



UNITED NATIONS

Office of the Resident Coordinator
South Africa

Situation Report 6 – VIOLENCE AGAINST FOREIGNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA – 27 JUNE 2008

HIGHLIGHTS

- The total number of displaced people has slightly reduced to 13,872, representing a reduction of 5 percent since the last situation report (21 June 2008).
- More than 680 people were moved to a new site near Boksburg on 24 June 2008 after soil tests revealed high levels of heavy metal contaminants at the Wadeville Center of Safe Shelter (CoSS).
- Church representatives in Ethekwini (Durban), Kwa-Zulu Natal Province have asked the municipal authorities there to provide the displaced with new shelters and take responsibility for their assistance as the churches own capacity to respond is exhausted.
- An inter-agency team of UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross Movement facilitated a SPHERE training in Cape Town for government authorities. The consolidation and reintegration process continues in this province.

SITUATION - NATIONAL

Gauteng Province

The displaced population remains stable at 6,586 in 13 sites, according to provincial authorities.

Table 1 – Location, number of sites and displaced population as of 27 June 2008

| Province | Municipality | Sites | Population displaced |
|----------------|--|-----------|----------------------|
| Gauteng | Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, West Rand, Sedibeng, Tshwane, Metsweding | 13 | 6,586 |
| Western Cape | City of Cape Town, Cape Winelands, Eden, Overberg | 70 | 6,746 |
| Kwa-Zulu Natal | Durban | 11 | 540 |
| TOTAL | | 94 | 13,872 |

Source: DMCs from GP, WC and KZN.

On 23 June 2008, the Provincial Disaster Management Centre (P-DMC) relocated more than 680 people from the Wadeville CoSS to a new site in the nearby area of Boksburg. The new site, named the Strijdom Park CoSS, is still within the Ekurhuleni Municipality and has accommodated all of the displaced population from Wadeville, which is now closed.

The move was prompted by the results of ground tests that showed high levels of heavy metal contaminants in the soil at the original site. According to the P-DMC, the relocation went smoothly and was completed in one day. One hundred and fifty tents have been erected and 60 toilets put in place at the new site. Mediation efforts were activated by the P-DMC with the local resident community and private

security contractors are at the site. Formal registration by the Department of Home Affairs is to follow soon.

The Klerksoord site in Tshwane Municipality is being expanded to accommodate displaced people from two other ad hoc shelters in the municipality (Stanza Bopape Community Centre/Mamelodi and Malas Centre), and will host a total population of 1,400 people.

Western Cape Province

According to the P-DMC, there are 6,746 IDPs remaining in 70 sites. The decrease in the number of IDPs is attributable in part to reintegration and repatriation efforts, as well as improved data collection at the P-DMC.



Figure 1 –IDPs in Andile Nzizi, Kayelitsha , Western Cape Province
(Photo courtesy OCHA)

According to UNICEF, the humanitarian situation in two large tented sites in the Cape Town Municipality remains a major concern. The Soetwater and Blue Waters sites are located on the beach and are as a result subject to continuous heavy and cold winter winds at this time of the year. Dozens of tents collapsed in the heavy winds on 16 June 2008. UNICEF is advocating to the Provincial Department of Health and municipal authorities for the relocation of 40 infants and their mothers from Blue Waters to a safer location in community halls in the City of Cape Town.

Tension at several sites, including Soetwater and Blue Waters, is increasing due to intolerance between different groups of foreign nationals and anxiety about the

planned relocation process. To date, only 44 Zimbabweans have been relocated from these camps and all further movement has been suspended due to the harassment experienced upon arrival at the new site.

Kwa-Zulu Natal

A total of 540 IDPs are reported staying at 11 sites, including four police stations and nine churches, according to municipal authorities. The overall figure includes 55 nationals from Malawi, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Mozambique, who have decided to return to their home country and are awaiting repatriation.

On 25 June 2008, 120 IDPs (mostly Congolese) were left stranded in front of the Glenwood Church in Ethekwini (Durban) before alternative accommodation and care could be found for them. The Municipal – DMC, informed beforehand of the exhausted capacity at the Church, was only able to find emergency alternative accommodation later in the day.

SITUATION - REGIONAL

The *Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades* (INGC) in Mozambique continues to report returns of nationals from South Africa following the xenophobic incidents. As of 23 June 2008, the INGC reported that a total of 40,528 nationals had returned to Mozambique from South Africa, of whom 4,463 people were assisted directly by the Government of Mozambique while the rest returned using their own means. The IOM office in Maputo reports that the majority of returnees have now been reintegrated within their original communities.

The Government of Zimbabwe has requested the assistance of IOM to return their remaining nationals in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg, and specifically to provide transport from these localities to the Zimbabwean border.

IOM has also received a request from the City of Johannesburg to assist in repatriating IDPs living in CoSS to their home countries. The City and the Department of Home Affairs intend to visit most of the sites and conduct an assessment in order to collect the necessary information of those wishing to leave.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

Following a request from the Western Cape authorities, a inter-agency team of UN agencies, NGOs and the Red Cross Movement facilitated a SPHERE training in Cape Town on 19 and 20 June 2008. All provincial and city departments involved in the current xenophobic crisis attended the course.

In order to harmonize the reintegration process and service delivery in the camps, the representatives of the provincial government of Western Cape, the city of Cape Town, the South African Police Services and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) met this week to discuss issues related to shelter and health, safety and security, reintegration and repatriation. Four joint working groups have now been formed and assigned the task of developing a common plan of action to address the crisis of the displaced foreign nationals in the Western Cape Province.

