



UNITED NATIONS

Office of the Resident Coordinator
South Africa

Situation Report 4 – VIOLENCE AGAINST FOREIGNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA – 11 JUNE 2008

HIGHLIGHTS

- Western Cape declares a disaster on 2 June 2008 in order to activate additional resources for the humanitarian response.
- Violence against foreign nationals has decreased and the security situation has stabilized. The South African National Defence Force personnel are withdrawn from townships and informal settlements.
- The consolidation of displaced foreign nationals at six new Centres of Safe Shelter (CoSS) in Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni municipalities in Gauteng Province has concluded. Similar efforts in Tshwane municipality are ongoing.
- Results of a government-led inter-agency assessment in Western Cape Province report that critical conditions remain at the largest sites, especially Soetwater.
- The UN considers issuing an international appeal to meet the humanitarian needs not yet addressed in the CoSS.

SITUATION - NATIONAL



Figure 1 - Tents at "Rifle Range" CoSS, Johannesburg Municipality (Photo courtesy of P-DMC)

The security situation in South Africa is stabilizing as the number of recorded attacks against foreign nationals has dropped dramatically. However, fear and uncertainty over further attacks remain. Members of the South African Defense Force, mobilised on 21 May 2008 to support the police, were withdrawn from all sites nationally on 9 June 2008, while supplementary police units have returned to their respective provinces. The provincial and national Joint Operations Centres for security were closed respectively on 9 June and 6 June 2008. The provincial

disaster management centres remain open.

Consolidation of the displaced in Gauteng Province is nearly completed, with only Tshwane municipality outstanding. A similar exercise is being considered in the Western Cape Province in

order to provide better services to those displaced. The government has indicated that the new CoSS will remain for no longer than two months and that those now living there will either be re-integrated into the communities from which they were displaced or be repatriated to their countries of origin. With many communities where the violence took hold, in particular in Gauteng Province, the international humanitarian community is concerned that conditions for their reintegration are not yet in place, and that the proposed rapid reintegration could re-ignite tensions.

Gauteng Province

As of 6 June 2008, there are 6,344 displaced people in 14 sites in Gauteng Province, including the new CoSS and the ad hoc shelters to which the displaced spontaneously fled. Despite opposition from local residents at some CoSS, the consolidation exercise started on 1 June 2008 was completed by 7 June 2008 with all those displaced in Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg municipalities resettled to six new CoSS. All old major sites at police stations and community halls have been dismantled, leaving a handful of very small concentrations of displaced people, who are expected to shortly either return to their communities or countries of origin.

Table 1 – Location, number of sites and displaced population as of 10 June 2008

Province	Municipality	Sites	Population displaced
Gauteng	Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, West Rand, Sedberg, Tshwane, Metsweding	14	6,344
Western Cape	Cape Town	70	15,477
Kwa-Zulu Natal	Durban	12	1,814
TOTAL		96	23,635

Officials in Tshwane municipality were planning to expand one existing site (Klerksoord) to accommodate all of the displaced within their city limits. However, they are reconsidering this plan, given the developing frictions between various nationalities, which may require their separation in more than one site. Protests and sporadic violence have taken place at Klerksoord and Rifle Range sites, where the displaced are asking for relocation to third countries and have refused any dialogue with national authorities.

Initial concerns over the level of preparedness of the new CoSS have largely been mitigated by the response of the provincial and municipal authorities. Service provision is being consolidated and coordination at the new sites is improving following the appointment of provincial

Disaster Management Centre (DMC) shelter managers at each location. Some key concerns remain however, in particular in the area of protection.

Western Cape Province

On 2 June 2008, the Western Cape provincial authorities declared a disaster for the areas affected by the displacement of foreign nationals. Similar to an earlier declaration in Gauteng Province (30 May 2008), this measure enables the province to access funds for the humanitarian response and manage the crisis. According to the National Disaster Management Act, this phase will last for up to three months, with a possible extension.

