



## PROVINCIAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT CENTRE

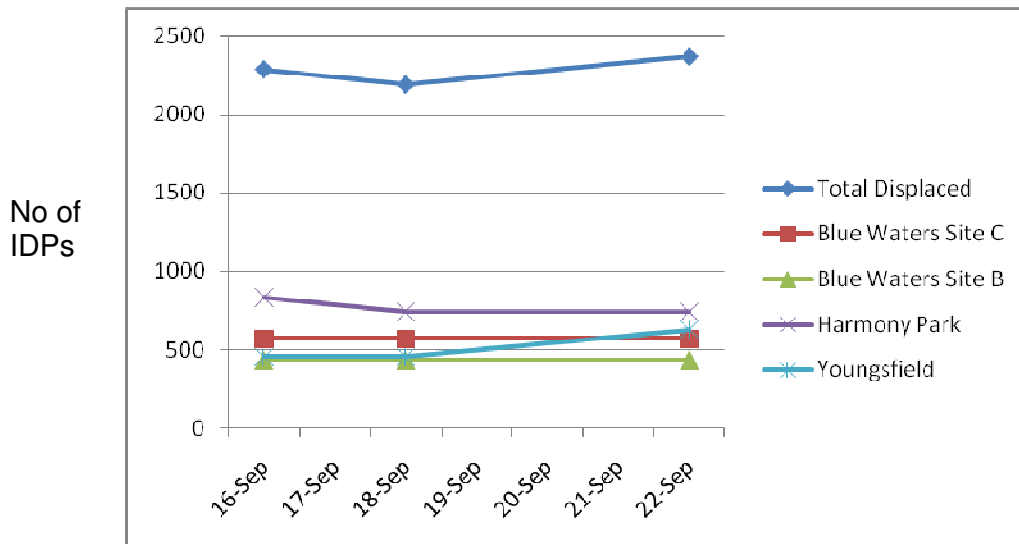


**REPORT:** Situational Report  
**DATE:** 22 September 2008

### Overview

As of 22 September 2008, the total number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Western Cape Province is 2371, having dropped significantly from the approximately 20,000 that were initially displaced. The percentage decrease since May 2008, is 88.14%, which is significant. During the course of the weekend, the total number of IDPs in the Province in fact increased by 176 IDPs-notably with the increase in one safety site exclusively-Youngsfield (2371 IDPs). The total number of IDPs in the other sites continue to remain constant- Harmony Park (738 IDPs), Blue Waters Site C (570 IDPs), Blue Waters Site B (433 IDPs).

The graph below illustrates the trend in the total number of IDPs during the consolidation phase.





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### **Status of safety sites**

The City of Cape Town reassured the JOC that the current status of safety sites complies with the prescribed standards, including the tents. The tents are currently being modified to better suit the weather conditions in the Western Cape. The United Nations commended the JOC on the improvements made in terms of the status of the sites since the issue of the UN Report.

The Department of Local Government and Housing reported that the Department is currently addressing the challenges with regards to the provision of food and the quality thereof with the Director General. The Provincial Disaster Management Centre (PDMC) highlighted that during the course of the weekend, there had been reports that IDPs were discarding food, resulting in the refuse bins being saturated. Arrangements were made to empty the bins. The United Nations called for the investigation of the motives for the IDPs discarding the food, rather than the Province reducing food provisions, as well as jumping to conclusions. The chair called for further investigation to be carried out, following which relevant responses would be carried out. The JOC resolution to this matter, is for the community development workers (CDWs) to carry out assessments of the food- specifically taking cognizance of the quality, temperature at which the food is served etc, and forward the report to the Department of Social Development. This is a temporary arrangement in light of the fact that the Department of Social Development indicated that they already have monitoring mechanisms in place in this regard.

The issues arising with regards to baby formula have been addressed.

