

Present:

Jurie de Wet—DHA  
Ghalib Galant—Office of the Premier  
Hildegard Fast—Disaster Risk Management  
David Zappo—TAC/ALP  
Mohamed Hirsi—TAC/ALP  
Teryn Allen—TAC/ALP  
Olivier Beer--UNHCR  
Scott Dunlop—TAC/ALP  
Fatima Hassan—TAC  
Vicki Igglesden  
Alan Jackson—Central Methodist Mission  
Annie Robb—Youngsfield  
Freddy Nkosi—Sonke  
Kimberly Fisher—Sonke  
Judith Cohen—SAHRC  
Andrée Goldsmith—SAHRC  
Chris Miller—SAHRC

#### I. Judith

- A. Meeting last week, in which Ghalib explained the timelines for closure of sites
- B. Another meeting at TAC at which HRC was asked to facilitate this meeting
  - 1. Agreement that sites will close
  - 2. Some concerns were raised about Harmony Park closing on Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> October
  - 3. Vulnerable people
  - 4. People who are involved in repatriation process
- C. From HRC point of view, we want to ensure that the sites close, but in a dignified manner
- D. Moving forward, we can hear first from Harmony Park about where people are at, and how many people will be in a position to leave the site by Friday, then some input from Disaster Management and Ghalib
- E. Take a list of practical challenges that people in the sites are facing, along with possible solutions to these problems
- F. Dr. Fast can perhaps indicate what is possible at this stage, and what is not possible
- G. We must use our time economically—only an hour to meet

#### II. Mohamed

- A. Refugees nominated five people to speak for everyone—each will speak separately about issues

#### III. Harmony Park

- A. Mercy
  - 1. People are not ready to move yet—they want to but there is no clarity in terms of rentals
  - 2. One week is too little

3. There is an HIV/TB patient—wants to go back to his country, and he is waiting for repatriation while people in the camp are taking care of him—moving him to Blue Waters would take away his caretakers
4. Education—people need time to find schools for their children
5. DHA process—some people don't have their decisions from DHA yet, and other people are still waiting to appeal their decisions
6. UCT Law Clinic came to Harmony Park, but there are people that they missed due to the high number of rejections
7. Some people's assistance forms have not yet been submitted—how will they be submitted if people have to leave the camps?

B. Willy

1. People not ready to move
2. No bank accounts, no information from government about when money will be disbursed
3. Some people have found accommodation, but money has not yet been put in bank account
4. Other people have not yet found accommodation
5. People are waiting to be repatriated
6. Some people are still waiting to fill out the forms for reintegration support

IV. Judith

- A. We need to be very accurate and clear about the categories of people in the camps—who has found accommodation but is waiting for money, who has not yet found accommodation, etc.

V. Youngsfield

A. Abdul

1. Refugees understand that sites will be closed—they are happy about this, but the question is when repatriation and reintegration are happening because people are unhappy living in the camps
2. No health care, no education, women and children are suffering
3. Wants to know exactly when repatriation and reintegration assistance is happening
4. Somalis are unsafe at the sites—want to be repatriated
  - a. Does not agree with the idea that Somalis cannot be repatriated there—it is a big country, not everywhere is dangerous
  - b. Most Somalis want to go back to Somalia
5. People are dying everyday—even people who reintegrated into communities are being killed

- B. Judith—Will the Somalis at Youngsfield who want to be reintegrated be ready to reintegrate by the 17 October, have they applied for assistance?

