



Battling the Elements: Melusi's Struggle Under the Watchful Eye of GRT-INSPIRED

April 2024



Melusi is a study site that forms part of GRT-INSPIRED. This informal settlement is situated near an old quarry turned into a deep waterbody. Like in most other informal settlements, people living in Melusi construct their own shacks out of any materials they can find. Corrugated iron is most frequently utilized, and majority of buildings are constructed without a foundation to support the walls. Consequently, the homes of Melusi offered little defence against the torrential rains that frequently besiege the region.

As the second trimester of 2024 unfolded, three significant flooding events ravaged the community, exposing their vulnerability to inclement weather. Families were left homeless after the first incident struck with a cruel familiarity, and thirty shacks were dismantled. In a coordinated effort facilitated by local authorities, affected families were relocated to Plot 101 near Bundu Inn, a distant and unfamiliar locale. While the government extended support, discontent brewed among those grappling with the challenges of adjusting to a new life far from their roots. As soon as the weather settled, majority of them went back to Melusi, and this is supposed to be a recurring pattern.

The second incident, unfolding within the watchful gaze of the GRT-I team, saw the rising waters of a nearby quarry inundating dwellings to the north. Approximately 10 families found themselves stranded amidst the floodwaters; their homes swallowed by the relentless deluge. Despite efforts to assist, the fate of these families remains uncertain, lost amidst the chaos of nature's wrath.

The trials of Melusi did not end there. The third incident, a widespread onslaught of heavy rainfall and fierce winds, wreaked havoc across the community. Ten dwellings bore the brunt of this assault, their flimsy roofs torn asunder, leaving families exposed and vulnerable. In the aftermath, the resilient residents of Melusi rallied, rebuilding their shattered homes with determination and solidarity.

The dedicated field team of GRT-I continues to monitor the site and offer updates timeously. In an effort by the GRT-I team to investigate the future plans by the local authorities for the area, we were informed by the local municipality of the intention to install an overflow pipe to help mitigate the area's flooding caused by quarry runoff. This will divert extra water to a nearby catchment, reducing flooding.

Thank you to Thato Seome, Community Engagement, Hillbrow Site, Kenny Mafala, Community Engagement, Melusi Site, Rhena Delpert, GRT-I Operations, Melusi/Atteridgeville Sites, Nhlanhla Khumalo, Field Supervisor, Hillbrow Site, Rebaone Madzivhandila, Field Supervisor, Melusi/Atteridgeville Sites for this article.

