

Car Parts and Repairs

One of the challenges we experience here has to do with vehicles. Cars are definitely an indispensable item. They help us to go to and fro running errands, visiting friends, shopping, and going to church. They are a much needed item for my sanity. There are some days when living behind walls can feel like a prison. But our poor cars go through a number of daily challenges.

One problem is the poor quality of roads. There are always surprises that await you - pot holes, ditches, cracks in the pavement (if there is any pavement), and bumps where they paved over anything they found in the way.



Big hole on the right side of the road

Another challenge is the lack of drainage. You might find some drainage ditches in the city where we are located but they don't work well. People will throw trash in them or the street sweepers will sweep the garbage into them. When they are full and flooding, people will come by and dig the drainage ditches and place the refuse right back on the side of the road, blocking much of the flow of traffic. Until dry season when the street sweepers sweep the trash back.



Normal sight after rain

A third problem is bridges. Many of the materials used to build bridges are not very sturdy and often break. You never know if your vehicle will be the one that cracks the materials or not. Our car can attest to this challenge as it has lost once before. No one wants to pay for good materials for a bridge because often, people will steal them in the middle of the night. You think I kid? Concrete slabs have been known to disappear in minutes once the sun sets.



Wooden Bridge



Used Tires for sale

One of the biggest challenges is parts. It is very difficult to find car parts and if you do find them, they are most often used or of poor quality. We don't exactly have an Auto Zone or handy car parts store nearby. We recently needed our breaks replaced. So we paid a buyer to go find what we needed. He then returned with what he could find. We have lost quite a bit of money trying to find parts before. If you find something used and it does not work, you have to find a new seller yourself. There are no "exchanges or refunds" to be found here. Or if the item is of too poor a quality for safety, you have to wait for someone traveling this way from the U.S. to bring a better one.



The last challenge I am going to mention is **traffic** or the **in-knowledgeable drivers**. Most people will call those lovely little dents and scrapes "Congo Camouflage" on their car, but everyone gets them. These come from cars who have misjudged space and distance in their need to fill in the road gaps and get where they want to go. Too many of those fender benders can be quite rough on a car.



So what do you do when the buyer brings back the wrong parts? You let your daughter play . . .