.

It was flexible, you could mix as you like. I would have some white friends, and they would encourage us to have pen friends with overseas students, whoever, you know, things like that.

Were the students at Inanda a mix of rural and urban students at that time?

In fact, you wouldn't see [a difference between rural and urban students]. I think parents who could afford, sent their children to Inanda. And also, parents who were previous students at Inanda. So you wouldn't read whether they were underprivileged scholars or not, you wouldn't even assess that. You would just not see. Because I mean they would give us a generic rule to provide the same uniforms.

Yeah, so differences weren't as obvious.

Yeah, they weren't obvious. Unless you knew these particular people came from a rural environment, you know, after mixing and making friendship. I don't think we had a lot of township—I don't even think we did—checking that.

Yeah, I that was a little later.

Later. There was no township, or no township type of mix. We just saw everybody on an equal level, people who could afford fees at Inanda Seminary and we enjoyed the Christian school that we had. Half the time, the teachers that we had, for instance, we would have the old teachers who were there, grounded teachers...

Lavinia Scott, of course.

Of course, of course.

And what do you remember of Ms. Scott?

Oh, she was a wonderful person. Ms. Scott was a wonderful person. She had a character. And you would like to have been, to be like her. She was very sort of motherly. Apart from being motherly, very principled type of person. Very principled, and you admired her principles and the way she was handling things, you know.

Yes, everyone has given me very positive assessments of her. There aren't very many people like that.

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No, no, no, she was super. It's very difficult, and I don't know what else to say, but we had good times there, we had good times. And extra-mural activities, we were encouraged to have social activities as well, which sort of were therapeutic, in terms of us staying there, we were able to look at other things, enjoy ourselves, be young, and do things like other youth would do. And there were inter-school debates with Ohlange School. We had contests between Ohlange and Inanda so we would have visits, and inter-athletic entertainments when we would play against Ohlange, and Ohlange was a mixed school.

Would you play against boys as well, or would you just play with girls?

We would play with girls, but we would organize the whole activity such that it's inclusive, such as Mariannhill. We would go and play Mariannhill. Mariannhill was mixed, and we had an opportunity of having debates there as well.

And in terms of career preparation, when you started Inanda did you have an idea of what you wanted to do for a career. Did you feel that you were supported and encouraged to think about your profession?

Yes, I think we were in a way, because for instance the type of subjects were more or less directly orientating you towards sort of a direct line. Because I took up English, biology, zoology, maths, um, well science, we definitely had science. We had a laboratory there, some schools never had a laboratory. We had a library at Inanda Seminary during our times. So in other words, if you wanted to be a doctor, you would definitely develop out of zoology and botany and science, so that would be the direction where you would go. But at matric level we would actually have some—they would invite people to come and speak to us, about career guidance, tell us exactly what we actually would have wanted to do.

And during your time there, what were the most popular professions that students ended up going into?

In fact during our times it was mostly—I wouldn't say teaching that much. They were providing us a broader prospect, a broader view, where you would be able to select whatever you wanted to select at that time, available at the time, because they had other streams, because during our times they still had section at the industrial school, which was a direction towards people who wanted to do home craft, home cooking, whatever.

Yeah, that did still exist at that time.

It did exist. I think one or two years later it stopped.

I think it closed in like '67, '69.

Yes, it was an industrial division, completely. And the commercial side during our times did not develop. They were talking about introducing the commercial side so that students who were

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interested in commerce, or were interested in commercial causes would—but during our own times we just had a generic—subjects for our matric, yes.

Did you finish matric at Inanda or did you go somewhere else?

I finished at Inanda.

So that was ‘63, ‘64?

Yes.

And then, where did you go after Inanda? To varsity?

I went to Zululand, the University of Zululand. It had just opened, so I did social work there.

Were there a lot of other Inanda Seminary students who were at Zululand at that time?

Yes, mostly, it was only university open at the time, for us to go. Because it was difficult for us to go to other universities. So they had just opened this university and were encouraging students to go in there.

There weren’t many female students at University of Zululand at that time, were there?

No, there weren’t many females, just a very few, very few. But with me it was easy because my brother was there as well, and a number of our pupils were there as well.

Do you remember—I was just looking at statistics about this yesterday, about females and males at this university, and I think that during your time there, there were maybe fewer than 100 female students there.

Yes, there were very few.

So do you remember where female students came from, who hadn’t graduated from Inanda? Were they coming from the other [historic schools you’ve mentioned]—Ohlange, Mariannhill, Amanzimtoti—or other places in the country?

Most of them, some of them came from Mariannhill. Ohlange, yes. Amanzimtoti, yes. We had quite a variety of students coming from all of these—in fact, it was the only university they could go to, they had no choice, so we had a variety of students from these colleges as well.

