**UNREVISED HANSARD**

 **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2022**

***PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY***

The House met at 15:00.

House Chairperson Ms M G Boroto took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Order, hon members. The only item on today’s Order Paper is questions addressed to Ministers in cluster 2, Social Services. There are four supplementary questions to each question. Parties have given an indication of which question their members wish to pose a supplementary question on. Adequate notice was given to parties for this purpose. This was done to facilitate the participation of members who are connecting to the sitting through the virtual platform. The members who will pose supplementary questions will be recognised by the presiding

officer. In allocating opportunities for supplementary questions, the principle of fairness, among others has been applied. If a member who is supposed to ask a supplementary question through the virtual platform is unable to do so due to technological difficulties, the party Whip on duty will be allowed to ask the question on behalf of their member. When all supplementary questions have been answered by the executive, we will proceed to the next question on the Question Paper.

The first question today has been asked by the hon L J Basson to the Minister of Water and Sanitation. I have been informed that hon Deputy Minister Mahlobo will respond from the virtual platform. The hon Deputy Minister?

**QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS CLUSTER 2**

**SOCIAL SERVICES**

Question 747:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

Thank you very much, your excellency House Chair and hon members. With respect to the question that has been posed, we are pleased to indicate that the system for water in Gauteng

has stabilised after a number of weeks where the system was under stress and the availability of water in our system had dropped below 52% till 38%.

Due to the recent rains and good weather conditions, the system has stabilised to above 60%. Our entity Rand Water has lifted the restrictions and many areas in Gauteng are receiving water. We had challenges on the basis of load shedding that affected both Rand Water and all the municipalities in Gauteng in the main because the high-lying areas were not able to use gravitational force to pump water up them.

Secondly, there was a heat wave, and the behaviour of citizens and consumers impacted very negatively because of issues of sprinkling, irrigation and the use of water, increasing the demand. Then there were challenges around electrical failure and mechanical failure in some of our systems.

We need to indicate that Rand Water is in the process of increasing its water treatment capability on the basis that the population of Gauteng has increased over the last few years to above 17 million, and the economy of Gauteng, in proportion to the gross domestic product, GDP, has increased.

In the last quarter of 2023, we are going to build

600 megalitres of capacity per day to treat water. Currently, Rand Water is extracting approximately 4 400 megalitres per day and they are exceeding the allocation by 1 600 megalitres. As a department, we have made a decision to increase their extraction capability ... that the infrastructure must be increased in terms of ... direct proportion ...

Phase two of the Lesotho Highlands Water ... will ensure that there is water security for Gauteng, and all the snags that are between Lesotho, Namibia and us are being sorted out by the Minister.

The last point that we must note is that the water service authorities – the municipalities of Gauteng — because of the aging infrastructure that is still asbestos, over years on average they are losing 42% of water. It means that out of

100 megalitres, more than 42 megalitres is being lost.

Johannesburg is at 44%, with the City of Tshwane at 34% and the City of Ekurhuleni at 35%. We are working with them to support ... to attend to issues of infrastructure, the replacement of asbestos and ... [Inaudible] ... pipes that are susceptible to bursts and leaks. However, the issue of the budget for operations and maintenance is a matter of concern

that must be addressed and then the issues of the management of human settlement in Gauteng will be the most important aspect that we need to attend to.

Mr L J BASSON: Deputy Minister, there is an urgent need to put water higher on government’s agenda. Water losses are escalating at a rapid rate. We see water losses in Gauteng metros between 30% and 50% — you mentioned 42% — costing the taxpayer billions. This crisis in Gauteng has developed over many decades. Some water pipes in Johannesburg were installed nearly 100 years ago. These losses are also putting more pressure on Rand Water to purify drinking water. The quality of water infrastructure in South Africa is deemed to be below average and deteriorating due to poor planning, a lack of financing to maintain aging infrastructure and to keep up with rapid urbanisation.

Deputy Minister, what measures are your department going to put in place to stabilise these water losses and how will government financially assist metros and municipalities in the country to replace aging water infrastructure? Thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

Hon Basson, you are quite correct. The only issue that we as South Africans, especially the leader of the DA in Gauteng, need to do is to stop politicising water, because those who live in a glass house must never throw stones into that particular glass house.

One of the things that has happened is that over the last

28 years the ANC-led government has expanded access to basic services to many South Africans who had no access to water, especially those who are poor or on the basis of the colour of their skin.

