



UNITED NATIONS

Office of the Resident Coordinator
South Africa

Situation Report 5 – VIOLENCE AGAINST FOREIGNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA – 21 JUNE 2008

HIGHLIGHTS

- There are 14,647 displaced foreign nationals staying in ad hoc shelters and at new sites across Gauteng, Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces.
- The UN inter-agency team, NGOs and the Red Cross Movement are conducting a series of trainings and capacity-building exercises for officials in Western Cape on minimum standards in disaster response.
- The acting UN Resident Coordinator and UN Heads of Agencies in South Africa met with senior Government officials to take stock of progress made in the humanitarian response.

SITUATION - NATIONAL

On 12 June 2008, the Inter-Ministerial Task Team reported that a total of 62 people, including 21 South Africans, had lost their lives during the recent spate of attacks on foreigners. The majority of deaths have occurred in Gauteng Province. The Inter-Ministerial Task Team appointed by the President to deal with the crisis is considering declaring a national day of healing to pay respects to all those who lost their lives.

Although the number of xenophobic incidents appears to be on the decline, threats are still being made against foreign nationals and fears remains about possible future attacks. Notably, on 13 June 2008, a Mozambican male recently reintegrated from a temporary shelter was burnt to death by an unidentified mob in Atterdgeville, Tshwane municipality in Gauteng Province. Several Zimbabweans and Mozambicans were also injured by the mob.



Figure 1 – Residents of Wadeville CoSS return to site with firewood (Photo courtesy OCHA)

Gauteng Province

As of 18 June 2008, there are 6,602 displaced people in 12 sites in Gauteng Province, including the new Centres of Safe Shelter (CoSS) and the ad hoc shelters to which the displaced spontaneously fled.

Following tests made on the soil quality at the Wadeville CoSS that showed high levels of contaminants the Provincial Disaster Management Centre has begun searching for a new site to relocate the more than 980 people hosted there.

Violent incidents erupted on 14 June 2008 between the police and residents of the Klerksoord site in Tshwane municipality, following an incident involving one of the private security contractors. UNHCR assisted local authorities in mediating between the authorities and the temporary shelter residents.

According to the Centre for Study of Violence and Reconciliation, there are still more than 130 displaced people staying at the Reiger Park Police Station. It is reported that they do not wish to move for fear of losing their jobs. No assistance is being provided to them, and they are no longer being allowed access to the bathroom facilities at the police station.

Western Cape Province

According to the Provincial Disaster Management Centre, there are 65 ad hoc shelters hosting a total of 7,460 foreign nationals who fled xenophobic attacks, with the majority (7,323 people) in City of Cape Town District Municipality, and the others spread between Cape Winelands District Municipality (69 people), Eden District Municipality (13 people) and Overberg District Municipality (55 people).

Local authorities, who are identifying new greenfield sites for the displaced, are facing increasing protest over their decision to avoid opening community centres for the displaced in areas of the city of Cape Town. A high court order lodged by provincial authorities requesting the City of Cape Town Municipality to open its community halls for IDPs, has been withdrawn as both parties have agreed to negotiate.

Table 1 – Location, number of sites and displaced population as of 18 June 2008

Province	Municipality	Sites	Population displaced
Gauteng	Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni, West Rand, Sedberg, Tshwane, Metsweding	12	6,602
Western Cape	City of Cape Town, Cape Winelands, Eden, Overberg	65	7,460
Kwa-Zulu Natal	Durban	17	585
TOTAL		94	14,647

On 16 June 2008, gale force winds blew away tents and portable sanitation facilities at the Harmony, Soetwater and Bluewater sites.

Kwa-Zulu Natal

The Provincial authorities have not issued a declaration of disaster. There are 585 displaced at 17 sites, all of which are located in the municipality of Ethekeini (Durban). Overall numbers continue to decline as many (particularly Mozambicans, Malawians, Tanzanians and Zimbabweans) are being repatriated to their country of origin. Coordination of the response is taking place at the level of the Municipal - Disaster Management Centre (M-DMC). The M-DMC is in the process of identifying a new site to which all of the displaced will be moved as the capacities of civil society responders have been exhausted.

SITUATION - REGIONAL

According to the *Instituto Nacional de Gestão de Calamidades* (INGC) in Mozambique, from 10 May to 15 June 2008, 40,361 people have returned home from South Africa as a result of the xenophobic attacks. Of these, 4,463 people were assisted directly by the Government of Mozambique while the rest returned by their own means.

In order to support the victims of xenophobic attacks, the Government of Mozambique through the INGC is forming a technical working group to facilitate the reintegration of the returnees into society. The group will be led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINEC) and composed of officials from MISAU (Ministry of Health), MCTC (Ministry of Science and Technology), MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture), National Directorate of Migration, DNA (National Directorate of water) and the United Nations.

According to the Ministry of Women and Child Development of Malawi, a total of 1,260 nationals have passed through the transit centre for returnees at Blantyre, as of 12 June 2008. The returnees included 1,188 men, 72 women and 38 children (19 boys and 19 girls).

Since 13 June 2008, a total of 184 Zimbabweans from Johannesburg and Durban have returned home with the assistance of their government.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

On 12 June 2008, the Inter-Ministerial Task Force acknowledged and conveyed its gratitude on behalf of the Government to the South African public and the many NGOs, civil society and the private sector partners for their role in supporting the victims of violence. The Task Force further stated that it will continue to work with international agencies such as the UN, Oxfam, MSF, the Red Cross and a number of South African NGOs to ensure that the Centres of Safe Shelter comply with international standards.

