

Operation 'rebuild and restock' underway as unrest wanes

 By Lauren Hartzenberg

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The intensity and frequency of riots eased on Thursday, and businesses and residents are in the throes of repairing the damage to property and clearing the debris that has resulted from days of looting, arson and vandalism in KwaZulu-Natal and parts of Gauteng.



A screen grab taken from a video shows the damage inside a shopping mall following protests. Source: Courtesy Kierran Allen/via Reuters

Restoring supply of food and essentials

Following the widespread destruction of food and other manufacturing facilities, supermarkets and grocery stores as well as distribution infrastructure, the Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA) has appealed to the government to provide effective protection to its retail, manufacturing and services sector members, and to provide for the safe passage of delivery vehicles and employees, in restoring the supply food, pharmaceutical and medical supplies to areas affected by looting.

The CGCSA also urged the government to open critical road networks such as the N3, and suspend tolls to enable the free flow of traffic.



200 liquor stores looted, along with SAB and Heineken facilities

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The council said it is particularly concerned about the impact of the disruptions on food security across the country, and is calling on government's support to avert an emerging humanitarian crisis.

"As CGCSA members are assessing the losses and damage caused, they are also rebuilding capacity to resume serving customers as soon as possible. The CGCSA members are united in their determination to do everything they can to restore the supply of food, essential groceries and general merchandise and meet the emerging humanitarian need," CGCSA said.

The Shoprite Group said it's working around the clock to restock and rebuild affected stores in KZN and Gauteng, and will re-open stores for business in these areas as soon as it is safe for both customers and employees. In other parts of the country, all the group's stores are fully operational and fully stocked.

"The mayhem and destruction are everyone's loss, particularly in a country ravaged by a poor economy and joblessness, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The riots are only making our challenges, including food security, greater," the supermarket group said.



Business, charity sectors collaborate on securing food aid for KZN

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Staff and customers lend a hand

Shoprite added, "We are especially grateful to our loyal customers, many of whom have reached out and offered to help with clean-up operations and want to assure our customers that we are working day and night to continue to feed and support the nation."

The group also thanked its employees for continuing to serve customers, and for going the extra mile under extremely trying conditions.

A video emerged on social media this week showing Shoprite and shopping centre employees pouring cooking oil onto the floor in front of the store entrance to prevent looters from entering.

“ Shoprite employees pored cooking oil outside the store so looters can't get in. The video is pure gold

👉👉👉👉👉👉👉👉 pic.twitter.com/72A3p5SFIC— Tilka Paljk (@TilkaPaljk) July 15, 2021 ”

Employees at the Clicks Evaton store in Johannesburg also volunteered their time to help clean up the damage left by looters.

“ Our Clickers at Evaton store helped clear up the destruction in their own time to make sure we all keep going – they're here for us, just as we'll always be here for you. That won't change. pic.twitter.com/SoRB42jsXY— Clicks (@Clicks_SA) July 16, 2021 ”

Some Clicks stores in Gauteng and KZN remain closed, however details of updates on closures and reopening can be found [on the retailer's website](#).

Residents have also rallied together to help clean up the multiple shopping centres that were ransacked this week. [Daily Maverick](#) reported that in Alexandra, residents were cleaning debris at the Pan Africa Mall on Thursday, while in Soweto, communities had banded together to tidy Diepkloof Square and protect Maponya Mall. Similar activities were reported in Daveyton at Mayfield Square and Daveyton Mall as well as in Tembisa and Vosloorus.



Residents count cost as South Africa looting starts to die down

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Delivery of essentials

Massmart retailer Game said it has prioritised providing South Africans with essential goods in as many areas as possible, through its brick-and-mortar stores and its partnerships with Uber Eats and OneCart.

"Our ability to deliver online orders has been affected in some areas, such as Durban and surrounds, where routes have become inaccessible or unsafe," explained Game's vice president Andrew Stein. "We are proactively communicating with customers and doing all we can to minimise delays, including re-routing orders to operational stores and facilities. Our focus during this time is to ensure that our customers are able to shop essential items safely and conveniently."

"It's the love and support for me 💎💎 Siyabonga.

Together, we will bounce back 💎💎💎 Game's got Mzansi, always! 💎💎💎 #GotGame pic.twitter.com/XYQ22YtYGb— Game Stores SA (@Game_Stores) [July 15, 2021](#) "

Stein said that the partnerships with Uber Eats and OneCart allow Game customers to place their orders online with on-demand delivery. This service is for essential items only.

"Delivery to our customers via the Game stores has been impacted, especially in KwaZulu-Natal, and operationally the team is communicating directly with customers via contact centres, as well as making every effort to ensure delivery of items in areas that have not been heavily affected by the unrest," the retailer said in a statement.

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