

APPENDIX E: ESKOM EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE

Interviewer : Vonani Michael Baloyi
Interviewee : Ngodiseni Mayisha
Date : 30 March 2005
Venue : Malamulele ESKOM Office
Time : **14h47 to 15h15**

1. What type of education do you normally offer as ESKOM to people before electrification?

There are two types of education that we offer to villages before and after electrification, that is, pre-education and post-education. Pre-education is also referred to as pre-electrification where people are taught how the electrification project will be conducted. Firstly we talk with the community representatives to give a site to contractors where they will offload the electricity materials. There is also what we call site handing over where the community representatives show a site to ESKOM consultant and the contractor. Thereafter a site office will be built in a village.

A. PRE - ELECTRIFICATION

We also organize a mass meeting of all people covered by the electrification map to educate them on the following headings:

I. SAFETY

The contractor will survey the site to be electrified and pin some pins or put stones on the ground. Thereafter they will dig holes which might be dangerous to the community people. If people are drunk for example they may fall in the holes and get hurt or lose their legs or hands which may lead them to claiming money for the damages from ESKOM. But since we would have educated before hand it is good for the safety of both the contractor and people.

II. AFLOADING OF MATERIALS

We teach people to inform their children not to play next to the offloading site where ESKOM heavy trucks that use crails offload all the electrification materials. Again here when materials are being offloaded they may happen to fall on them and hurt them which may lead them to claiming something from ESKOM.

III. THE CONSTRUCTION SITE

On the construction site tents for contractor's workers which are mainly men will be erected. But after 2 to 3 days you will find mostly women around the village flocking to the construction site, hence we warn them about the danger of sexual transmitted diseases and HIV and AIDS. We teach them to look after themselves as they will be our future customers.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE

We teach people that for them to get this electricity their houses should be approximately 80m away from the electricity poles but if they are beyond that distance they will not get electricity.

V. SERVICE CONNECTION

It is where the contractor hires the subcontractor to do the house-to-house connection. Electricity lines will be connected to all the houses from the electricity poles and meter boxes will be also be mounted. Each house will be connected according to the size of supply that one wants. There are three types of supply:

- 1. 2,5 AMP meter box, it is little amount of electricity which can be used only for playing a radio.*
- 2. 20 AMP meter box which can be used for playing radio, refrigerator, and lights or for light electrical appliances. The connection fee for 20 AMP meter box is R165 – 00.*
- 3. 60 AMP meter box which can be used for radios, ironing, geyser, stove or for both light and heavy electrical appliances. If one has this type of supply one can cook while cutting grass outside or while ironing and baking. The connection fee for 60AMP meter box is R1000 – 00. The similarity between 20 and 60 AMP meter boxes is that if we buy electricity for example R20 coupon we will get the same units. We as ESKOM do not encourage people to have 60AMP meter box if they do not have lot of electrical appliances.*

Before house-to-house connection is done we as ESKOM, community representatives and the contractor should determine the number of people who need either 20 and 60 AMP meter boxes.

VI. RECONNECTION FEE

This is the amount that should be paid by a householder whose electricity was initially installed in a shack and it should be reconnected to a new built house. One should go for 60 AMP meter box if he/she has many electrical appliances which will need large amount of electricity. This does not necessarily mean that if one has a big house then he/she have a 60 AMP meter box because you can still have 20AMP meter box which can still be upgraded to 60AMP provide there are many electrical appliances.

VII. POST CONNECTION

Post connection is done to an already electrified area where one completes an application form which will processed until connection is done.

B. POST EDUCATION

This is the education that we offer to people that already have electricity. After electrification we also make follow up to people as they are our clients. ESKOM is a producer of electricity and should teach its customers to treat electricity with care because it is very dangerous. Post education focuses on the following:

VIII. SAFETY;

a. SAFETY INSIDE THE HOUSE

- (i). People should not touch plugs and electrical appliances with wet hands. Water with dissolved salt in it is a good conductor of electricity.*
- (ii). Cables connected to electrical appliances should not move under the carpets.*
- (iii). Cables from electrical appliances should not be extended by sello tape but by proper connectors.*
- (iv). Worn-out cables should not be used at all.*
- (v). appliances should be connected to the plugs but not to the door frames or lights.*

b. SAFETY OUTSIDE THE HOUSE

In the surrounding village there are high voltage electricity lines which should be treated with care. Villagers should consider the infrastructure in their village as their property because they get electricity service from it. When trees grow under electricity lines villagers are not allowed to chop them down because they could be electrocuted but to inform ESKOM to remove them. If villagers decide to chop down trees they might fall on the lines and there could be power cut off. Villagers should not also make fire under the electricity lines. When people are carrying long objects they are advised to carry them horizontally but not to carry them vertically under the electricity lines because they might be electrocuted. Kids should not play their kites next to the lines nor soccer ball next to a substation.

