

## **Unemployment is a Crisis**

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Employment has become a crisis in Grahamstown Makhanda. Unemployment in Makhanda has rapidly increased in Makhanda over the years and many of the unemployed youth are graduates. This employment issue has become a pathway to crime in the area.

On 27 March 2023, we interviewed an old lady who runs a small business selling tripe on the street for a living. She stated that she has been job-hunting for the past 20 years. She is not well educated formally but also mentioned that it is not the case for her being unemployed.

She said, "It is very hard for a mother to have no income when it's the end of the month and [the] children also having (sic) their needs as I am a single mother." The 40-year-old woman lost hope for herself but now only wishes that one of her children find work as she is now physically drained.

Her business has caused a strain on her health because she does more than her strength allows.

We also interviewed a 31-year-old male post-graduate student who lives in Makhanda. The student is also unemployed. The graduate spoke out about how he wished things were different. He continued by stating that it does not matter now whether one holds a Master's degree one will still be unemployed as he has been job hunting for 8 months after graduating.

Due to a lack of employment opportunities, he decided to go back to school for the time being. The 31-year-old said, "As I'm standing here it is almost like I never graduated because all my parents' savings went down to waste, and it is sad how I'm struggling having to explain to people how I'm struggling but yet I am a graduate." It has affected him in a way that he is now studying again for stability and not a dream career.

In Makhanda, the crime rate has increased because there are many unemployed youths who see crime as another way of making a living. The two residents who we interviewed shared the same view on how they felt like the government failed them in creating projects, learnerships, or even jobs to cut down the level of unemployment. Government has also not provided the youth with opportunities such as farming giving them a way to make an honest living and gain much-needed experience as well.

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