Did you feel like going to Inanda Seminary prepared you academically, and socially, and such for university life?

Yes, in fact I think it did play a very important role. That’s why it was easy for us to adjust, and we could socialize easily and for instance at university there were lots of sports and some of us—like I told you that I was involved with tennis, I could remember playing tennis for the team, for the school, for the university. I was playing tennis for the university, I was on the team, the main

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team, so they used to have—what was it they used to have? Not a dramatic society. At the university they were providing dance classes and things like that. Most of us were involved and interested in taking up all those social activities that were provided. For instance, because we were few, it was easy to sort of be involved. It was not yet a big, huge, massive type [of school].

It was a small school.

It was a very small school. You knew almost everybody there. It was easy to go about and in fact I think we did get proper preparation from the Seminary, sort of to be more assertive, able to do things, be outgoing, and many things on our own. It played a very important role in doing that.

And as far as sort of the political environment, or relationships between staff members of different races, that kind of stuff, how was that different at Zululand as opposed to at Inanda Seminary?

No, I didn't experience any of that at the university, no, none. In fact, I think during our times, even the SRCs were not as powerful as they became later on and [not as] volatile. They were still creating people with brains who could reason things, and sort out things correctly. So the element of political climate and political violence, it eroded later, when we were out of university, when we were already out of university. But in terms of the color, no, no, no, no. Our times were very sober. You could reason, think correctly, and take a correct direction as to what you want. Not that we weren't aware of the political arrangement. At that time, for instance, during my times, we used to have people coming from outside, from political organizations, coming to invite us.

Sorry, at Inanda?

At Inanda. They would invite us to go to camps, youth camps, whereby you would have different types of people coming to talk to us. Some of those people were political figures, who would come and give some talk to us. So in other words, it was not a sort of direct engagement with these people, but it was included in our sort of bringing up.

Yeah, these camps, I was just staying at Inanda Seminary earlier this week and was looking at some of the school archives. Were there interracial, or interdenominational?

Yes, they used to be yes. Both interracial and—so it's when you mix and get people—

And did you participate in any of those?

Of course I did.

Do you remember any of the people that would address the group?

Oh, it was a long time ago. And they would take us, they would take us to some places, groom you, talk, give you lots and lots of talks. And we enjoyed it. And we didn't know they were preparing us for a broader political approach, political experience, we didn't know that. It's only

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now that I recall. You know during those times when they took us out to these places, they were preparing us to have a correct political approach, look at things in a more positive way. But I think it's good to do that because it directly gives you support and are able to make informed decisions about things, for your later development.

So then after you attended University of Zululand, did you become a social worker?

Yes, I became a social worker, I worked, for instance, I worked for Child Welfare.

When you were there, was Isabel Sililo still there?

No, she was not. Yes, she had passed.

Was she alive?

No, she was late.

She was late at that time. Okay.

Yeah, I worked there for a long time. For a very long time. But before it was mixed with the child welfare—you know when the white child welfare services were mixed—it was then that I left. Before it used to be divided, Indian, blacks. I won't recall the times, but I know very well when I left... I think that's during the 80's. ... The reason why I'm saying that I am proud of Inanda Seminary is that even when I became Child Welfare, I became the director, the first black director at the time and we had 14 professional social workers working for the society, and the one infant's home. The very big infant's home in Lamontville. About 13 crèches, running crèches. So we were running the casework, community development, group work section, and also, doing the other section community development as well. Like I'm saying, had I not been at Inanda Seminary, I would not have even gained all those skills to be able to manage in this bigger environment. So it is through that, very much through that.

Yeah, it sounds like your education served you well.

No, no, no, it did... I was in Child Welfare for a very, very long time. I was lucky to be associated with a group of white ladies as well because they would form part of our executive committees and were very much progressive, and they were encouraging me to achieve, accomplish things all the time. When Mrs. Edward left the Child Welfare, I became the director at the time, and they were not against us taking position, and thereafter, after some time of development, I got into business, I got married, I went to business, I got married to a doctor, this guy I divorced some time ago. And then I was running a business. And the business was booming out of the scales, I didn't know all this, I didn't do business.

What was the business?

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In Zululand. I was running a very big business there in Zululand. My father he had a business and he left it for us to run it, take care of. So I developed the skills. In other words, my being coached at the Seminary helped me develop other various skills, such as business skills as well. I was running a very huge supermarket... It was the big establishment – I was able to manage all that for some years. Then I came back to work for the commission in 1994. I think I started working for the commission.

What commission is this?

It's the—why do you ask me for this? [Laughs] I've been into this Electoral Commission for a long time.

Oh, the Electoral Commission.

