

21 June 2008

Update:

- Districts are organised by area....admin before the start.

Northern Update

Combined Northern and Western....because they lost volunteers and they were working on the same sites. Some volunteers are TAC and some have jobs. Those who have jobs have cars, others don't. Struggling to get around to sites...Problem with showers. UNHCR standard? Can we force Disaster Management to provide showers???? Computer system would be a great tool if we can teach everyone how to use it. Would be good to have everyone on the same system. We want volunteers and sites working on the same systems. Working on halls, churches....Summer Greens is having trouble with refugee management...Could someone from TAC come and handle this? Beyond expertise of volunteers. Silverstroom is FREEZING even with blankets. Rain, sea, etc... Groups collapsed by there is a core. Some food was delivered to church in Elsie's River but the food was not fit for human consumption. Those who know more can come to the meeting. What do we do with off food? Also, how to we get big suppliers to deliver to small places? How to we follow up with food deliveries? Don't we have 3 weeks left until the money from government for food will stop??? (Zackie says there is no more money, problem). Silverstroom, 200 Zimbabweans were moved. Where did they go? They didn't go to another site in this district (no influx of people anywhere else).

Klipfontein

Met on Monday, want to do site visits. Visited churches in Pinelands than others. Bonne Esperance is expecting to get more people (people who were pushed out of churches). Set up because they deal with refugees. Usually deal with women and children, not men. One of the churches (Anglican in pinelands) is very regimented, bad environment, weren't allowed to talk to volunteers. Very limited in activities.

Khayelitsha

6 sites. Each site less than 100 people. Most of the people are back in their communities. Still challenges. Have dealt with. Most of people are still in halls are struggling because of the rent. Less than 300 from all sites together. Most of Somali shops are open. Much friendlier environment. People in halls don't have jobs, money for rent, don't feel safe. Have drawn in some government officials to speak to people. Harare is the worst section. Most are Zimbabwean. Have told people that there are community meetings telling people that no one will be attacked... Money is the biggest problem (to pay rent). General feeling that it is ok. Some want to go back, especially those from Ghana. Environment is good. Have been educating people about xenophobia in Khayelitsha. Challenges: Bambanani (group providing safety. They are drinking in the sites. Bambanani is stealing things for the refugees. (at two in the morning). They are also supposed to provide safety and security but they are sleeping at night. They are refusing to go outside to make sure people are safe. They aren't working. One of the sites,

they were asked not to come. Food, some problems: food coming late, or the food is bad. Some women are stealing food.

3 site visits. Reception different for each centre.

- *Racehorse centre*. Disorganized, no committee of refugees. Hard to get access. Touchy environment, unpredictable. Food diminishing. Stolen loaves of bread. Bambanani threatened to not feed them breakfast but they were fed. No longer a mobile clinic. No showers.
- Coordinator said everything was fine, refugees had a different story. Wanted counseling, has not been provided. Needed help filling out forms.
- *Masisize*: main concerns are around health. Interested in access to clinics. Are they being turned away? Documents? Incident with a stabbing and they weren't treated/pushed aside.

Zackie introduces: Nathan is treasurer, Dawn does books.

Caledon Square

60-120 people camped outside police station. Provided heaters. They see themselves as the political face of the refugees. Their key demand is that the UN comes in and does one on one counseling. Refuse to move out of the CBD. Have asked for Civic Centres. City refuses. Tennyson Street Mosque has people. Have also asked the city for help with no response. 35 people in Muizenburg. City refuses to put people in halls. Methodist churches are housing 100s – 1000s of people. Absolutely absurd that churches and orgs are sheltering people when it is the job of the state.

Trauma Center

Impossible case load for the centre to go to all the sites with such few workers. Cape Mental Health is at Desmond Tutu.

Mitchells Plein

Crisis at Blue Water. 450 people, others came from other places. Zimbabweans came in. Had to call the police last night. Didn't want to but afraid there will be a fight. Some volunteers are not going home. UN had a 2 day workshop, met the High Commissioner but nothing came out of that. Nothing came of reintegration either. In Blue Waters, really need assistance.

- UPDATE: Team of lawyers went out this morning, trying to arrange religious leaders as well.
- Zackie: Things need to follow up. Government, management, and staffing. Can't have 4 people dealing with 450 refugees. It's wrong.
- Mohammed: More people coming in. Community doesn't want them, people don't want to be there. Tension among refugees. Agreed to negotiate, there is a meeting at 4:30 to mediate the refugees. Not enough food. No bread. No breakfast. Don't have all necessities.
- 107 males, 140 children, 23 males. Omo-7 males. Ethnic fights. But also abusing volunteers. Hectic now. Need people from all over Cape Town but not increasing the foods. Biggest concern. That's why people are fighting. They want one load of bread but now get less. 27

Bangladesh....give to DRC guys. Perishable stuff gets given to specific people, refugees see this and blame volunteers. Camp is expanding, no one informs camp officials. No coordination. Had SHAWCO volunteers, otherwise no activities for children to keep them busy when not at school. Showers.. new ones are going into tents. Communal toilets. Not enough showers for all the people. Camp can't host 400 people, but already over that amount.