C. Abdul

1. They have applied for assistance by filling out the forms, but they have not yet received it
2. Vulnerable people
  - a. Women and children—they are tired of camps and want to leave

VI. Blue Waters

A. Prosper (Site "B")

1. Camps are not comfortable, this is why people want to leave

2. There seems to be difficulty categorizing people—some want to be repatriated, some want to be reintegrated, etc.
  3. People who want to be reintegrated have applied for the assistance, but have not received it yet—because of this, they cannot get accommodation
  4. Suggesting that the government gives cash to people who want to be reintegrated
  5. People are not clear on what the assistance package looks like
    - a. What is the value of the food?
    - b. How much money are they getting for rent?
- B. Judith
1. Prosper sounds confident that if the government finds more creative ways to assist, people will be happy to move out of the sites
- C. Prosper
1. This is true—people are tired of the sites and want to leave, so if they get assistance they will figure out the rest
  2. Vulnerable people
    - a. Single mothers
    - b. Pregnant women (2)
    - c. Married women with children
- D. Virginia (Site “C”)
1. Wants to know what the government will do for Somalis and people from Eastern DRC who can’t go back to their countries
  2. People are still waiting to be repatriated—no solutions
- E. Site “C”
1. People who want integration have filled out the forms, but have not received any response from government
  2. People came originally to South Africa for their safety, but they no longer feel safe
  3. Wants government to tell them the truth about the situation—they want to know their future, because they are not safe anymore in South Africa
  4. Wants to go to a place where he will be safe
- F. Judith
1. Site “C” is mainly people from Congo and Somalia
  2. What about people who want to be reintegrated in Site “C”? Will they be ready to leave by the end of the month?
- G. Site “C”
1. Landlords are asking for four or five months of rent, but they can’t do that—most people aren’t working
  2. It is not easy to find accommodation in one month—needs three or four months
- VII. Judith
- A. We need to be a bit more creative about how people can receive assistance
  - B. Handing it over to Ghalib or Dr. Fast about how they see the process at the moment, and also comments about refugee leadership
- VIII. Dr. Fast
- A. Prefers that UNHCR and UNICEF and DHA fill in the gaps because there are many questions that Disaster Management can’t answer
- IX. Judith
- A. Let’s start with DHA

- B. Received the stats about the accelerated status determination process late last night, but they were incomplete
- C. Wanted a breakdown per camp of number of applications, rejections, acceptances, etc.
- D. Maybe DHA can also update people on the process of handing out decisions

## X. DHA Process

### A. Jurie

- 1. Will get statistics and will have them to Judith by Thursday morning, maybe even by tomorrow
- 2. From a law enforcement perspective, no one will be arrested or deported until people have exhausted all options under Refugee Act
- 3. Not in mandate of DHA to deal with voluntary repatriation

### B. Judith

- 1. People are nervous to leave the sites before they've received the outcome of their application and had the chance to fill out an appeal, because there was an agreement with UCT Law Clinic that they would be at the sites filing appeals
- 2. People will have a harder time appealing decisions when not in camps because UCT clinic will not be around

### C. Jurie

- 1. Not all decisions will be handed out before closure of camps

### D. Dr. Fast

- 1. Richard Sikakane committed to having all decisions handed out by Thursday—first instance decisions at ALL camps

### E. Judith

- 1. This needs to be communicated to UCT Law Clinic, because we can't have people leaving the site on Friday without a chance to file their appeal

### F. Olivier

- 1. Right now UCT Law Clinic is helping people to appeal first instance decisions, but not everyone has yet received their first instance decisions
- 2. People need documentation before they close the site on Friday

### G. Alan

- 1. How do people get rental in one day (between Thursday and Friday), once DHA decisions are handed out?

### H. Fatima

- 1. Refugee leadership has agreed that camps need to be closed, but because of the reasons listed in the document being circulated, maybe government can push back the dates for the closing of the camps to address all these practical concerns?
- 2. If this is not an option, and the camp must be closed on Friday, then there are serious practical concerns in terms of DHA decisions and rental
- 3. This is the position of the refugees themselves

## XI. UNHCR

### A. Olivier

- 1. Process with Cape Town Refugee Centre
- 2. Providing assistance
  - a. Didn't want to pass out cash—learned by experience that providing cash does not lead to accommodation because people don't always spend it on rentals