The number of displaced is declining on a daily basis as a result of voluntary repatriation and some successful reintegration. As of 10 June 2008, there are 15,477 people displaced in Western Cape Province at 70 sites. Conditions in the six largest sites (referred to as “mega” sites) are deteriorating, in particular in the largest, Soetwater, where approximately 3,000 people are accommodated in large common tents. Frustration levels are mounting and occupants are refusing to talk to government representatives.

Kwa-Zulu Natal

Overall figures remain unchanged and a validation process is being undertaken to confirm the number of displaced. Some challenges remain at sites where relocations of those displaced are being undertaken by police officials without consultation with provincial Disaster Management Centre (DMC) officials. This was noted as a concern at Chatsworth police station.

SITUATION - REGIONAL

According to the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), an estimated 1,900 people from Malawi have returned home after fleeing violence and intimidation in South Africa and have transited through the Blantyre Kwacha Conference Centre before moving on to their homes. The High Commission of Malawi in Pretoria is expecting repatriations to continue at a rate of a few hundred every two to three days.

The UN and NGO partners are reviewing preparedness efforts in the region in light of possible outflows of Zimbabweans prior to and after the run-off elections, now scheduled for the 27 June 2008. In South Africa, given the recent xenophobic attacks, there are concerns that further significant inflows of Zimbabweans could exacerbate tensions and worsen existing vulnerabilities.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

The South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) national appeal for ZAR 7 million (almost US\$ 987,000) has been met through donations from South African companies and the public. For the time being, IFRC does not envisage appealing internationally for further assistance. A significant in-kind donation has been offered by the South African Revenue Service to the SARCS with the provision of second hand clothing as well as partitions for tents, and furniture. So far, the SARCS has distributed more than 80,000 food and non-food items.

The Department of Health in Gauteng Province will deploy focal points at each of the new CoSS and provide mobile clinics able to refer people to secondary health care when required. UN agencies and NGOs have drafted a strategic plan of action for health service provision to the displaced, which has been shared with all stakeholders.



Figure 2 - Residents of Rand Airport CoSS assist SARCS to distribute emergency items (Photo courtesy of SARCS)

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Since 11 May 2008, the UN has been working closely with national, provincial and municipal authorities to support the needs of those displaced. In particular:

UNHCR has promoted with the Department of Home Affairs the issuance of conditional temporary legal status for undocumented victims and is working with the government to ensure it maintains its position to implement a policy of no deportation for victims. The UN refugee agency has donated 2,000 tents to the government which can be used to temporarily host 10,000 persons in the new sites in Gauteng Province. It has also provided 7,500 blankets and 2,000 mats. An additional 5,000 blankets will be made available for distribution in Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal. At the request of the Executive Director of the Disaster Management Centre, UNHCR deployed a senior physical site planner to provide technical advice during the identification of new sites for relocation. UNHCR implementing partners have also been involved in providing relief to victims in Johannesburg, Tshwane, Cape Town and Durban.

UNICEF has delivered basic emergency supplies, including blankets clothing and infant cups urgently needed by women and children. Some 3,035 hygiene kits and 7,600 nappies have also been

provided through several of its NGO partners on the ground, including the City of Johannesburg and the South African Red Cross Society. Thirty-five early childhood kits containing development materials to meet educational and recreational needs of more than 1,000 young children have been provided through the Active Learning and Leisure Libraries of South Africa. UNICEF is also working with the Gauteng Department of Education to find solutions for displaced children unable to write their exams in June.

WHO has locally procured 975 hygiene kits worth US\$ 10,000 and has sent them to the South Africa Red Cross Society for distribution. WHO has also begun looking into health requirements and is exploring specific requirements for both preventative and curative actions to address HIV/AIDS.

As of 26 May 2008, UN OCHA has deployed information management officers to support the Provincial Disaster Management Centre to develop coordination tools and provide guidance to provincial and municipal disaster responders on international standards for humanitarian emergencies. UNDP will further reinforce nationally owned processes for post crisis recovery that are resilient and sustainable. In this context, dialogue is taking place with the National Disaster Management Centre and other concerned government structures to review areas of support for early recovery.

IOM has provided 2,500 non-food item kits, including 500 for children, half of which have been given to the provincial Department of Safety and the rest to the South African Red Cross Society.