Southern

Apologies for not being here.

Youngsfield

- Good news: Two of spokes people spoke at Home Affairs parliamentary meeting. People coming back kissing each other. So excited to speak, speaking to politicians. Personal stories were told.
- Following court case of people that were arrested. Friday is the court hearing. Want to show support. Probably Wynberg court. They are stored in Pollsmor. UCT is dealing with it.
- Sexual harassment is a problem. Problems with food. Not culturally appropriate.
- Big need for more volunteers to dish out food. Need help. Some Youngsfield volunteers came to help.
- Lot of talk about moving to halls. Those in Youngsfield want to stay, feel safe, like privacy, separate tents for families. May be better for reintegration.

Knysna

8 people in tents. Somalis, etc. Hard to get municipality to understand obligation to make them do something. Have taken away cooking facilities. Sleep on grass. No electricity. No Security. Gov't refuse to help. Some people want to come to Cape Town. Are persuading people to leave, paying to bus people out. One Muslim community member is supplying food. Zackie: There is a TAC site in Knysna.

OXFAM

Angelica is sending the technical structure for the showers. Public health coordinator will be checking on the facilities to see if they meet the standards.

Black Sash

Template of affidavit. First page says that people ready to assist with building up the case then we need to get info to support people. Can't raise expectations by taking info if it isn't getting used. Must be careful. If people raise questions about health, they need to get contact numbers, services, etc. As we get more affidavits. Need a system where we can link cases to individuals so we can see what becomes of them.. Helps with integration because we can ensure community that they are meant to be there (?). Number of people who have been arrested for possession of stolen property. Refugees should be able to go and identify if those goods are theirs. Must use discretion with affidavits. Dave: If you come across someone who has been a victim violence, you can use the form.

COSATU

Apologies from Ivan.

SHADE

Big need: Proactive work around the emptying of some sites. Which sites should be left open and which should close? Want fewer sites so they can be well run rather than keeping all of them going. Can districts identify which sites should be open?

Joint operation committee Klipfontein. Workshop facilitated by UNHCR. From next week, all the centres will have assessments about the needs, who needs to go back, who wants to be reintegrated. Mentioned last week that "our" organisation assists with help (not financial) rent, others, etc. Maybe other areas could get help in this way. May also help to resettle.

Concerned about food. Lots of sites are getting late food, bad food. How to engage Mustadafin, NGOs, others, that food has to be correct, on time, good.

Group is trying to help with coordination....with food and health (Zackie, Dave: we'll get to that later)

Please can we keep all information public, not private. This is good for research, the future, best practice, etc.

Political Update (Zackie)

Lawyers going to assess with people what the issues there are and what help they need. Youngsfield, etc. need legal advice, documentation. Caledon Square is trying to get the city counsel to open the civil centers. 22 orgs sent a memo to the UN on World refugee day. Can still sign on if you want. Seminar that was org at parliament...originally said that only South African's can speak to parliament. TAC took people in to speak at the meeting. Want to exclude refugees at these meetings. Minimum code of contact. Any organisation that participates with government must force that the refugees must also be included. Andrew Fienstein has also asked city to open halls. Zimbabwe: Critical issues. Three types of documentation. 1: Giving people docs who lost it. Home Affairs is having problems. 2: people who never had docs. 3: Zim is a problem. We are going to have a flood of Zimbabweans coming in. For any Zim who wishes to remain in SA MUST be given refugee docs or another doc for the regularisation of travel. This is a huge problem. Have to follow up on documentation. Social Justice Coalition Meeting is on Wednesday. SAFETY FORUM: City has said that sites have expanded from 40 to 84 because people are coming out of big sites. Still no joint plan. Clear thing that our lawyer told us is that they want to starve people out. They have succeeded to some degree. Must be wary of reintegration. LITIGATION: We are about to win on Soetwater. We are moving people to Blue Waters. We are trying to

3 demands: 1) Close inhumane camps. 2) Must bring UNHCR in properly. Can't do it with the government because they can't be involved with repatriation. UCT students are fine. 3) Zackie couldn't remember.

Questions and Comments:

A whole group of organisations are asking for all camps to be closed.

Muizenburg is open, empty. 400 people. Good ablutions. Good access to railway lines.

Premier's meeting? – Health should be in on the next meeting (they weren't at the last one.) They did say that the MEC apologised for not being there.

