

## **Seven Weeks of Darkness in Naledi**

Residents in Ntshwe Street in Naledi, Soweto has been without electricity for the last seven weeks. Residents initially thought the power cut was a result of load-shedding. The residents only realised a week later that they they were the only street without electricity in the area. Residents believe this is “personal”, since Eskom, has provided no answers.

“It now seems personal. The other side of the street does have electricity, but we don’t. We have seen a person from Eskom every day coming to shut the meter off in the street. We have asked him what is happening but he never gave us answers,” Shadi, a resident, said.

The selective power cuts affect other sections as well. Tladi and the other side of Naledi have also experienced the same. When Ntshwe Street residents have electricity, the other sections will not have electricity. Residents now know that when load-shedding strikes, it will also strike Moletsane, Tladi, and Naledi, not one area only (sections that are not supposed to be affected).

In the morning of 5 August 2020, Tladi and Naledi residents took to the streets as they had not received a response from the ward councilor about the problem they were facing. Streets leading in and out of the area were blockaded with objects, preventing morning traffic from flowing. Many streets and roads were blocked with rocks and other objects, preventing vehicles from passing. Rea Vaya buses did not run for two days, inconveniencing commuters who were going to work. Taxis could not reach Naledi, and only operated from the areas that were not blocked.

Residents demanded electricity. They also wanted a stop to the illegal cutting of electricity as parts of Naledi and Tladi have electricity, except for few streets in the area. Small Shops in the area are losing stock and income. Adding to the woes is the unavailability of airtime and data.

Itumeleng, a university student, attends virtual classes and has to prepare for exams. He struggles with internet connection.

“I do not know what are we going to do now, I am just hoping that we get a response and that they get this sorted out because I have to prepare for my mock exams. I can’t get to the university or send an email to tell them I don’t have electricity. Whoever is doing this, I hope it stops as my future is in technology's hands.”

*This article was submitted on 8 August 2020. You may republish this article, so long as you credit the authors and Karibu! Online ([www.Karibu.org.za](http://www.Karibu.org.za)), and do not change the text. Please include a link back to the original article.*