

profile

Enoch Nelani:

building POPCRU

POPCRU president Enoch Nelani loves rugby as much as he loves mobilising his members to actively participate in democratising our country.

I was born in 1959 on a farm outside East London. I am the eldest of six children. My father was a farm hand and my mother a housewife. My father's brothers and their wives and their children all stayed together, and we were therefore a very big family.

A vivid memory of life on the farm was that we kept on moving all the time. In 1968 we had to move from a white man's farm because my father and his brother, after saving for years, had bought a tractor. The farmer was not happy about this. He complained that there can't be two tractors on one farm.

Another feature of living on the farm was the erratic manner in which we attended school. We attended school for three days a week and the other days were forced to work on the farm. I left school in standard four, but I went back later until I reached standard nine.

The first job I had was at a hotel in East London in 1982. I worked for a year for R160 a month. I then left to work as a furniture salesman for Ellerines.

Joining the force

In December 1984 I joined the railway police and was based at the East London airport. One of my uncles worked for the railway police and he got me a job there.

In 1985 I went to the railway police training college in Bloemfontein. On completing my training, I was stationed at Cambridge police station in East London. Although I was never politically active, I was conscious and had some streak of rebellion in me. I was regarded by other policemen as having a negative attitude towards white police officers. There were instances when the railway police called the security police to talk to me about what they considered to be my negative attitude.

Although I joined the railway police as a desperate measure to provide for my family, I had told myself that I wanted to serve the community. However, the training at college changed this perception. It was geared towards manipulating our minds against the community.

From 1984 to 1986 was the height of mass mobilisation. Feelings against the