

Release date: 5 May 2020

Level 5 Lockdown Ban on non-essential travel reduces car-guard opportunities

By Siyabonga Mviko

There are several people wearing reflective yellow jackets in the CBD of Johannesburg doing informal work. *Karibu!* spoke to Siphso Khoza from Ekurhuleni who guards cars for clients near Ghandi Square in the city centre.

Khoza, 32, says he is in distress because of the lockdown. The measures by government to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has limited traffic. In the area where Khoza works, guarding and washing cars, the traffic is due mostly to sit-down restaurants, visitors to residential flats nearby and workers in the offices. Since the lockdown and related regulations, there has been a huge drop in the number of cars coming around.

“I don’t know if it is worth it, coming here all the way from the township, it is not working,” Khoza said, speaking in isiZulu. He says he keeps coming to maintain his area of work because, if he stays away, one of the many homeless people could occupy the area. “It will be a problem to get my space back without fighting,” he added.

The government has now begun the process of ‘re-opening the economy’ through the enforcement of various levels of national lockdown, with all provinces now on Level 4, from the initial level 5 (26 March – 30 April). But as more and more sectors of the formal economy are opened again, it is still unclear whether informal sector workers in Johannesburg will see their livelihoods restored soon.

This article was submitted on 24 April 2020. You may republish this article, so long as you credit the authors and Karibu! Online (www.Karibu.org.za), and do not change the text. Please include a link back to the original article.