

Durban volunteers and workers clean up en masse

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Volunteers and workers are out in numbers on the streets of Durban and other areas in KwaZulu-Natal to clear the aftermath of widespread unrest and looting.



Clean up operations with volunteers are underway across the city of Durban following unrest and looting this week. Photo: Nokulunga Majola

In Umlazi, over 50 volunteers from the community and local organisations arrived at the Umlazi Mega City Shopping Centre, armed with brooms and other cleaning material on Wednesday to clear debris and other items left behind by looters.

Ntokozo Ndlovu, one of the clean-up organisers, said it all started with a Facebook post by Menelisi Hlangu on Umlazi Kasi Lami. “While I was busy trying to get resources and other people to help out, I discovered many other organisations and individuals calling for a cleaning campaign for our township. We then joined and used our own vehicles, cleaning materials and safety gear to go and clean our mall,” said Ndlovu.

“Our campaign is aimed at cleaning all centres and streets around Umlazi. We all know it’s not going to be easy and will take a week or two due to setbacks we are experiencing in terms of transportation and cleaning material but we are not giving up. We are also facing the fuel challenge but people are here knowing there is nothing to gain personally. They are doing it for the Umlazi community,” Ndlovu said.



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Request for assistance

She said many of the businesses looted were owned by and employed people from the community. "Some of them won't be able to recover from this setback. We would like to request anyone who is willing to help us with transport for volunteers or drop off cleaning materials," said Ndlovu.

Volunteer Nokubonga Zulu said she was tired of sitting at home and doing nothing while her community was being destroyed. "This is about humanity. Humanity makes you rich in the heart and all I can say is that we need our malls back."

In Durban central, taxi body Santaco with cleaners from Durban Solid Waste began cleaning up the littered streets in the CBD under the watchful eye of police. After the clean-up on Wednesday, they collected and bagged all refuse that included plastic, paper, boxes and all sorts of rubbish.

More sites and volunteers were out on Thursday again for a second day of clearing the streets.

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