

RAILWAY STATION DWELLERS will vote for a better future

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RESIDENTS who have been living in the old railway station in Kokstad say they are hoping that the upcoming elections will have a positive effect on their lives.

During this weekend's voter registration drive, they have vowed to visit voting stations to register to vote, while others said they will be updating their residential addresses on the IEC voters' roll so as to exercise their right to vote in May.

Despite the lack of proper housing, electricity, water and sanitation, they believe that, by voting, their lives will improve.

A 17-year-old mother of one said they depend on chopping wood to prepare fire for cooking because there is no electricity. She added that they use candles for light at night.

"Life is not easy here, we keep praying to government to make our lives better," she said.

Another resident, Aubry Mthembu, who has been living in the area for 20 years has asked President Cyril Ramaphosa to fulfil his promise of creating jobs for unemployed people.

Mthembu says he can repair cars and cut grass, but now he is unemployed.

Thapelo Morai, another resident, was seen searching for job opportunities in newspapers when the *Fever* reporter visited the area on Monday. Morai was sitting on his bed, which was made of rocks, in the small room that he calls home.

"I converted one of the rooms that was previously used as a toilet at the railway station and I feel safe compared to my previous life of sleeping under bridges.



"During the 2016 Local Government Elections I voted, and I will also vote this year for better things," he said.

Other residents in the area said government has done a lot for them as they work in the expanded public works programme. They said

more jobs need to be created in the country.

In a *Fever* publication last year, Greater Kokstad Municipality speaker Councillor Zolani Mhlongo said the old railway station is not owned by the municipality and people have been told to vacate the premises.

Thapelo Morai has converted an old toilet into a bedroom for himself.

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