

EPWP workers help clean ill man's home

Neighbours need material to rebuild his meagre shelter

By ATHENA O'REILLY

A GROUP of Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers rolled up their sleeves yesterday and cleaned up the home of an ill Nompumelelo man.

Luyanda Sbako, who cannot care for himself, had been living alone in a tiny, one-room shack that he has used as a bedroom, kitchen and toilet for more than five years.

His neighbours were concerned that his home could pose a health risk for him and others living in the area.

When the Daily Dispatch visited the area, it was covered in rubbish, dirty clothing and broken shoes, as well as a broken mattress with exposed springs.

About 40 EPWP workers were cleaning up the structure and carrying away refuse to a nearby dumpsite.

Resident Sizwe Jamda said they had alerted EPWP workers about Sbako's plight and asked that they help.

"He is living in a terrible situation and he can't help himself so we called upon EPWP to clean up his shack.

"We do need material to rebuild the structure and give him a proper place to stay but we don't have the means either.

"He needs basic necessities like clean clothes and shoes, as well as a clean bed, and we are trying to get this for him as a community," Jamda said.

Resident Zoliswa Tsonono, who lives not too far from Sbako, said the way the man lived posed a health hazard for him and those around him.

"We are concerned about everyone's



CAN'T CONTINUE: The sad home of a man who can't take care of himself. The social development department is keen to find out who is receiving his grant

wellbeing in the area and he is the only one who lives like this here.

"There are a few others in the same situation in other parts of the township.

"We are trying to help people like him, who cannot help himself, because we feel bad and we worry about his situation as he lives alone," Tsonono said.

Sbako was not at his place at the time of the visit and was believed to be working as a gardener at a house in Beacon Bay.

The community members plan to visit another person living in a similar situation on Monday to assist in the same manner.

Provincial social development spokesman Mzukisi Solani told the Dispatch that they would try to find Sbako's relatives – who might be

enjoying his government social grant while he suffers.

"We will have to make a follow-up and locate this person's relatives.

"What is important is that people in that state need to receive assistance [financial grant] and we need to find out who receives it on his behalf.

"That grant should take care of him if he applied for it," Solani said.

Ward 15 councillor Makhaya Bopi visited the man's home and applauded the intervention by the community.

"We held a meeting [on Wednesday] to map out a way forward to help this man out and this was the solution – to clean up the structure.

"We need to now rebuild it [for the night] and take him back to his family [today] so that he can be taken care of."

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TOUGH JOB: EPWP workers clean out a shack of an ill Nompumelelo resident after being summoned by concerned community members
Pictures: ATHENA O'REILLY