One of the issues that I admit we have actually neglected is that our investment in water resource infrastructure has not been commensurate in terms of population growth and GDP growth, and these issues have caught up with us.

What are we doing? Rand Water, for example ... to stabilise the issue of security in Gauteng ... Already, this is going to be the biggest water treatment plant of 600 megalitres that will be done and we are putting about R28 billion for capital expenditure, Capex**,** over the next five years, starting at this current period, as I have indicated.

One of the most important aspects is that local government must play their part too. Over the last few years, a number of these municipalities have not been using their money or grant, which is the Urban Settlement Development Grant, USDG, and some of this money is being returned. Therefore, one of the issues ... we will support them, working with the other state departments, that we put more money on operations and maintenance, replace ... so that every drop that is wasted counts. However, our deployment of water boards with this capacity to these municipalities will help a lot in terms of regenerating our economy. Indeed, water is a priority ... [Time expired.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Deputy Minister, unfortunately your time has expired. You have two minutes to respond to supplementary questions. The next follow-up question will come from hon Matuba.

Ms M M MATUBA: Thank you very much, hon House Chairperson, hon Members of Parliament and hon Deputy Minister Mahlobo.

Wastewater and water treatment is an important process which is a significant source of water. The level of effluence has an impact on the capacity of wastewater and water treatment plants.

My question to the hon Deputy Minister Mahlobo is as follows. What is the level of compliance with regulations related to wastewater and water treatment works across Gauteng, as the department has issued notices and directives in terms of section 19 of the National Water Act, as this impacts on water supply capacity such as in Rooiwal Wastewater Treatment Works and Temba Water Treatment Works, and what support does the department provide ... [Time expired.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Thank you very much. Your time is only one minute. Let’s just assist in that. When you ask a supplementary question, it should consist of only one question. However, it is the prerogative of the Deputy Minister to respond if you have asked more than one. The hon Deputy Minister?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

In terms of wastewater treatment systems and the deterioration of water quality, it is one of the major concerns of our country. We have reintroduced the Blue Drop and the Green Drop

... and a number of municipalities in Gauteng are performing on average to well, but there are challenges in the areas that the hon secretary-general has actually indicated. However, we are intervening.

If you look at the situation at Emfuleni right now, we are intervening in terms of section 63 of the Water Services Act and we are working with the government of Gauteng in addressing those issues. At the very same time, the issues of local municipalities in Tshwane are being attended to, though there are challenges.

However, generally the issue of the wastewater system in South Africa is an area of concern, but wastewater ... We are also promoting the brown economy so that we can be in a position to ensure that there are no water drops being dropped away**.** In Limpopo, there are examples where wastewater is being used as effluent by industries, but also helping the local municipalities to build their capacity. Thank you.

Ms Z MAJOZI: Hon Minister, considering that approximately

41% of water that is ... [Inaudible.] ... to consumers is lost before it gets to their taps, which tremendously affects the amount of water that communities have access to and can consume, what is your department doing to repair the aging water infrastructure linked to all Gauteng municipalities, to ensure that 100% of the water goes to communities and is not lost due to inadequate infrastructure?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

The responsibility of the distributive system is a responsibility of municipalities. With regard to the water that is being lost, the municipalities in Gauteng have a constitutional responsibility to fix their own assets. On our part as national government, especially those that are metros, our sister department has a provision around the renewal of infrastructure under the USDG so that we don’t lose so much water. However, at the very same time we are supporting them with issues of water conservation and demand management.

Therefore, the issues of investment in operations and maintenance and the fixing of the leaks in the main, replacing that infrastructure that has technically collapsed, is one of the biggest things we need to do to regenerate our economy to ensure that there is an assurance of supply, but more importantly, that the right of access to water is not hampered or affected. Thank you.

Mr N L S KWANKWA: Thank you very much House Chair. In about 2008, there was a nationwide programme that was established to develop water reconciliation strategies to address the shortfall in water supply caused by the poor operation and maintenance of water supply, treatment and reticulation infrastructure, which result in significant water losses

across the country. I want to find out from you whether the approach was used to alleviate the shortfall in water supply and to improve the current inefficient supply infrastructure, especially in many parts of rural Eastern Cape.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo)**:**

Our policy documents have been improved. The Cabinet has approved the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan and when you look at the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan in terms of the network industry, water is one of the apex issues, including in terms of the funding and in terms of the budget infrastructure office in the office of National Treasury. We are supporting a lot of municipalities, even in the Eastern Cape, whether it is Gqeberha and other areas that we are supporting.