Although the exact figure is not known, there are large numbers of young children between one to ten years of age in the sites in Western Cape Province. According to the Western Cape Department of Education (WCDoE), 104 school age children in the CoSS do not

attend school because either they are too far from the schools that they attended before, their parents do not want them to go for fear attacks on their children, or there is no transport provided to the schools.

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) has initiated the registration of undocumented displaced people at sites in Durban municipality, with the intention of issuing a temporary document that will legalize their stay in South Africa for a period of six months. Similar processes are also planned for IDPs in Western Cape and Gauteng Province. It is anticipated that IDPs who have received temporary documentation will have the opportunity to regularize their stay in South Africa with DHA, or apply for asylum as appropriate.

Community-based organisations and faith-based organisations alleviate suffering among displace communities

Civil-based organisations (CBOs) and faith-based organisations (FBOs) have been at the forefront of the response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the displacement of foreign nationals as a result of xenophobic violence. Their rapid mobilisation in Gauteng, Western Cape and Kwa Zulu Natal has and continues to avoid a worsening of the crisis and in many cases, particularly through active involvement within communities affected, helped in halting further displacement and supported the immediate re-integration of those who fled.

In Gauteng Province, Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities and organizations have donated huge quantities of food, blankets, clothes and other relief supplies. Many volunteers continue to provide psycho-social support as well as humanitarian assistance. Many civic and political organizations, including local political branches are working actively to support the displaced people and to facilitate re-integration. In one case, 400 people from Diepsloot area sheltered in the local Lonehill Methodist Church and with the help of the local ANC branch were re-integrated into the community within 24 hours.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

UNHCR is supporting authorities to register the displaced at the various sites. While having significant infrastructure to carry out such an operation, DHA has requested UNHCR to ensure the operation meets registration standards, allows the objectives of various departments to be met, and assists in defining the specific site population (*i.e. fixing the populations at existing sites*). Two UNHCR senior registration officers will be assisting the authorities with activities in Western Cape and Gauteng Provinces.

Following the authorities' request to receive support in camp coordination and camp management, UNHCR is providing three staff to assist Disaster Management Centres both in Pretoria and in Cape Town.

UNHCR distributed an information note to site residents in Western Cape and Gauteng provinces clarifying some of the most frequently asked questions, including about voluntary repatriation, reintegration into South African communities and resettlement to third countries.

The UN agencies present in Western Cape Province have continued to consolidate the coordination of the response. The provision of basic services is ongoing in all the centers. The City of Cape Town has appointed several mediation teams to work with those displaced to facilitate their reintegration and relocation and to address critical challenges in doing so.

In Gauteng Province, the Health and Nutrition working group of the Inter-Agency Standard Committee (IASC) is planning for further immunization campaigns in the CoSS. A training session on hygiene was launched on 23 June 2008 at Rifle Range CoSS.

In collaboration with Save the Children Fund, UNICEF has supported the establishment of Child Friendly Spaces in Rand Airport, DBSA and Rifle Range CoSS (Gauteng Province), which are now operational. A fourth Child Friendly Space will soon be completed in Klerksoord, Tshwane Municipality.

MSF continues to provide primary health care (PHC) at all sites in Tshwane, Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg municipalities, filling in gaps where needed through its mobile clinics. Since the violence began, the NGO has conducted more than 6,000 consultations, constructed 74 showers and distributed 11,000 blankets and 9,000 hygiene kits. In Cape Town, MSF continues to operate in seven community halls providing primary health care and referrals, in addition to their HIV programme.

NEEDS

According to the South African Human Rights Commission, there are concerns over numerous reports of police brutality in the communities and various sites hosting displaced foreign nationals across Gauteng, Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces. The National Prosecuting Agency (NPA) is tasked with bringing to justice those responsible for xenophobic attacks but no information has been forthcoming on the numbers and whereabouts of those prosecuted thus far and how many of the court proceedings have been postponed for further investigation.

Church representatives in Ethekwini (Durban), Kwa-Zulu Natal Province have asked the municipal authorities there to provide the displaced with new shelters and take responsibility for their assistance as the churches own capacity to respond is exhausted. They have provided assistance for more than one month without support from municipal authorities. The Municipal DMC has played a limited role in coordinating direct assistance in the sites, relying instead on the support and efforts of the local faith-based and community-based organisations. The capacity of these organizations to maintain existing levels of support is reducing quickly, which may result in gaps in assistance.

Meanwhile, relocation plans for the remaining caseload in Kwa-Zulu Natal Province are delayed and no progress has been apparent in the selection and preparation of a new site. Voluntary repatriations have also come to a standstill and those wishing to return to their home countries have no clear sense of how the Municipal DMC of Ethekwini (Durban) intend to support them. This has led to high levels of frustration among IDPs. Approximately 34 displaced people have been waiting since 24 June 2008 for their imminent repatriation but have not yet received details on the exact date it is to take place.

In Western Cape, challenges within CoSS management and coordination, and in communications to beneficiary groups remain. IDPs have raised concerns about unpredictable food distribution and a lack of communication from authorities regarding plans for relocation between sites, reintegration and longer-term solutions. There are sustained concerns regarding education of IDP children in the main sites. Protection and communication with beneficiaries are the main issues on which urgent support to the authorities is required.

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