### **Access cards**

Youngsfield and Blue Waters Site B have been visited and access cards have been provided at both sites. Electronic lists of the residents at both of the sites are currently being compiled. The team visited the site today, and the site manager confirmed that the lists will be available on Wednesday 24 September 2008. Members of the JOC reported that some IDPs have been issued with access cards despite the fact that they are not residents at the sites, which is a cause for concern.

Blue Waters Site C is yet to be completed. A follow up will be made.

### **Repatriation process**

The CDWs, UNICEF and the Cape Town Refugee Centre had a good start at Blue Waters Site B, processing 95 IDPs, of which the majority are Zimbabweans. The second day posed a challenge, with IDPs (of which the majority were Congolese) were hesitant and resisted to partaking in the process. On Saturday 20 September 2008, 395 IDPs were processed at



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Youngsfield. Today (22 September 2008), the team is at Harmony Park (the largest safety site), where there are about 200 IDPs who are to be processed.

The JOC engaged the possibility avenues which would be explored with IDPs who refuse to take part in the processes and opportunities that are availed to the them. The general sentiments were that the communication and facilitation teams should continue to emphasise that the safety sites are temporary arrangements, which would eventually cease operations. By that time, IDPs are encouraged to have chosen the option which best suits them utilising the assistance on offer to them. Before any drastic measures are taken with regards to forced removals etc, constant communication needs to be transmitted and restated to the IDPs to ensure that they are aware of these factors.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has indicated that due to time constraints, lack of feasibility of alternatives etc, the relocation assistance will be a cash payment. UNICEF has requested the proposed date for the closure of the safety sites, as this will direct when the roll-out of the cash payment will take place. This is to counter the possibility of an influx or return into the safety sites, as an incentive for the cash payment. The members of the JOC expressed their concern of assistance in the form of cash, and requested for UNICEF to investigate possible alternatives. Members generally felt that the date for the official closure of the safety sites would need to be decided as seemingly, processes are continuing with no end goal in sight. The original thought was for the date to be by the end of September, with no later than mid-October 2008. Due to the bad weather over the past few weeks, progress towards achieving that goal is behind. A resolution was taken for the official closure date to be mid-October 2008. The chair tasked the Department of Local Government and Housing, the Office of the Premier, the Department of Home Affairs and the City of Cape Town to draw up a timeline with the upcoming activities and processes, and therefore propose a date of closure of the sites.

The growing concern is the increase in IDP numbers in the safety sites over the course of the weekend. This may affect the nature of the assistance that is given.

### **Status determination**

The Department of Home Affairs reported that the status determination processes have started to unfold. Officials from Gauteng Province have been deployed in the Western Cape to firstly observe the areas and draw up operational plans, and thereafter work out logistical arrangements for the processes. It was reported that the status determination process started as of this morning (22 September 2008) at Blue Waters, and the officials will complete this safety site today. Harmony Park will be covered on Tuesday 23 September 2008., and Youngsfield on Wednesday 24 September 2008. On Thursday 25 September 2008, the complete assessment and quality assurance will be conducted. The plan is to issue all decisions with regards to the status determination by Friday 26 September 2008. The Department of



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Home Affairs will report back on the processes as well as the pamphlet on Friday's JOC meeting. Members of the JOC highlighted the need for the processes to be conducted in a credible manner.

### **Eviction notices**

The IDPs at Leibrandt van Niekerk (22 IDPs) have committed to moving from the site by the end of September 2008. An agreement was made in this regard.

The IDPs at Zolani Sports Centre (10 IDPs) have indicated that they will move from the site by the end of September 2008.

The IDPs at Chrysallis (24 IDPs) are waiting for repatriation processes to continue. They are currently in the process of reintegration, and are awaiting the return of the Burundian embassy representative.

### **Department of Education**

The Department of Education has indicated that they have been, and will continue to provide teachers to the sites, for school going children. A weekly report will be made to the PDMC.

### **Acronyms**

CDW	Community Development Worker
DoE	Department of Education
DLGH	Department of Local Government and Housing
DSD	Department of Social Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund