

## **Homeless People Struggle to Survive the Rainy Season**

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In this rainy season, it is a sad and difficult time for people who live on the streets. Many homeless people experience great hardship when it rains, as they have no shelter and no safe place to hide from the cold and wet conditions. They say that living on the streets is the hardest thing ever, as they must use plastic sheets to protect themselves from the rain.

Mlungisi Nyawose said that he left home after the death of his parents, when the house was taken over by his aunt, who later kicked him out because he was using drugs. He explained that drugs helped him forget the pain of losing his parents, who died in a tragic accident when he was only 14 years old. Mlungisi now sleeps on the pavements outside Bara Hospital and uses plastic to cover himself at night.

Nosipho Sangweni shared that after giving birth, her father threw her out of the house and told her to go and live with her baby's father. However, her partner later turned against her and also threw her out, leaving her with nowhere to go. She now lives on the streets and smokes drugs, having joined other girls who were already doing so, just to be part of their group.

Nosipho said she once stayed in a shelter for homeless people, but it was not a pleasant experience. She said that the place did not treat her well, and the hospitality was poor, which led her to leave. "It's not great living on the streets," she said, "but it is a place where I have peace." She added that she does wish to go home, but she cannot find a way to do so, as she does not know how her family would react or whether they would accept her back.

The rain and stormy weather have become a serious issue for those who are homeless because there is no proper shelter available for them. This leads to long, cold days outside, and they are unable to hustle for themselves or find work. The makeshift shelters they build often get flooded during heavy rains, leaving them without warm clothes or bedding that can last them through the season.

Lack of employment also contributes to their struggle, as many of them rely on recycling to survive. When it rains, they cannot collect recyclables, which means they lose their only source of income.

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