IX. ECONOMIC USE OF ELECTRICITY

As ESKOM we really care about our customers not to overspend but to save electricity. We teach people on how to use electrical appliances such as;

1. electric iron

Electric iron is one of the appliances that consumes lot of electricity, so we advise them that when they want to iron clothes, they should first collect all washed clothes to one place and then iron them on one day, this will save their money. When they iron clothes they should start with soft linen and end up with hard linen. But when they iron clothes one by one too much electricity will be consumed. It is advisable for all clothes to be ironed once after seven days.

2. refrigerator

Refrigerator does not consume lot of electricity but people have bad tendency of putting hot stuff inside it and that will force it to use lot of electricity to keep the temperature as low as possible. The refrigerator should always be locked.

3. electric kettle

we advise people here not to fill the whole kettle with water if they want to prepare 2 cups of coffee or tea.

4. *electric heater*

We advise people to check the size of heaters that will suit the size of their houses. When using a heater people should ensure that all windows in a house are closed in order for it not to consume lot of electricity. Other people use oven to warm their houses when it is too cold which a bad habit is because oven is one part of the stove that uses lot of electricity.

5. *electric stove*

We advise people to change plates of a stove from time to time because they get damaged which will result in causing them to use too much electricity. People should also check that stove plates are flat to avoid unnecessary loss of electrical energy. People are advised not to cook with small pots on big plates because lot of heat energy will be wasted and it is good to use pots that fit the sizes of the plates.

6. *electric geyser*

We advise people not to use hot water from the hot water tap to cook food. Water in the geyser should not get boiled if it is boiled lot of electricity will be used up (this is a waste of money) but it should be warm. People are also advised not to bath if they want to save electricity but to use showers if possible. People can save electricity if for example 2 to 3 kids bath together at once or a wife and a husband sharing the bath.

7. *the use of spot lights*

Spotlights should not be used because they are not good for the house. There are globes ranging from 20 to 200W and their consumption differ. ESCOM recommends the use of florescent bulbs which they can get at approximately R17 and they can last for 3 years.

X. *POWER FAILURE*

Power failure is referred to as outage or when there is no supply of electricity because of certain reasons. There are 2 types of outages;

a. planned outage

We inform people over the radio or through SMS in the cell phone that in certain places there will be power failure due to problems on the lines.

b. unplanned outage

This is normally caused natural factors such as wind, thunderstorms, lightning, or the burning of transformers. It is also caused by vandalism, which is, stealing of electricity cables, kids throwing stones on the electricity poles and drunken drivers hitting electricity poles with their cars.

Power failure in houses can be reported to Walk in Centres or the nearest ESKOM offices. But the person reporting any outage should have the following detail:

- i. identity book,*
- ii. pole number,*
- iii. meter number*
- iv. name of the village*

*Power failure can be reported to this call centre number: 086 0100304/
08601100384*

- **ILLEGAL CONNECTION**

If ESKOM finds that people have done illegal connection, it will open a case against that person and may be fined from R3000 to R4000 and electricity service could be discontinued.

2. How did you teach communities as first time users of electricity?

We write letters to different structures, municipality and ward officers to get permission to teach people on the better use of electricity. We normally teach approximately 10 000 people and we teach them as a big group. We also ask them questions on what we would have taught them and if they answer correctly they can win electrical appliances such as TVs, stoves, kettles, irons, kettles and refrigerators. We even teach our customers to take precautionary measures against AIDS.

3. I have observed many people from the village who have electricity in their homes going to the veld, chopping down trees and setting veld fires for fuel wood. Do you think that it is good for people to continue chopping down trees and setting veld fires for fuel wood?

As ESKOM we encourage people to use our product (electricity) and not to chop down trees. Naturally we find people going to fetch wood in the bush irrespective of electricity that they have, really I cannot stipulate the reasons for those actions. Telling people not to chop down trees is not our main objective it is the responsibility of the nature conservists but our task is to sell electricity. I can say that chopping down trees is not good because they are food for animals, they provide shadows and also serve as wind breakers. ESKOM' s focus is on selling our product and how to protect peoples' life.,

- 4. There is an arbor day, that is, the day on which many people throughout the world plant trees. Do you also plant trees on this day? If yes or no, explain why?**

Conserving the natural environment is not our main concern as ESKOM but it is for the NATURE CONSERVISTS. But within ESKOM we do have environmental department that focuses on the protection of animals not to be electrocuted.

- 5. Nowadays you will hear most people complaining about the global warming (rising of the earth's temperature). What do you think might be the causes of the change in earth's climatic conditions.**

ESKOM does not contribute to the production of CO₂ in the atmosphere because in most power stations we use water and not coal, there are cooling towers that allow only water vapour to move out but not carbon dioxide.

- 6. What lesson have you learned from the conversation that I had with you, and what can you teach others about using electricity in order to protect the natural environment?**

I have learnt that trees are natural vegetation which should be protected. I have also learnt that as ESKOM we need to inform people about conserving nature although it is not major but we need to alert people about protecting some of the natural vegetation such a trees.