The DMC of Gauteng Province continues to coordinate the immediate response. The six CoSS established in Gauteng Province are currently managed by Disaster Management Solutions (DMS), an international service provider contracted by the provincial authorities.

The Gauteng Department of Education (GDoE) is undertaking planning to ensure the continuation of education for the children affected by the xenophobic attacks in the province. The GDoE is currently conducting a needs assessment in the CoSS and putting in place transport arrangements for children between the CoSS and their schools of origin. This service will begin on 18 June 2008 and continue for the duration of the crisis. The GDoE is also ensuring that alternative arrangements will be made for children to take their exams as soon as the situation stabilizes.

Disaster authorities in the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces are attempting to assist those displaced foreign nationals wishing to return home by providing them with transport to Johannesburg. The M-DMC in KwaZulu Natal Province has assisted 282 people in this manner. Some of these movements, however, have been poorly coordinated with the relevant national High Commissions.

On 14 June 2008, the Municipal DMC of Ethekwini (Durban) organised the movement of more than 160 Tanzanians who were eventually stopped at Johannesburg International Airport as their papers had not been finalized. The Tanzanian party was not allowed to access any of the CoSS in Johannesburg for temporary accommodation and food; and were thus forced stay in emergency accommodation provided by the Tanzanian High Commission for two days before being allowed to board the flight to Dar Es Salaam.

Further, a group of 79 Malawians, including seven children, who were on 9 June 2008 transported by Western Cape authorities to Johannesburg, were left stranded for two days at the city bus station without food or blankets, before the Malawi High Commission took over.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

On 18 June 2008, the acting UN Resident Coordinator led a team of Heads of UN agencies in South Africa in a meeting with senior Government representatives, including the Minister of State in the Presidency, to take stock of progress made in the aftermath of the acts of violence and to discuss renewed cooperation between the UN development agencies, Government structures, non-governmental and community-based organisations to effectively respond to the situation.

The UN inter-agency team, NGOs and the Red Cross Movement are conducting a series of trainings and capacity-building exercises for officials of the Western Cape Province Disaster Management Centre and the Municipality of Cape Town, which focus on humanitarian principles and Sphere minimum standards in disaster response. The trainings are expected to conclude on 21 June 2008.

UNHCR has recently established a hotline number to address queries from refugees and asylum-seekers. It is also responding to queries from the general public.

In Gauteng Province, UNHCR is assisting the government in harmonizing ongoing registration efforts led by the Department of Home Affairs and the Disaster Management Centre. Sustained attention will be given to protection issues, in particular vis a vis unaccompanied/separated children. Dialogue with refugees and asylum seekers on the conditions in temporary sites, as well as possible solutions, has continued over the reporting period.

UNHCR has established a senior presence in Cape Town, and is considering opening a temporary field office.

IOM has launched the Humanitarian Assistance Project to provide support for 2,200 displaced migrants returning to their countries of origin on a voluntary basis. The organisation has also received USD 200,000 from the US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration to fund a limited number of returns, as well as to cover the costs for the 2,000 adult and 500 baby relief kits already distributed.

UNICEF is providing technical expertise to government planners within the WASH, nutrition, education and child protection sectors, in collaboration with all working group stakeholders. In close collaboration with Oxfam UK, UNICEF has developed an environmental health strategy, including recommendations on improving the environmental sanitation situation in the CoSS in Gauteng Province. These documents were shared with DMS for implementation.

In partnership with the Refugee Children's Project (RCP), UNICEF is supporting the educational and reintegration needs of school going children. Basic recreational materials were distributed to children in established CoSS, and 1,200 lap desks are being procured to assist children in doing their homework while in the CoSS.

UNICEF is planning to extend an existing contract between the La Leche League (LLL) and the Western Cape Department of Health for provision of infant feeding counseling support to the sites. Trained assessors will be hired to support infant feeding counseling in the sites in Gauteng Province, pending approval from the GDoH.

A project cooperation agreement valued at US\$80,000 is being concluded with Save the Children to respond to child protection concerns at all sites in Gauteng Province. Five tents are being procured to serve as child friendly spaces at the CoSS of Rand Airport, DBSA, Wadeville, Klerksoord and Rifle Range.

OCHA deployed staff on behalf of the Country Team to the Municipal Disaster Management Centre in Ethekwini (Durban) to assess needs and support coordination efforts. Furthermore, it has sent additional staff to support the P-DMC in Cape Town.

NEEDS

There is an urgent need for better coordination between the provincial and municipal authorities of Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal, who are facilitating the transportation of the displaced to Johannesburg, with the High Commissions receiving those being assisted to return home, in order to avoid people being stranded.

There are concerns about the ability of people fleeing out of fear and persecution to find refuge at the ad hoc shelters in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal Province. According to the municipal DMC, new cases will only be allowed entrance at existing sites once they have reported to the police station. Meanwhile plans are being put in place to identify a location for a temporary shelter for the displaced, pending their reintegration. The M-DMC is seeking technical guidance on the selection of the site, in order to ensure compliance with minimum international humanitarian standards, as well as on how to manage the site.

The Provincial DMC in Western Cape have requested that all lead agencies and other organisations participate in local coordination for a on a regular basis in order to provide technical guidance within their areas of competence. In specific, training is now being provided in the following areas:

1. The upgrading and maintenance of existing sites to minimum international humanitarian standards
2. The reintegration of the displaced back into South African communities
3. The movement of the displaced to new temporary shelters
4. The voluntary repatriation of the displaced into their countries of origin, either with the support of the relevant embassies or independently

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