



CoRMSA Newsletter

Edition 6 — September 2011

Welcome to the sixth edition of CoRMSA's Newsletter. This month's newsletter is complementary to the last issue. It covers activities that CoRMSA's Secretariat was engaged in. We are endeavouring to keep our members, partners and the broader network posted on the Secretariat's engagements. CoRMSA welcomes feedback on the articles covered in this newsletter and suggestions for other subjects that you would like to see covered in the future. Kindly contact Alfani at communications@cormsa.org.za in this regard.

Parliamentary Update

In September 2011, the provincial heads of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) presented briefings to the Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs regarding the performance of their provincial departments. These presentations revealed some information and statistics relating to refugee affairs, and immigration – including deportations. Unfortunately not all of the same information was made available by each provincial department. Find below the information relating to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants that was made available by each provincial department.

- Gauteng:

Detailed statistics—Refugee Affairs: April to June 2011

New comers:	2426
Section 22 Permit Extensions:	16 104
Refugee ID applications received:	74
Refugee IDs issued:	161
Status Determination cases adjudicated:	1154
• Manifestly unfounded cases	100
• Unfounded	1021
• Granted	33

- **Limpopo:**

Immigration statistics – Inspectorate

Arrests:	862
Detentions:	818
Deportations:	759
Prosecutions (employees):	21

- **Mpumalanga:**

Profiling of Immigrant Communities Project:

The Department of Home Affairs has embarked on a project to profile communities that live on South Africa's borders with other countries. The project will be piloted in Mpumalanga, in the municipalities of Bushbuckridge and Nkomazi, as the Department states that these municipalities have the highest concentration of illegal immigrants.

The strategic objective of the project is to profile and 'build a coherent and credible database of immigrant families' who have settled in and around certain municipalities across the country.

Questionnaires were developed, and the areas visited between January and March 2011. The information has been captured and quality assurance has been done. The Department is now in the process of analysing the data.

Immigration statistics - Inspectorate

Deportations (2011): 4812

(January: 993, February: 720, March: 485, April: 246, May: 217, June: 140)

- **North West:**

No information given.

- **Free State:**

No information given.

- **Northern Cape:**

Immigration statistics – Inspectorate

Arrests and detentions (January–June 2011): 385 (most from Lesotho, Mozambique and Malawi)

Deportations: (January–June 2011): 273 (most from Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe)

Transgressions that have led to arrests, detentions, and deportations:

- Overstaying validity of permits e.g. Section 22
- Illegal employment e.g. no work permit
- Contravention of conditions on which allowed to remain in country
- Aiding and abetting an illegal foreigner to get a South African ID through misrepresentation/fraudulent means.
- Attempting to defraud the Department through obtaining South African IDs.

- **KwaZulu-Natal:**

Immigration statistics – Inspectorate

Deportations: 246

(April: 77, May: 112, June: 57)

Refugee Affairs

- **New arrivals: 1 989**

(April: 712, May: 966, June: 220)

- **Extension of temporary asylum permits: 11 192**

(April: 3 349, May: 3 530, June: 4 313)

- **Interviews conducted: 2581**

(April: 818, May: 892, June: 871)

- **Adjudication: 2 743**

(April: 974, May: 868, June: 901)

- **Unfounded: 1 327**

(April: 438, May: 438, June: 451)

- **Manifestly unfounded: 1 371**

(April: 526, May: 410, June: 435)

- **Approved: 35**

(April: 10, May: 10, June: 15)

Top five countries for new arrivals – Ethiopia (539), Zimbabwe (364), DRC (265), Malawi (230), Burundi (96)

- **Eastern Cape:**

Immigration statistics – Inspectorate

Deportations: Lindela: 144; Direct deportation: 3 220

- April – Lindela: 81; Direct deportation: 1 529
- May – Lindela: 29; Direct deportation: 855
- June – Lindela: 34; Direct deportation: 836

Refugee Affairs

- **New arrivals: 1 062**

(April: 306, May: 382, June: 374)

- **Extension of temporary asylum permits: 6 314**

(April: 2 026, May: 1 720, June: 2 568)

- **Interviews conducted: 2 385**

(April: 862, May: 799, June: 725)

- **Adjudication: 2 385**

(April: 862, May: 799, June: 725)

- **Unfounded: 1 085**

(April: 399, May: 402, June: 284)

- **Manifestly unfounded: 1 227**

(April: 436, May: 378, June: 413)

- **Approved:64**

(April: 27, May: 19, June: 28)

Top five countries for new arrivals – Somalia (94), Bangladesh (65), Ethiopia (58), Zimbabwe (44), Pakistan (30)

- **Western Cape:**

Immigration statistics – Inspectorate

Illegal foreigners detected (April-June): 171

Illegal foreigners deported (April-June): 178

Refugee Affairs:

- **New applicants: 14 970**

(January: 1 349, February: 1 057, March: 2 209, April: 473, May: 1 821, June: 5 088, July: 2 973)

- **Section 22 extensions:30 759**

(January: 7 225, February: 3 547, March: 3 674, April: 2 588, May: 3 597, June: 2 631, July: 7 497)

