

Life as a Homeless Person in Johannesburg

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Johannesburg CBD is generally a place associated with a fast paced life and making money. Yet in the midst of all this are the forgotten: the homeless and unemployed people that also inhabit Johannesburg.

Siphamandla Nkosi, is a 28-year-old homeless man who is originally from Pimville, Soweto. He ran away from home after his family found out that he was using drugs. As a young boy he always wanted to become a professional soccer player until he got caught up in the life of drug abuse. "I ran away from home at 18 and I found myself as a permanent resident of the streets of Johannesburg," Siphamandla said.

When asked about how he manages to survive he mentioned that recycling helps him secure a meal everyday. "Because I am homeless people treat me like a criminal and they never want to be around me. All I want is for my family to take me back so I can further my studies," he said.

Emma Sheremba is a 37-year-old homeless woman originally from Zimbabwe. She found herself on the streets after coming to South Africa in the hopes of getting a better life. "I came to South Africa at the age of 14 and I have not been back to Zimbabwe for 20 years now. I ask pedestrians for help with food or money," Emma said.

"I was very young at that time but had dreams of getting married to a wealthy South African man who would take care of me but things didn't go as I thought they would". Though at times people do not trust her, and she feels hopeless, she still lives in faith that one day she will have her own place she can proudly call a home.

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