



UNITED NATIONS

**Office of the Resident Coordinator
South Africa**

**Situation Report 12 – VIOLENCE AGAINST FOREIGNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA –
5 SEPTEMBER 2008**

HIGHLIGHTS

- Consolidation of the Center of Safe Shelter (CoSS) in Gauteng Province has begun on 1 September 2008.
- UN Agencies, NGOs, civil society groups and faith-based organizations are all supporting the government with reintegration plans.
- Consolidation of the sites in Western Cape has resumed once more after bad weather conditions interrupted the process on 29 and 30 August 2008.
- There have been reports of threats against Somali shop owners in Western Cape.
- As of 5 September 2008, the total number of displaced people in the Centres of Safe Shelter (CoSS) and other ad hoc sites now stands at 5,999.

SITUATION – NATIONAL

Table 1 – Location, number of sites and displaced population as of 3 Sept 2008

Province	Municipality	Sites		Population displaced	
		May	Aug	May	Aug
Gauteng	Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, West Rand, Sedibeng, Tshwane, Metsweding	48	6	17,548	3,465
Western Cape	City of Cape Town, Cape Winelands, Eden, Overberg	90	26	19,654	2,499
Kwa-Zulu Natal	Ethekwini (Durban)	2	3	1,650	35
TOTAL		140	35	38,762	5,999

Source: DMCs from GP, WC and KZN and TAC (WC).

Gauteng Province

3,465 displaced foreign nationals remain in 6 sites in Gauteng Province.

On 1 September 2008, residents of DBSA, River Road and Wit Road sites were moved to Rifle Range. Only three sites remain open in Johannesburg: Rifle Range, Rand airport and Boksburg. Some of the IDPs have reintegrated within local communities, while others have moved out of the sites fearing arrest and deportation.

On 2 September 2008, the Protection Working Group (PWG) met and discussed the future of Akasia site. There is a general feeling among UN agencies and civil society organizations that some of the residents in Akasia are not willing to move out of the site and be reintegrated, but are, instead hoping to be resettled to a third country. The meeting also took note however of the fact that there is a group of vulnerable persons at the site who remain in need

of assistance and are receiving assistance. The working group acknowledged that while Akasia

remain open until the end of September 2008, minimum delivery of services must be maintained. To that effect, the working group drafted a framework for a safe and humane closure of Akasia that will also be used as a model for the closure of other remaining sites in Gauteng Province. This framework is proposed to secure a safe and humane closure of the sites and to minimize hardship and suffering that could result from this process. The framework is still at its very early stage and a task team comprising of UN Agencies, NGOs, civil society and faith-based organizations have been created to develop an operational plan. A help desk will be set-up outside the sites with the objective of informing people of what is available for them in terms of packages: rent subsidies, transportation, assist them thinking through some options for their future as well as legal services. The Provincial Government reported that they will continue to provide food while Akasia remains open.

Western Cape



Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) moving towards consolidated sites.
Source: AP

About 2,499 displaced foreign nationals in 26 sites remain in Western Cape Province.

On 28 August 2008, the movement of IDPs into the two consolidated sites (Blue Water and Harmony Park) began and was proceeding smoothly until bad weather conditions over the week-end interrupted the process. However, the consolidation process successfully resumed during the week. The Provincial Disaster Management Centre (PDMC) reported that the movement process is approximately 40% complete. The second phase of the movement will start on 6 September 2008. The Department of Transport will continue to provide services. The City of Cape Town informed that all sites that have been officially closed are no longer

being serviced.

The Somali Association of South African (SASA) reported that on 22 August 2008 in Cape Town, a group named “Zanokhanyo Retailers Associations” distributed a letter in Khayelitsha Township ordering the Somali shop owners to close down their shops by 14 September 2008. This new threat against the Somali community is of concern as it comes in addition to recent attacks. On 27 August 2008, two Somali traders were killed and another two seriously injured in separate violent attacks that took place in the Eastern Cape. Prior to these attacks, three Somalis were killed in Khayelitsha Township in Cape Town. It is unclear whether these attacks were purely criminal in nature or linked to xenophobia.

Kwazulu Natal:

About 35 displaced foreign nationals remain in 3 sites in Kwa-Zulu Natal Province. The population of IDPs in churches has decreased with about 20 individuals remaining in two churches. Due to the work of faith-based organizations, most of the IDPs have been reintegrated in communities.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

Gauteng Province:

On 3 September 2008, the Consortium of Refugees and Migrants (CoRMSA) facilitated the first meetings of the safety/security and housing/accommodation task teams on reintegration. The purpose of the safety/security task team meeting was to provide a clear plan for security issues including engagement with communities and the need to develop both proactive and reactive strategies on security of foreign nationals. The housing/accommodation task team meeting reviewed various initiatives presented by different organizations regarding ways to tackle some of the accommodation challenges. Follow-up meeting will be taking place.

Three councilors from Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) have been deployed to Akasia and Malas sites to answer all questions IDPs may have regarding their legal status.

The Consortium of Refugees and Migrants (CoRMSA) worked with Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) on a questionnaire to be used in the assessment of the different CoSS in Gauteng Province. A team visited the sites to assess and determine the needs of the IDPs. The findings will be communicated soon.

Kwazulu Natal:

Faith-based organizations are setting-up a city development programme to provide IDPs and refugees with shelters and skills training.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Gauteng Province:

UNHCR through its implementing partner Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is supporting a package of assistance consisting of a sum of money for rental subsidies, transport and food parcels for IDPs who voluntarily decide to reintegrate into local community. The UNCT encouraged all UN agencies to consider supporting this initiative in order to prevent further issues and challenges from drifting into long-term problems. UNICEF informed the PWG that they will support a program of "exit cash grants" to the value of USD \$100,000. The funds will be split between the residents in the sites of the Gauteng Province and Western Cape. UNICEF is currently looking for an implementing partner willing to take on the project. The next PWG will look at practical issues on how to implement this process.

Oxfam in partnership with RedR, has provided Sphere training to local and provincial government staff in Gauteng and Western Cape.

In an effort to consolidate existing reintegration initiatives and to engage the authorities, OCHA will play a role of secretariat linking all concerned stakeholders and ensuring good communications and follow-up between the newly created task teams (framework for a safe closure of the sites, safety/security and housing).

UNFPA is supporting service providers in the communities of return so that they can respond to Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) issues. On behalf of the UN and the UNCT, the gender task team has also identified government and civil society partners who have never been trained on Gender issues to participate in the inter-agency workshop on gender equality and SGBV to take place on 23 – 25 September 2008.

Western Cape:

UNHCR tents have arrived this week to provide shelters to the most vulnerable groups (especially women and children) in the consolidated sites.

WFP continues to encourage the introduction of dry rations and to strengthen nutritional standards.

GAPS

No serious humanitarian gaps have been reported this week. Reintegration plans efforts are ongoing.

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