- **Section 24 extensions:9 319**

(January: 1 436, February: 1 268, March: 1 442, April: 1050, May: 1 070, June: 731, July: 2 322)

- **Cases adjudicated:6 537**

(January: 436, February: 1 041, March: 1 438, April: 853, May: 707, June: 1 119, July: 943)

- **Cases decided:6 327**

(January: 398, February: 967, March: 1 230, April: 853, May: 921, June: 1 053, July: 905)

- **Manifestly unfounded:3 623**

(January: 222, February: 537, March: 661, April: 402, May: 355, June: 772, July: 674)

- **Unfounded: 2 134**

(January: 127, February: 341, March: 470, April: 418, May: 312, June: 257, July: 209)

- **Granted: 421**

(January: 53, February: 71, March: 122, April: 36, May: 70, June: 36, July: 33)

For additional details on this article please contact Gail Eddy at: gail@cornsa.org.za

CoRMSA Capacity Building Project—Update

Programme and system's growth:

The capacity building program continues to grow and September saw the appointment of an intern for the program. The intern will assist with the implementation of capacity building initiatives stemming from the needs assessment report conducted in the past months.

One of the key recommendations from the needs assessment report is the need for capacity building internal systems development and strengthening. This is a continuous process and encompasses the institutionalisation of stakeholder engagement plans, communication plans, curriculum and capacity building content development, and other capacity building-specific systems and procedures. The intern will be assisting in this regard whilst also providing valuable research deliverables on strategic focus areas for the programme.

Capacity Building workshops conducted over the last period:

a. Fundraising proposal writing:

This workshop was presented by Ninette Mouton from the University of Pretoria on the 23rd of September 2011. The workshop was a success and highlighted a number of areas for refugee and migrant civil society organisations (CSOs) to focus on in order to improve their fund-raising strategies and expand their donor pool. This will be critical in the coming months and years as the sector faces funding challenges. There is need for a broader view of potential funding sources and partnerships. Follow-up initiatives will be looked at in the coming months as it will be important for CSOs to implement these skills, whilst at the same time considering opportunities for collaboration on certain initiatives for the purposes of increasing the sustainability of their work.

b. Monitoring Service Delivery at Refugee Reception Offices (RROs):

CoRMSA is embarking on a national refugee reception office monitoring project. This project is funded by the Foundation for Human Rights (FHR) and the European Union (EU) Commission.

The main objectives of the project are:

1. To improve service delivery for asylum seekers and other foreign nationals seeking services at the various RROs around the country. Currently, RROs are found in Musina, Pretoria, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town;
2. To capacitate members of the civil society throughout the country to conduct such monitoring;
3. To create conducive working conditions for an increased engagement between the civil society and the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) officials at the local level; and
4. To increase collaboration for monitoring as well as advocacy initiatives emerging from these activities at the national and local level.

This project is particularly relevant due to many RRO-related developments that have been noted currently throughout the country (e.g. office closures, service delivery issues, LHR and CoRMSA litigation against DHA and rumours of the relocation of RROs to the borders).

It is for this reason that a workshop on RRO monitoring was held on the 11th of October 2011 and delegates from Cape Town, Musina, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Johannesburg—towns where RROs are located—attended the workshop. The

workshop covered monitoring essentials, accounts from CSOs who have already conducted monitoring activities and the conceptualisation of challenges faced at the various RROs around the country. Participants were provided with a range of resources to assist them to properly conduct such monitoring and CoRMSA will be coordinating the monitoring activities nationally.

Capacity Building Workshops to be conducted:

a. RRO Monitoring Capacity Building—Follow up:

CoRMSA intends to conduct at least one follow-up capacity building workshop that will be based on contextual needs identified within the first couple of weeks of monitoring at the various RROs around the country. Much of this approach will also be based on information from CoRMSA-initiated reports that have prompted local CSOs to formalise some of the most important considerations for effective monitoring to take place at their respective RROs. CoRMSA will also assist in some of the initial local stakeholder engagement processes, where possible, and in line with its own facilitation and coordination imperatives nationally.

b. Capacity Building:

In order to maximise impact and the efficient utilisation of resources, CoRMSA's capacity building program will also endeavour to conduct other parallel capacity building workshops when visiting local networks. Much of this will depend on the local capacity building needs that have been identified during the preceding months. These workshops will seek to capitalise on available resources and the strategic imperatives of local and national networks in order to ensure relevance and effective reach.

Other initiatives planned for the next period:

a. Continuous feedback and planning:

Needs assessment report feedback and capacity building prioritisation will take place wherever possible and during local network visits during the months of October and November 2011. The purpose for this assessment will be to facilitate the collective contracting of capacity building initiatives that speak to local and national needs, thereby ensuring relevance to the rapidly changing refugee-migrant sector in Southern Africa. CoRMSA will also attempt to further institutionalise processes and platforms for sustained engagement regarding the identification of capacity building needs and the implementation of relevant capacity building initiatives.

b. Financial Management and Literacy:

A deficit in financial management skills and literacy emerged as a key national need from the needs assessment process and CoRMSA is currently looking at partnering with Avocado Vision - a large training vendor with links to various corporate donors - in an effort to provide low cost or free capacity building to CSOs and migrant communities. CoRMSA realises that access to capital, and other banking services,

as well as the broader internalisation of financial concepts and best practices will greatly benefit the refugee and migrant sector in South Africa. Talks are currently under way with Avocado Vision to roll-out a smaller pilot workshop for the purposes of gauging the benefit for migrant and refugee CSOs.

