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Commission for Gender Equality

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The Human Face of Floods Disaster



Nosizakala Mesiwiwe stands next to a family house that collapsed during the floods disaster in Ntlavini village, Mzimvubu Local Municipality under the Alfred Nzo District, Eastern Cape.

She says her old-aged mother-in-law has been relocated to live with relatives in other villages while the provincial department of human settlement is still finalising the temporary structure that will house the family.

The area was hit by the flood disaster that claimed lives in KZN. The family says apart from the temporary structure that is being built for them, they have not yet received any other relief assistance although they have received numerous promises.



21-year-old Zenande lives with her younger sibling in Mhlonto village outside Qumbu in the OR Tambo District, Eastern Cape. Both their parents have passed away. She says two of their houses collapsed following heavy rains and they are now living in another homestead nearby.

They have not yet received a temporary structure to accommodate them but that is not top on the list of her concerns. She is not working and has no means to support her younger sibling.

Other families in the Mhlonto village are in the same predicament. The village is not easily accessible even by vehicles as it is situated up on the mountain. Most of the people in the village are unemployed women.



This woman in Mount Aylif lives with her little child in a house that has partly collapsed. They sleep in a part that is still standing but she says the walls have been affected by rain and can also come down anytime.

The provincial department of human settlements has delivered material that will be used in erecting a temporary structure for her. She survives on a child support social grant and also relies on distant relatives for occasional assistance.

The municipal disaster management office says plans are underway to build permanent houses for all the families affected by the disaster.



Ms Zulu says the floods affected her family severely, particularly pertaining to the loss of her and her family's identity documents. Her home was in Ward 4 in the village of Nhlungwane, in KwaMadhu Nonyevu in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

She is one of the few residents housed at Inanda. She has lost everything as her house is one of the few that was washed away. Ms Zulu's request is for them to be moved to temporary housing structures.



LEFT: The family that stays in this house is still waiting for the provincial department of human settlements to erect a temporary structure same as the one pictured far left.