

UJ explores effect of electricity crisis on Black working-class in townships

The University of Johannesburg's (UJ) Centre for Sociological Research and Practice (CSRP) has released a research report exploring the experiences, responses, and solutions in Soweto to the energy crisis in South Africa.



Soweto township. [Source: sea turtle/Flickr, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#)

Titled [*Energy racism: The electricity crisis in South Africa*](#), the CSRP research team used an ethnographic, door-to-door research methodology to answer the following questions:

- How do ordinary township folk experience the electricity crisis?
- What impact does it have on their lives?
- How are they coping with and responding collectively and individually to the crisis?
- What solutions do they offer?

The research results contained in the 83-page report are captured in the concept 'energy racism'. The researchers found a situation whereby Black working-class communities are bearing the burden of the electricity crisis.



SA's economic growth affected by mismatch of electricity supply and demand

Roula Inglesi-Lotz 13 Apr 2022



Townships neglected by Eskom

It demonstrates how, in addition to load shedding, Black working-class communities suffer from load reduction - "a racist

policy of targeting Black areas for power failures aimed at reducing South Africa's energy demand given Eskom's inability to cope", said the university in a media release.

The report also provides evidence of how areas where the Black working-class live are neglected by Eskom and the authorities when it comes to maintenance, service complaints, response to repair callouts, etc. The report suggests that the neglect of the energy needs of the working class and the poor is a continuation of past racist policies.

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