Finally, at the request of the Provincial Disaster Management Centre for Gauteng, the UN deployed together with the Red Cross and NGO community technical experts to assist municipal authorities in conducting a rapid multi-sectoral assessment at sites to which foreigners are displaced. UNFPA designed instruments which have been used in collecting data, and conducting registration of the affected displaced people in the shelters. This is expected to yield data for planning and provision of necessary services.



On 5 June 2008, the Department of Home Affairs, UNHCR, UNFPA and provincial Departments of Local Government and Social Development registered foreign nationals in Klerksoord (*aka* Acasia), Tshwane municipality site. This follows a registration undertaken earlier at Malas and Stanza Bopane by UNFPA.

A joint rapid assessment mission was carried out in 26 sites in Western Cape Province between 3 and 5 June 2008. The teams were composed of local government representatives, WHO, IOM, IFRC, UNICEF and OCHA. The assessment reports that there are as many as 70 sites where those affected spontaneously sought safety, with the

population in each ranging from 45 to more than 3,000 people. Most are in the Cape Town area but a few of the larger ones are isolated some distance from the city. The assessment also reveals that the predominant concerns of the displaced at most sites relate to their options for relocation, re-integration and repatriation.¹

In Gauteng Province, inter-agency thematic working groups are in place and have been developing strategic plans of action in partnership with the government to address outstanding needs for the displaced population. Working groups are also refining the inter-agency rapid assessment tool for all sectors in order to standardize data collection to establish baseline data for all displacement sites in

¹ For the full report please visit: <http://ochaonline.un.org/OchaLinkClick.aspx?link=ocha&docId=1090798>

the country, including those that have not yet been comprehensively assessed. At the request of the National Disaster Management Centre, the UN and its partners have also provided the government with an indicative budget to provide ongoing support to the CoSS in Gauteng Province. The UN is considering the possibility of issuing an international appeal for the humanitarian needs not yet met in the sites to which displaced have been relocated by the government.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) donated 13,000 blankets and 2,000 tarpaulins to SARCS. These were distributed to the temporary shelter in Midrand municipality (Gauteng Province) on 5 June 2008. ICRC continues to provide training to SARCS volunteers on restoring family links and tracing services.

Medecins Sans Frontieres - Belgium continues to provide daily mobile clinics to the new sites in Gauteng Province. According to MSF, most medical consultations are now directly related to living conditions at the shelter sites, particularly exposure to cold weather. The Department of Health has initiated and staffed mobile clinics, and has conducted a vaccination campaign at the new sites.

Oxfam has established sanitation facilities at some sites and, together with UNICEF and partners in the water and sanitation sector, is exploring with the provincial Disaster Management Centre the implementation of a hygiene awareness campaign for the population in the new CoSS.

NEEDS

- Significant and tangible improvements have been made in the service provision at the new CoSS in Gauteng Province. However, there remain some humanitarian concerns, including:
 - Poor infant and childcare services; in particular the lack of means for mothers to clean infant formula bottles which is putting children at risk of diarrhea;
 - Poor quality/irregular food provision; the absence of protein and fibre in the food distributed, which may lead to protein energy malnutrition;
 - Lightweight tents providing inadequate protection from the cold, increasing the risk of acute respiratory infections in children and the elderly;
 - Environmental sanitation and hygiene standards still need improvement: there are few showers, while wastewater and drainage in some sites remains poor;
 - Staff of private security companies providing protection need to be trained in humanitarian codes of conduct and protection; surrounding fencing at some of the sites also remains poor; and
 - Not all children are going to school due to fear of attacks, as well as the far distances from school facilities.
- The rapid assessment conducted at selected sites in Western Cape Province last week has made the following recommendations:
 - Decongestion of some of the “mega” sites, particularly Soetwater where tensions among the diverse population are rising;
 - Urgent provision of training and strengthening of site management systems, including training in minimum standards in disaster response for those working on site;
 - Strengthening of coordination and information management within the Disaster Management Centre, particularly at the district level;
 - Continued engagement of UNHCR and IOM to explain and activate available future options for the IDPs; and
 - Strengthening the capacity of the Department of Home Affairs in conducting registration and documentation.

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