However, we must admit that we can still do more when it comes to our asset management and the philosophy of ensuring that operation and maintenance is the way to go in terms of ensuring that you can ... [Inaudible.] ... so that your asset can be able to give you a return on that particular investment.

Therefore, municipalities, working with Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, should be supported ... that the five per cent of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, Mig, and other grants ... [Interjections.] ... we must be in a position to ensure that they actually comply with that money of operations and maintenance which is ring-fenced so that it should never be abused, because if they do that there is also the issue of lost revenue and also of citizens that are denied access to basic services and customer satisfaction. Thank you.

Question 716:

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, House Chairperson, and I wish to thank the member for the question. The Presidential Employment Stimulus package was introduced by President Cyril Ramaphosa as part of South Africa’s Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, which set out a range of measures to address the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the Department of Social Development was given the responsibility to administer the Early Childhood Development Employment Stimulus Relief Fund to ensure the survival and reopening of the sector.

House Chairperson and hon member ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Dr Basopu, please mute, you are doing this for the second time. Check your gadget, please. Apologies, please proceed hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, House

Chairperson, the ECD Employment Stimulus Relief Fund was targeted to benefit all types of ECD services registered, conditionally registered or unregistered. We need to make this reference because when we started with it, there were a number of ECDs that were not registered, and according to our process and accountability, we needed to also make sure that we give the fund to the right people. We included them because we understood and appreciated the conditions under which these ECDs operate including the fact that some of them are not registered because they want to but because some of them are in far flung areas, and sometimes the registration processes might be difficult for others. They were all included.

We have a special programme that usually support these ECDs which were not registered and we wanted to make sure that by the time we even hand them over to the Department of Basic Education, they are properly registered.

I also indicated in my reply that the provincial departments – by the way, I am answering this question not for the first time. It repeats itself also on written questions, but it is okay, it is our task to answer – in my previous reply I indicated that KwaZulu-Natal experienced challenges and delays with the disbursement of ECD Employment Stimulus Relief Fund due to a number of reasons. But chief amongst those reasons was: firstly, information errors in the application, for example, some ECDs had captured incorrect names and ID numbers wherein some names did not match the Identity Documents; secondly, some ECDs had made multiple applications which by the way, it is also another problem because people must know that the system is designed to make sure that we pay the right people. So, when people do multiple applications, they also confuse our system; thirdly, in some instances bank accounts were bearing names of ECD operators instead of ECD centres that are making applications; fourthly, some staff verifications failed as a result of incomplete information and not appearing on the National Population Register which is administered by the Department of Home Affairs. I do want to say to members here that we try by means to make sure that our connectivity and our database speaks to each other in government; and lastly, some applications were received but were not providing ECD services.

We took our time to also continue with our programme called Vangasali campaign where we were assisting ECDs to register so that it becomes easy for them. Through this campaign, we were able to record more than 52 000 ECD services of which 60% were not registered and that 60% is quite a high number.

Hon House Chair, it was not for lack of trying on the part of KwaZulu-Natal provincial government or Social Development that they did not spend all the allocated money. It was because of the previous instances which I mentioned. In fact ... [Time expired.] ... Thank you, House Chair.

Ms P MARAIS: Thank you, House Chair, House Chair, I just like to find out from the Minister if she is considering the poverty and the extent of the recent flood damages in KwaZulu- Natal? The fact government departments are unable to utilize money should be viewed in a more serious light. It is in fact, treasonous. [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon Minister, please mute when you are not speaking. You have been asked a question, hon Minister. Please proceed, hon member.

Ms P MARAIS: Minister, considering the poverty and the extent of the recent flood damages in KwaZulu-Natal and the fact that government departments are unable to utilize money should be viewed in a more serious light, in fact, treasonous. What steps have you taken to ensure that officials who are not able to use the monies for intended purposes are made to account?

Thank you, House Chair.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, hon member for that question, but I would like to request, House Chairperson, that the issues, the management and administration that have to be done by provinces – the question may come to us, yes, but at the end of the day, it is the Department of Social Development at a provincial level that would have to implement whatever measures that need to be taken for monies that have not been spent. Again, we must separate between this money that we are talking about which was for ECDs from any other money which was meant for disaster management and all that, because these are two completely distinct and separate issues.