- b. Also had experience that people got cash but then still had constraints and came back to the camps
3. UNHCR is not running refugee camps like they are in other countries—there is a mix of people at the camps, not everyone is a refugee
4. Asking people to fill in the form—the money that people receive depends on various criteria, and this is why each person needs to fill out a form
5. When people fill out a form, they are told to go and find a landlord, and then come back once they have arranged something
6. Two challenges
  - a. People did not register with Cape Town Refugee Centre initially, and are coming now trying to benefit from the assistance packages
  - b. Some people managed to get the rental agreement forms and bank account information, but never registered with the CTRC—now UNHCR is double checking the forms
7. Understands that it is a challenge for people, and that some people will not be able to get a rental in one or two days—perhaps this is where the more creative ways of assistance can come in
8. Providing relocation assistance is not linked to the closure of the sites for the UNHCR—the assistance will still be available after the sites are closed; refugees from Harmony Park can still go to the CTRC next week
9. If a landlord is asking for pay slips and several months of rent, come back to the CTRC and they may get help—this has happened in the past, but only with people who had refugee status or a paper saying they had applied for refugee status
10. Vulnerable people
  - a. This issue was raised at JOC meeting yesterday, can be raised by Dr. Fast today
11. Repatriation
  - a. UNHCR only repatriates refugees, not migrants
  - b. Had an agreement with IOM that they could repatriate other categories of people
  - c. IOM was not there when UNHCR interviewed people who are not official refugees, but these cases were passed along to IOM
  - d. Sent a message to get all the names of people from IOM in order to give names to government
  - e. At Harmony Park, there were no UNHCR repatriation cases, but there were IOM cases
  - f. Somalia and DRC
    - i. UNHCR interviewed everyone who wanted to repatriate, including Congolese and Somalia, because there are some places in the countries where you can repatriate, like in Somaliland
    - ii. Asked the people where they were from, told them that they could not repatriate to Mogadishu, and asked them if they would like to repatriate to Somaliland, but they didn't want to
    - iii. UNHCR is constantly reassessing to see where people can be repatriated to
    - iv. The final word is with the country of origin—UNHCR needs clearance from government of home country
    - v. Countries of origin want to make sure that the person who wants to repatriate is actually from that country

- vi. Need documentation from countries of origin—this takes time (6 weeks minimum), but is different from one country to another

XII. Dr. Fast

- A. Understands that there are very real obstacles for people in the camps—being able to find and pay for accommodation
- B. Assistance, reintegration, which then makes closure automatic—theoretically, if everyone in Harmony Park were able to receive assistance by Thursday, then reintegration could happen on Friday
- C. Rental assistance was to be paid into people's accounts on Thursday and Friday so that by Friday people could reintegrate
- D. UNHCR and UNICEF provided rental assistance forms, but it depends on when people return the forms in terms of when rental assistance will come
- E. Vulnerable people
  - 1. Need to know the numbers for vulnerable people in order to make a special plan for them, which they are committed to doing
- F. People requesting repatriation—small number of people—this does not justify keeping an entire site open because the number is too small—this is why they want to move these people (and perhaps vulnerable people) to another site while still closing Harmony Park
- G. There is an issue with people who have not yet returned their rental assistance forms
- H. Two challenges
  - 1. People who have received financial assistance on the condition that they will reintegrate, but are back at the camps
    - a. When people accept assistance, they are entering a contract that they are receiving the assistance to relocate, and government does not want to see people receive the assistance and then not relocate
  - 2. Need to be clear about people who want to repatriate
    - a. People change their minds, and this causes enormous cost to institutions that are trying to help people repatriate
    - b. People need to make a decision and be clear about it, and then follow through with it
- I. Going forward
  - 1. Need to find a way to provide an answer for people who have brought back rental assistance forms but haven't heard anything yet—need to provide some sort of proof that the landlord has been paid
  - 2. Harmony Park
    - a. Very few people have opted for repatriation there, mostly reintegration
    - b. Challenges are about people returning rental assistance forms
    - c. Worked hard to convince UNICEF to get them to extend registration until Saturday when UNICEF tried to stop accepting registration applications
    - d. Wants to work towards a closure plan for Harmony Park and Youngsfield—wants to get as many assistance forms as possible back this week so that money can be disbursed on Friday
- J. Backup plan
  - 1. Trying to speed up registration and reintegration processes, and aiming to close Harmony Park and Youngsfield by next Friday, 17 October

