



I am involved in the LPM in Protea South, Soweto, where we are shack-dwellers. The state wants to remove all the shack dwellers, and to then use the land for houses for other people. This is a major issue that we are fighting. Forced removals are what we are facing. Housing is what we want: to be housed properly.

We also face a lack of consultation from our so-called elected municipal councillors: they do things, without consulting the community. The politicians rely on the votes of our grandparents: they use them to get elected, promising this and that to get at the end of the day more votes.

These are the problems that we are facing. To organise and fight for the things I have mentioned, we as LPM Protea South usually have a protest march or barricade the streets, so we can be seen by the state as fighting for our demands. Normally we make it a point that no-one from our community goes to work during the protests. There are shops in our area: we make it a point that no-one opens on that day also.

If each and every person joins the struggle, we can make changes. We need to fight the struggle together: even fighting for our rights in Protea South is not only a fight for LPM members only, but for everyone who lives in in this community and in this world. We are fighting for everyone who needs land and freedom.

All social movements should organise all the ordinary people to take direct action to defeat the state and the capitalists. If we always talk and talk without action, we are like an empty vessel. We need to be creative, and I push the idea of a poor people's summit, to build for big day of action and to allow struggles to be linked up.

Part 2: Lekhetho Mtetwa: Rebuilding the Landless People's Movement from below

Lucien van der Walt (LvdW): Thanks very much for agreeing to be interviewed. Can you tell me a bit about yourself and about the Landless People's Movement (LPM) and its work?

Lekhetho Mtetwa (LM): I am Lekhetho Mtetwa, secretary of the LPM in Protea South, from Chiawelo, in Soweto.

The LPM was set up in Protea South in 2001, and the person who introduced it was Maureen Mnisi. She became its chairperson for plus-minus 11 years, and was also Gauteng LPM chair.

How did I join? I raised issues in a public meeting, around land, and people said, "You know what, come and join us." And I was given light on how the LPM

