

City dwellers count losses after downpour

Cold weather. Many people stayed home, leaving traders and motorists stranded with no customers.

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KAMPALA. Several businesses in Kampala City were brought to a standstill following a downpour on Sunday morning.

Until 2pm, rain was still pounding some parts of the city, leaving many people stranded as they tried to brace the weather to go for prayers and work.

Majority of city traders, who had reached work as early as 7am, chose to keep their shops closed to protect their merchandise from being drenched.

All the busy shopping malls and streets had a handful of people, as majority of shops remained closed.

For instance, roads such as Ssebaana Kizito (former Naki-vubo) and Allen Road in downtown had a power blackout which some traders attributed to the downpour.

"I reached here by 7am but I haven't seen any customer, two hours later," Ms Nalukwago Juliet, a trader on Namirembe Road, said.

No sales

She told *Daily Monitor* that the day was a bad one because she would not make sales even if she stayed there the whole day since people had chosen not to enter the city.

Taxi operators and boda boda cyclists were not spared either as they could not manoeuvre through the already potholed roads, leaving passengers stranded.

Although passengers scrambled for taxis in both the New and Old taxi parks to board and leave the city to their destinations, their hopes to reach early were also shattered by the grid-lock especially on major city junctions.

Mr Henry Mutyaba, a taxi driver, said whenever it rains, they make losses because of the heavy traffic hence drivers cannot make many trips like it is the case during day time.

Due to the heavy rain, there was an overflow caused by Naki-vubo drainage channel, spilling into Allen and Ssebaana roads.



Submerged. Flooded houses at Kigowa Village, Kalinabiri One and Two on the Norther Bypass on Sunday.

PHOTO BY RACHEL MABALA

KCCA SPEAKS OUT

While addressing journalists on the city's infrastructural development last week, Mr Andrew Kitaka, the Kampala Capital City Authority director of engineering and technical services, said after roads construction projects in the city, they will now embark on upgrading all the drainage channels to allow easy flow of water.

Areas in the city such as Queens's way were not spared. Other city suburbs such as Bwaise, Kawempe, Kasubi and Namungoona were affected.

Meanwhile, residents living on Kimera Road in Ntinda are crying foul over what they call 'persistent flooding' which they say is caused by the construction works on the same road.

Kimera Road, which stretches from Kira Road opposite Haruna Complex, is being constructed by Stirling Civil Engineering Ltd

on behalf of KCCA.

When completed, it will connect to Ntinda Market on Ntinda-Kampala road.

The most affected people are those residing on the lower side of the road, who said water flows with high pressure from the upper side.

The construction works, residents argue, have had a negative impact on their lives because the contractor has allegedly failed to find a mechanism of channelling water to avoid flooding.

Daily Monitor visited the contested road construction project on Friday to verify the claims by the residents and found out that floods have since ravaged homes of some residents.

Channelling water

Mr Micheal Raja Aguma, one of the residents, said before the construction works commenced, he and other residents tried to engage KCCA on what plans they had to properly channel the water but they were assured of how their homes could not be affected by flooding.

"All the culverts which were planted to channel the water have since been washed away and water just flows direct into my house. Whenever I engage the engineers who are on site, they tell me that for them they were contracted by KCCA," Mr Aguma said.

Mr Robert Kalumba, the KCCA deputy spokesperson, said works on Kimera Road are in the early stages, adding that with the onset of the rains, the team is going to increase efforts of diverting storm water.

"We have several engagements with the residents of Kimera Road to discuss encroachment on the road reserve and building of houses in wetlands or swamps.

In these engagements, we have advised the clients on the effects of these constructions and the effect of roadworks," he said in a text message.

Mr Kalumba noted that their contractor, Stirling, was advised to design and build drainage outflow channels to curb the flooding.