

**Guidelines for Phase Out and Closure of Centres of Safe Shelter (CoSS)**  
**A Strategy for Persons displaced as a Result of Criminal Activities in South African Townships**  
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*Draft*

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**Background information: -**

Since May 2008, South Africa has witnessed displacement of foreign nationals and some South Africans as a result of massive criminal activities perpetrated by unknown criminals whose intentions are not known. The Government of South Africa in collaboration with well wishers, local and international organizations is responding to the needs of the affected persons and currently is hosting them in six (6) camps in the Gauteng area and over 60 communal centre in the Cape area.

While protection and assistance of displaced persons is a prerogative of the government; camps/sites set ups are safe temporary shelters and may not provide a conducive atmosphere for the displaced persons. In order to give opportunity to the displaced persons to rebuild their lives and to be self reliant, the government intends to phase out and close down these temporary safe shelters.

This document will therefore be a reference tool during the process. It has been drafted based on the situation on the ground. Reference has been drawn from ***International Guiding Principles for Internally Displaced Persons, Global Framework for Durable solutions , the Camp Management Toolkit, Emergency Handbook and other relevant protection related references putting at the forefront the interest of the government of South Africa to protect its citizens and those within its territory.***

**Definition of terms: -**

Camp phase out - refers to activities that are undertaken at the camp/site following indication that the conditions that prompted displacement have improved and the displaced no longer require protection and assistance or humanitarian assistance in a camp/site set up. It is a process that gradually leads to withdrawal of humanitarian assistance from a camp/site location. This process ultimately should be government led and conducted in close participatory consultation with the host community and the displaced persons and other stakeholders.

Camp closure - refers to activities involved in removing the official status that recognized a particular area as a camp/site. A camp/site is declared closed by the government after camp phase out process. The process of camp/site phase out and eventual closure can take place for a number of reasons, and in a diversity of ways or stages. Some are planned while others may be spontaneous due to voluntary choice of the displaced to reintegrate back in to the community. The identification of durable solution for the displaced is an essential part to focus on during this process.

Whatever the circumstance that lead to camp phase out and eventual closure, it is important to note that careful **planning** and **extensive coordination** is crucial. The exercise is complex and involves a collaborative approach between camp managing agency/institution entrusted with camp management, the sector lead agency or cluster lead (where cluster arrangement applies), the government authorities, individuals, local and international service providers, the site population and the host community. Others to be included in the process are contractors in order to prepare the ground for closure.

The process is challenging and the camp mangers should be prepared for eventual negative reaction towards phase out and closure given its complexity

### Planning process: -

1. Consultative meetings with the government authorities, sector lead agency, Camp Management institution/contractors and other stakeholders in order to brainstorm on the process. This is followed by government organized sensitization and confidence building missions in areas where the displaced will reintegrate/relocate to and in the camps/sites.
2. During such missions, dialogue with the host community to know their fear and expectation during reintegration/relocation process is vital. Similarly, views of the displaced persons should be considered before the process begins and emphasis should be made on the concept of durable solution.
3. The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) should constitute a Camp/site Phase Out Technical Committee to work on the process in consultation with Department of Home Affairs (DHA), Disaster Management Solutions (DMS), lead agency, service providers and other stakeholders. The government through DMC will nominate representatives to the committee. ***The committee will be guided by the principles and objectives laid out in the International Guiding Principles for Internally Displaced Persons, Global Framework for Durable solutions and other relevant documents aimed at promoting rights of the displaced persons while considering the government of South Africa policies and plans. To the largest extent possible the committee will make use of a participatory approach in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.***
4. Agreement of Terms of Reference for the Camp/site Phase Out Technical Committee (PTC) and discussion on the process of Camp/site Phase Out and Camp Closure with members of the committee.
5. DMC decides on and gives the task to the PTC to initiate inter-agency joint assessments to camps/sites identified for phase out based on camp management reports from DMS as well as population figures attained from the DHA registration figures. The assessment team is to ascertain the continued need of the camp/site setting and provision of humanitarian assistance in the location. This team conducts a participatory assessment as well as a random tent visit and drafts its recommendations to DMC.
6. The recommendation is discussed at the DMC and a decision on whether to start the phasing out of each individual camp/site is taken..
7. The final decision of the DMC is shared with the camp/site population and the intention to support those reintegrating/relocating with a reintegration package designed by the PTC and recommended by DMC.