Need a formalised structure for reintegration with the Safety Forum. Need to have the powers and officials to look in to the issues. Public demand.

Silverstroom also does not meet international standards. Only Youngsfield and partially Harmony. We forced government to a position to close Soetwater but they were just doing it to keep us happy.

Quite clear that province is doing their jobs. They don't show up to meetings. They don't respond to emails. If it were not for the NGOs, this would be so much worse. There needs to be a public statement that comes from a broad coalition that shames the government. They can't even feed a few 1000 people.

From Knysna, officials have a mantra, "we don't want to create dependency"

All local government health cities are open to everyone (???). The notice in the reception in Red Cross Children's Hospital: ID, proof of address, etc. Might discourage people. Zackie: must take these things down.

Can't we take away the red tape? City and provincial are fighting, making things very difficult. Zackie: Can we have a demo or a statement outside at lunch time on Monday or Tuesday. We have done the city....must now do the province. City is shamed.

Another programme called the *victim empowerment programme*. Department of social development...Help with social relief. Helps people with social reintegration. Maybe this programme can help. Another person: this programme only comes on a referral....very concerned with getting involved. SAPS will probably pull back.

TASKS

- Transport Coordination. (Northwest, Mitchell's Plein)
 - o Need money
 - o **Dave** will deal with it
- Suppliers Meeting (Salvation Army, HDI, Red Cross, Mustadafin, etc.)
 - o Need formal meeting

- Can we have a forum?
- Food campaign
- Diet assessment No food for infants, for example (David Saunders)
- Daily statements to the police?
- **Vicky, Linda, Julie, Belinda**
- The Missing
 - Where are they? Where are they going?
 - Where are they being reintegrated?
 - Can we flag this. Not the most serious. Assign to legal group and safety and security group.
- Pinelands Church
 - We will ask **Alan** to chat with Vicky
- Khayelitsha
 - Reintegration: Jobs (get back old jobs), money, rent, safety
 - Also want things to do on site (crochet needles, etc)
 - **Christina and Mandla**
- Bambanani
 - Formal complaint
 - **Fatima**
- Counselling Load
 - Formal letter to Universities.. Psych department? Counseling Centre? Trauma Centre? They want to coordinate. Can put a request into UWC.
 - Have been doing group work but it's actually a nightmare.
 - Women from Obs does counseling, is willing to assist.
 - A huge database is being compiled by Pinelands centre...can we send a letter out to all the psychologists who could help with Trauma counseling
 - **Bridget**, PHM will act as a clearing house for trauma centre, collecting people's names
 - **Dave** at UWC (?)
- Blue Waters
 - Staffing, etc.
 - Leave to lawyers
 - Wednesday lunch time
 - Where can those people go?
 - **Louis and Mandla**
- Friday Court/Perpetrators
 - Black Sash to get list of people appearing in court.
 - Raises awareness that people in Klipfontein people getting punished
 - Also, show support at Youngsfield for support
- Sexual Harassment
 - Gender-based network
 - How is it being measured in the site assessment?
 - Is it counseling that is needed? Or Advocacy? Or Protection.

- Knysna
 - o Southern Land Group
 - o Combine efforts to go and help.
- Site Consolidation
 - o Needs to be discussed
- Provincial Advocacy
 - o By Monday night, Tuesday morning, we will have a statement
 - o People should sign on.
- Documentation
 - o If you identify people who don't have docs, two people be in charge of dealing with that
 - o Zim, DRC, Somalis (lost docs, asylum seekers,
 - o Legal Resources Centre
 - Want to win class action suit with Zimbabweans
 - Attach everyone else
 - o Should be for all people, not just in the sites.
 - o People are sick of being interviewed, filling out forms
 - o PASSOP is also doing stuff with forms
- Community Organisation
 - o Door to door educating people in Khaye
 - o Encouraged people in different areas to be part of TAC, AIDS Community
 - o Have organised community to talk about Xeno
 - o Three committees in Harare, Site C, Other areas...What we have resolved...all those who are back must submit names and contact details. Easy, then, to protect those people
 - o Courts: Critical to punish people who commit crimes.
 - o Landlords are afraid of risking their houses; are they given protection.
 - o **Elan Abrell** to take names of people for documentation

Site Assessment

Need to do this to supply things and for advocacy. Want to share info, also don't want to give people same forms over and over. Met with an epidemiologist who created check list forms. Daily check list. Must check in with every site every day about all things (health, food, etc.)

Andy: igiveadamn. Check in with sites each day. This information is fed into a website. People can share information this way.

Need help in doing the site assessments.

Other people also collecting information (Methodist and Anglican churches). These sites already have people. We need contacts for the other sites, the TAC sites.

Split off into district groups.