For any additional information or capacity building-related questions please do not hesitate to contact Hilton at capacity@cornsa.org.za.

Regional Advocacy Highlights

CoRMSA attended a three-day programme of training and dialogue between civil society organisations and the Peace and Security Department of the AU Commission sponsored by Oxfam International AU Office in Addis Ababa. The first day coincided with Africa Peace Day events held at the AU headquarters and provided an opportunity to visit the situation room—part of the newly established AU Early Warning System. The following two-day programme enabled the civil society organisations to better understand the work of the Peace and Security Department, including the planning of African Peace Force deployments, and to engage them on how civil society can work with them in various ways.

Whilst this was an excellent opportunity to access key role-players in this AU Department and gain insights into the workings of the AU Commission, it was clear that larger regional or international organisations were best placed to make use of the opportunities. It is extremely challenging for small civil society organisations in the continent to fully exploit the possibilities of a long term sustained engagement at this level. Nevertheless, there was great interest in the information we gave on the work that CoRMSA and its members are doing around conflict resolution and mediation in situations of xenophobic violence in South Africa, and in particular on early warning systems to avert violence, which could make an innovative impact on the way in which the Peace and Security Department develops projects at a regional level.

For any additional information on this article please contact Roshan at roshan@cornsa.org.za.

Non-nationals discriminated against as Schubart Park residents seek to get a durable solution from the City of Tshwane.

The evicted residents of Schubart Park spent the weekend on the streets of Pretoria after the City of Tshwane failed to fulfill its promises to provide alternative accommodation to them.

Residents were allowed into the buildings for a brief period to collect their belongings, but then spent the rest of the weekend huddled on top of their possessions with nowhere to go. This included entire families with their children. There were reports of widespread looting after the doors were open and residents were too afraid to move from their goods for fear that they would be stolen.

A registration process has been underway but it is unclear what the outcome of this process will be. Discrimination against foreign nationals was also noted. They have been told that they will be sent to Lindela rather than be sent to shelters as the South Africans. This is regardless of whether they are documented in the country or not.

“City officials have been very uncooperative towards us and have been unwilling to explain where the residents would be taken,” said LHR’s Nathaniah Jacobs, who has spent every day since Wednesday night monitoring the situation. “They only promised that there is a plan, but the details of that plan have been kept secret.”

To this point, no one has been able to explain the legal basis for the eviction. The city officials have called it an “emergency evacuation” while it is clear that this is used to disguise a mass eviction as approximately 8000 residents were forced out on the street with their belongings. The law, however, requires that evictions comply with the strict legal requirements under the Constitution which includes notice and an order of court. No eviction court was sought to justify this forced removal.

It is shocking that the City of Tshwane would again attempt an illegal removal just a week after appearing in the Constitutional Court defending such practices. The Court has not yet issued judgment in either eviction case.

LHR is equally disappointed by statements made by city spokespersons who have labeled the residents criminals and ungrateful “non-South Africans”. The Schubart Park residents are a diverse group of people who share the common burden of poverty and making ends meet. Labeling the poor as a band of criminals is a cheap comment which shows that the city does not truly appreciate the full extent of the problem.

LHR has taken statements and obtained mandates from many of the evicted residents and is currently considering further legal action to prevent this ongoing situation.

For any additional information on this article please contact Kaajal at kaajal@lhr.org.za

End of moratorium—Deportation of Zimbabwean nationals has resumed

The Department of Home Affairs has quietly lifted the moratorium on the deportation of Zimbabwean nationals. Deportation of undocumented Zimbabweans resumed early in September with many reports of arrests across the country. Victims of deportations include Zimbabwean nationals who do not have an asylum status in South Africa and those who failed to apply for permits under the Zimbabwe Dispensation Project. However CoRMSA appeals to the government to conduct such deportations in a humane manner and observe the human rights of the people affected.

CoRMSA is therefore encouraging the refugee and migrant network to report incidences related to mass deportations.

How/where to report emergency cases

For a better, faster and coordinated reporting of emergency cases, CoRMSA would like to recommend the network to use SA Emergency: <http://saemergency.net/>

How does this link work? Click on the link above and register with SA Emergency. After you have registered, log in with your email address and select “*Join a new group*” under Groups option. Different groups will be displayed and you have to click “**Emergency Reports During Deportations**” which you can use to report any emergency incidents.

Note that this should not replace telephone calls, sms and other traditional means of communication we have at our disposal.

For any additional information on this article please contact Alfani at communications@cormsa.org.za

CoRMSA reserves the right to edit and/or shorten any article received for the purpose of this newsletter.