### Procedure: -

The PTC examines the following key activities during Camp/site Phase Out process: -

1. **The residual population** – seeking durable solution to displaced persons who due to reasons of insecurity and other justified reasons choose have not made decision to reintegrate. Particular focus should be made on persons with specific needs.
2. **Land issues/areas hosting sites** especially regarding land owned by the host community who hosted the IDP population. Assess in case there is need for any rehabilitation.
3. **Continuous consultation** with relevant government departments such as Home Affairs, Education, Social Development, Health etc, local administrators, DMS, site residents through their leaders and host community through out the process in order to address specific basic needs during reintegration.
4. **Information dissemination:** - It is critical not to send wrong signals to the residual population, and consequently vital for the government to engage in an information campaign of residency and denounce forced eviction or dismantling of individual tents without consent. Messages on the three durable solutions should be accurate, coherent and consistent.
5. **Dismantling of individual tent:** - Once individuals own up to reintegrate/relocate a grace period agreed upon by the PTC and passed by DMC should be given to him/her to gather belongings and clear the surrounding. In case of abandoned tents, the Camp Management team will dismantle the tent after a given period after consultation with the PTC.

6. **Rehabilitation activities:** - Other rehabilitation activities will involve slashing and clearing site previously occupied by sites, rubbish bins/containers, taps, bathrooms, the mobilette toilets and urinals to be removed. Rubbish sweep and removal of hazardous materials (e.g. batteries, broken glass, nails etc).  
*The government through the local authority will carry out rehabilitation plans to ensure that the land previously occupied by sites are made useable.*
7. **Property/facility hand over and Maintenance and repair:** - MoUs and other official handover documentation should be done with mutual understanding with the involvement of the CTCs, Camp Management teams, community through their leaders, host community and other community structures so that the hand over process is smooth. Rehabilitation of damaged facilities in case the site was established in a public facility.

## **Camp/Site Phase Out Implementation process**

### **1. Preparation phase:**

- Information dissemination of camp/site phase out activities
- Training of Camp Management teams.
- Identification and profiling of vulnerable groups
- Conducting assessments including recounting of existing infrastructure.
- Negotiation, drafting and signing of agreements/MoU with host communities, agencies and local authority.
- Official hand over of facilities from agencies to the local authority/host community
- Local authority in collaboration with DMS to organize for site cleaning. In case the host community wishes to participate, they should be encouraged.

### **2. Rehabilitation Phase**

- Slashing and clearing area occupied by the site
- Initial rubbish sweep and removal of hazardous materials (e.g. batteries, broken glass, nails etc).
- Removal of rubbish bins/containers, taps, bathrooms, the mobilette toilets and urinals.

### **4. Continuous consultation, Monitoring and evaluation**

Most important is for the DMC, PTCs, Camp Managers in collaboration with the displaced/host communities and the local authority to continue with consultation during the process, undertake regular monitoring and evaluation activities and to keep information flow from the community to the local authority and to other actors through the DMC.

### **Some areas of concern: -**

- Finding durable solutions for residual camp population/ssupport to persons of concern during the process
- Information dissemination
- Forced eviction (in case)
- Selection of camps/sites of sites to phase out and the consequences.
- Reintegration process/Return package
- When does the IDP status change
- Enhancing community participation during the process
- Issue of Identity cards
- Dealing with persons who have expressed interest for voluntary return/resettlement to other countries