I've been there for a very, very long time. So all those skills of being able to fit into things I never went to school for that type of job but I was able to accomplish through my prior educational preparations and that was gained from my experience at Inanda...to be able to do big things you must have courage to stand up and do things without anybody pushing you. You see yourself reach heights, you see yourself developing, you see yourself accomplishing. It's great, as far as I'm concerned. That's the type of caliber that people that came out of Inanda Seminary. You didn't have a second grade type of student, you had a high student, a top scholar, who would go for anything and achieve the best all the time. That school guaranteed us that. And it was repeated that not everybody could take his or her child to that school. It's only those who could afford, because of the fees. There came a time when the Americans were not able to pay fees for—to subsidize the school fees, so it was difficult for the missionaries to continue. So the government had to sort of agree to provide the sort of support

Yeah, it's strange because technically private schools weren't supposed to charge fees after the Bantu Education Act, but yeah, I mean, Inanda clearly was having to charge fees to actually stay in business during that time. I know from the records that it was very difficult to afford to sustain support at that time. So after you graduated Inanda did you stay in touch with a lot of Inanda Seminary alumni?

Yes, some of the girls still do. I stayed in the Transkei most of the time, and in Transkei I met different people. And I went to Zululand, I went to an extreme area where you wouldn't see the Inanda students. It's only when I came back to stay in Durban that I began to. In fact some of them would phone me and they come around and they come together. They were telling me the other day that they were a very important big event. I asked them, 'Why is it that I am not on the database?' [Laughs] So it's only recent students that they are able to identify, the old ones they forget about.

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Yeah, it's weird doing this research, I've found that there are certain networks of people who are really close knit, but it seems that the networks aren't really talking to each another.

That it is, that's true, that's very true.

It's a problem because I think for fundraising—

We are available and worried, I was talking to some of them last week, only last week, because I am now attending the church here in Berea and I see some of the old Inanda girls there.

Oh, the Congregational Church?

The Congregational Church.

Mabel Christoferson is still there, too.

Yeah, in fact that is exactly what I say. I'm so glad when I can come back and still identify people during school meetings. Because they tell me, 'No we had a function at Inanda' and I say, 'But why didn't you tell us.' And I told them, I'll give you my email address. They you can keep in touch with me, send me an email. Then I can decide what I want to do thereafter. There is a lot of cream that is untapped which could be useful for the development of that school...

To go back a bit to your early childhood memories. What do you remember about Emmeline Gumede who was at Inanda?

She was my aunt.

Yes, she was your aunt. Mwelela mentioned that she was a very important figure in your family.

Oh, my dear God. That is where we got our strengths from. She was very strong, powerful. She became an inspector of schools and very independent, very independent and dynamic person. She was broad in a sense that as a family—because we come from a very, very big family, I knew that she was very fond of my father because my father was the only brother. They were 8 sisters. It was a big family, but she could anchor the household in a manner that—you would say she's an engine. An engine that was really driving everybody. It was the right direction. Very strict principles, principles. She was not a big talker. But she was very brainy and dynamic. I know her, in fact, when I grew up, in times that I was matured enough, and I was able to see her charisma and manner that she was actually dedicated to her family, dedicated to her work. She would go—at that time, when she was inspector, you would see her, she was not driving a car. She would go on foot, go by buses to these areas and you never hear a complaint about transportation to these schools. And she would coming back and you would not hear her say much about her work, but you could see that when she comes back, she comes back with something that most of us would benefit from. It was very kind, very generous, she had no children, but very generous. For the upbringing of her own sister's kids. That's where we take this thing from, because I am also

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staying with some of my cousins, my late cousin, I just dropped him at Inanda yesterday. He stays with me and I take him to school, boys school here. Over there we can drive him home, mix with the family. On Sunday, take him to school, you know that’s a type of caring actually we learned from her.

And then, did you – so she and your mother went to Inanda Seminary. Did all of your other aunts go as well?

Yes, all of them, all of them did go there. All of them did go there. They were a fortunate family because their father was a minister. And when my father actually they at once they made sure that my father achieved his medicine. She would actually make sure, she collects funds for his schooling and make sure that he finished his own education in Birmingham. If she was selfish, my father wouldn’t have gone there, because she was the only one that was highly-qualified amongst the other sisters. All of them are teachers, but she was the one that got the promotions, was an asset to all of the schools in the area. I know very well, because each time I would go there everybody would say, ‘Oh, your aunt, oh your aunt.’

And then among your generation, did your cousins all go to Inanda too?

All of them, all of them. Yes, all of them... In fact I do not know whether because Ms. Scott was close to my family, or because of the ministry that my grandparents had, they encouraged that the first place to go is Inanda Seminary for proper and good education. So when you look at other schools—the best one, Inanda was top of the list. And added to that was because it was local, we didn’t spend money to take buses or transport, we just walked to school.

So you didn’t stay as a boarder when you were in high school?