2. Start processes with rental assistance this week, and hopefully by next week both camps will be ready to close
3. Foresees problems with people that have not been able to turn in rental assistance forms until now

K. Food packages will be given to everyone by the Red Cross

XIII. Yves

A. CTRC and DHA are the people that are keeping IDPs at the camps—some people don't have their rental assistance yet, and don't know their results from DHA and are here illegally as a result

B. Wants three or four more weeks for IDPs to get what they need from CTRC and DHA

XIV. Moving forward

A. Judith

1. For quite a large number of people at the sites, there is a process that is happening, there are plans, some people will be a position to start moving out on Friday
2. It's about ensuring that people move out in as dignified a manner as possible
3. The smaller the number of people that government has to focus on, the more manageable the situation
4. Maybe we can meet again next week when numbers in the camps have diminished to reassess where we are—we'll know by then about DHA and CTRC processes
5. We all need to go back to our sites and organizations to unlock as many obstacles as possible, and then we can see next week what the situation is
6. Must identify particularly vulnerable people by next meeting

B. Dr. Fast

1. Where people can move, they should move, and they should move this week
2. 213 households have received rental assistance—if this is true, then there is no reason that they shouldn't be able to relocate by Friday to the places where rent has been paid for them
3. Wants to continue the movement of people out of the camps—let's move people when and where we can—especially out of Harmony Park and Youngsfield
4. Needs an agreement from Olivier that this is feasible, so that by next week, we can see the progress has been made and remove any obstacles that remain
5. Let's focus on Harmony Park and Youngsfield, and reintegrate as many as possible, and then meet again next week to see how many are left
6. Harmony Park will not definitively close on Friday—we're setting a date for next Friday, 17 October, and we will reassess next Tuesday
7. Move with processes that we can move with (relocation assistance and DHA process), and we'll discuss next week

C. Judith

1. We will come back next Tuesday to have a reality check—it will be easier then as the number of people left becomes much smaller

D. Fatima

1. Agrees with Dr. Fast's proposal
2. Youngsfield and Harmony Park will be open until 17<sup>th</sup>, but what about Blue Waters? If it takes at least 6 weeks for repatriation to happen, Blue Waters needs to stay open until this is finished

3. Hears that the amount of money for rent and food package are not sufficient—many people are taking it because they don't have a choice, not because they are really choosing to
- E. Alan
1. Question for Olivier: What is the time lag between return of rental forms and disbursement of rental assistance?
- F. Judith: Alan requested churches to put out a call for people to come forward if they have accommodation available
- G. Olivier
1. Agrees that the relocation assistance might not be sufficient, and it's for a limited period of time—after two months, people will face challenges to pay rent
  2. Everyone that came back with rental agreements and bank account, they can pay the landlord by Friday, and they will receive a slip from the bank proving that payment has been made
  3. Olivier can go to sites tomorrow to explain this
  4. UNHCR cannot do everything at the same time—while trying to make landlord payment, they are also trying to deal with people who want other things, like repatriation
  5. Focusing on people who registered for relocation assistance, who returned the form—they will be prioritized
  6. Even if someone did not lodge their appeal before they leave the camp, they can still go to UCT Law Clinic to do it
- H. Judith
1. Thanks to Dr. Fast
  2. We will meet again next Tuesday, 2 PM
  3. Leadership in the sites are being called upon to support people in practical ways
  4. Wishes leadership all the best
  5. Need to keep dialogue open to ensure that people find a place to go to continue with their lives
- I. Dr. Fast
1. This is a useful conversation
  2. Even if leadership does reintegrate, she would still like to see them at the meeting next week
  3. Commitment is that once there is proof of payment to landlord, government will provide them with transport