

Tackling Pollution In The Inner City of Johannesburg

By Tshepiso Kodisang

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On Thursday, 17 August 2023, I went to interview people living in the inner city of Johannesburg about how they are affected by the pollution. More especially the street vendors and the people who live in the inner city. The aim was to hear how they really feel about the pollution issue as people have different views because it won't affect us in the same way. Pollution can include man-made harmful materials in the environment or the pollutants can be natural materials that can damage the quality of air and the environment.

As I was on the lookout, I saw an old lady who asked to remain anonymous. She is a street vendor selling to support her family back home. She said, "The people who sell here in the streets clean after they are done for the day. But also the people from the municipality come here every day from 06:00, and come back later in the day to clean at 16:00 until 21:00. But that does not make any difference because I, as a person, get affected as my business gets affected because people think that my stock is not clean as the place I'm selling in is not clean."

This perception has affected her financially as she said that she works as a street vendor to support her family back home. Meaning she doesn't get to send enough money home since there are few people who support her.

She continued to say that "the people who make the place dirty are the ones that pass by with their cars. They throw their trash outside the car windows. Also the people walking past by, they don't use dustbins. Including men who tend to pee in the streets make my customers uncomfortable because of the smell."

"It's been six months since I started selling in the streets, and every day I come to this mess. It hasn't been different ever since I started working here."

It goes without saying that environmental pollution caused by poor and improper waste disposal can reap serious havoc on habitats, ecosystems, air, water and not forgetting the people.

Siyanda who stays in the inner city buildings said, "Homeless people are the ones that dig into the dustbins." He also stated that he is very hurt but there is no one that he can cry to because the municipality employers are already doing their job, so it is not their fault. Siyanda proceeded to say, "We can avoid the pollution by being on the lookout and tell the people who are untying the plastics to look for food in the open bins rather than in the closed plastics"

People in the inner city should start to think strategically about the waste. They can always recycle the waste and make money from that. Moreover, as a person, you can reduce the amount of waste

you produce by purchasing products that come with less packaging, or recyclable packaging as not all plastic is recyclable.

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