I stayed as a boarder. Despite the fact that our home was in the neighborhood.

And then did you have children? Do you have children?

I have 5 daughters, 5 heavyweights. Two have just recently gotten married. But all of them, I’ve given them good tuition, they’ve been to good schools, all of them went to multiracial schools. She’s the last one, and the one did become, a second one did political project management after his matric, he did some degree courses and then he qualified to do project management, that one is a lawyer. And the fourth one—did medicine, opted to go into work for a pharmaceutical company and she is frustrated, and this last one did graphic design. They’re all grown up and independent. I just have to take care of myself and do some work, because I’m still with the IC right now. Only two are married. The two in between ones are married, they’ve recently gotten married anyway. But of course they are very independent as well.

Yes, it’s really striking how many people in the Gumede family went to Inanda. It’s quite remarkable.

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It's true, it's very true. Now our parents would look at all the schools and look at them. Now out of these schools, which one? They would look at the results, production, morale, record, repute, everything, they would actually grade the schools. They would say out of twenty, which one comes first? And they opt for Inanda. So that's what they used to do. And when we grew up, when we were looking for proper schools, I didn't take my kids to Inanda. Because at the time, we were striving to get our kids to go to white schools.

That was in the eighties?

Yes, so that they would get equal education. I was lucky because where I was I was able to get a school that accepted the kids. My kids were one of the first black students, pupils to go to white schools. I was lucky in that sense, and also because I was married to a doctor, I had funds to pay these high fees. So that's how I was lucky. None of them went to a black school – none of them. So that's why they have no hassles in terms of jobs, they have no hassles in terms of choices, they do what they like, they're independent, they've got open minds...

I feel like now that Inanda is trying to improve again, some people are considering sending their children -

No, no, no. Somebody told me last Sunday, I was discussing the same thing. Have you seen the building at Inanda Seminary? I said, yes sir. It's coming, it's that beautiful. I said, I'm so proud Inanda Seminary is going back to the way it was before. It's when she asked for my email address. It's when I knew there was additional developments out there. Because there were problems underneath and it was difficult to get ground and to get things going. Now she was telling me of the new committees that was – I had good discussions with the lady last week. And I'm very happy because we were worried. I forgot the name of this lady. It was one of the old Inanda girls too, I met her at one of the functions and she was telling me that she was the one, she was also in the committee.

Mrs. [Bongekile] Dhlomo? She's great -

Yes. She's great, I tell you, when I meet her, we talk of nothing else but Inanda Seminary.

Yeah she's very passionate about it, very helpful.

Yeah.

Yeah, I think that sort of wraps up the questions that I wanted to ask you. Is there anything else you'd like to emphasize, that you think I should know or think about?

In fact there was one thing I was going to say, during now, these times, if we had four of such schools I would say our future is very, very bright, because such schools provide a wholesome type of development for our own people. Where you have one stop for education and you get 100 percent, that's where you'd like to take your child. Don't get a child to develop one side and

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the other side is blank... You need schools like Inanda Seminary when you really want to develop people. And there was a move sometime when they wanted to introduce boys as well, I think that the time, there was still funding.

Yeah, in the early nineties there were some day students, and some of them were male.

But then when Ms. Scott left and all these people left, the whole direction was lost, and then people were grappling with things, people were coming in and out and it was difficult to manage. But unfortunately some of us were far out, were far away, I was not even staying here, I was staying in Zululand at the time. But because I was interested in the school, you would get some people who would get personal, and they tell you more about, and that's how you would get connected.

Well thank you I think that answers my questions. Thank you. I think you remembered a lot.

I really loved that school, I loved it so much. Like I say, I'm a really independent type of person, even right now. I do what I want, anytime, and I bring up my children the way I was brought up and that basis was because I went to a very good school, powerful school that could make me stand on my two feet. For instance, I could have easily divorced and became a wash-out but I was able to stand on my two feet, stand on my ground, and say, look, what is divorce after all. You have to be on your two feet and you have a direction of where you want to go, that's it. Because of the background that I got before, the background where I came from, I didn't look at divorce as a negative factor. But I said to myself, look I need a good life, I have children to bring up, I must provide them an excellent education. I must stand up on my two feet: that's why I came back, from business, I closed the businesses and went back, settled down with the commission, I'm comfortable there, I'm regional supervisor. And what else do I want? But it's nice, it's really nice when you've got memories of your school. I always tell my children, I say, I've got history. I could write books. Some of us get lazy, nowadays we work too hard, but the history that we carry is interesting in terms of our development. They went to good school, all of them became collegiate. We all became collegiate. They know nothing about suffering, they know nothing about things that are not properly done, they have not seen things that are out of order because we made sure that they don't experience the lives that we did experience before. And we made sure that we provided them with the good schools that would give them everything in life.

Thank you very much.