What I can do hon member, is to say the implementation of whatever measures that needs to be done, they have to be done by the Department of Social Development at a provincial level.

My task would probably be to pass the message to the MEC of Social Development and the government of KwaZulu-Natal that this is a concern that has been raised by members at national level. Thank you.

Ms N Q MVANA: Thank you, House Chairperson, underspending is not a new phenomenon but it is recurring and weakens the government’ social and economic impact. What support mechanism does the department have to support provincial departments in planning and enhancing programme implementation? Thank you, House Chair.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, House Chairperson and hon Mvana for that question, yes, it is a big problem not only for the Department of Social Development but it is an overall government problem where monies are not spent and sometimes there is a rollover where we have to go to Treasury and ask to roll over the money. In most instances, Treasury is very difficult in allowing rollovers. However, the department in particular has put in several mechanisms to support provincial departments. These include, amongst others, the following: firstly, we have established a joint forum which meets monthly and comprises of both national and provincial managers to focus on planning, implementation,

monitoring and evaluation. By the way, one of the things that I decided we need to do as a department or as a Minister in particular was that the department does the annual performance plans, APPs. I am demanding from the department that they present the operational plan because it is good to have the APPs, but when you don’t know the operational plan, the timelines, and how much money is going to be spent on what and when. If I do that, then it enables me to make sure that I follow up and avoid underspending.

Secondly, we developed provincial project plans aligned to our APPs. As I am indicating, at national I have asked the department to connect the heads of department, HODs, to the provinces so that we are not only monitoring from the national point of view, but we know what is happening at provincial level.

Lastly, we have monthly budget committees to review and manage projects expenditure. All reports on projects performed are presented at various structures within the Department of Social Development for further interrogation including heads of Social Development at the level of the directors-general, DGs, as well as Minmec. Thank you, House Chair.

Ms A L A ABRAHAMS: Thank you, House Chairperson, House Chairperson, this is so typical of the ANC government, being unable to deliver the service, shifting the blame or passing the buck while South Africans suffers. Online systems do not work because vulnerable groups of people have limited, if any at all, access to internet, smartphones, and data. We cannot be surprised if the Department of Social Development does not reach their target.

The ECD practitioners in KwaZulu-Natal just announced an ECD shutdown from 14th to 16th November as a result of these unpaid funds. The KwaZulu-Natal’s head of department indicated that R39 million will be returned to them.

Minister, KwaZulu-Natal is not the only province in this situation, every other province returned funds except for the Western Cape government. So, Minister, the question is: as the national Minister for Social Development who has an oversight role and who leads Minmec, will you take best practices from the Western Cape government to ensure that KwaZulu-Natal and all other provinces spend their money and they do not return the money to Treasury for the second time?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, House Chairperson, I think if hon Abrahams was asking the question for purposes of getting a response from me, that is genuine and coming from the real work that I do on day-to-day basis, she would have understood exactly when I explained from the very beginning of what steps we have taken as the Ministry to make sure that this does not happen.

As to the political explanations about the Western Cape, congratulations for what you are able to do and congratulations to all the other people that are ignored by the very Western Cape government. I didn’t come here to make a political statement but to answer to questions genuinely. If I need to make political statements and play politics, I am not going to do it here. So, the hon member who is asking the question, I already answered the question by explaining exactly how I have realized that this is a weakness. I have answered the fact that I have asked that the national department connects to the planning of the provincial governments. I am here to answer that question. The rest of the politics, I haven’t got time for that right now.

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Thank you, House Chairperson, hon Minister, I think you would agree with me that underspending ... [Interjections.] ... impacts

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Allow us to hear what hon Shaik Emam is saying. I am sorry, hon Shaik Emam. Start from the beginning, please.

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Thank you, House Chairperson, hon Minister, I am sure you would agree with me that underspending impacts on the quality of services we deliver. From time to time, we find that many departments fail to plan timeously – and I think you picked that up and you are putting measures in place, which I welcome – as a result of that, we are in the process of wanting to introduce zero-based budgeting. Would your department be prepared when we go into zero-budgeting so that you can be able to plan, to get the money allocated accordingly and get to spend it timeously? Thank you, Minister.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, hon Shaik Emam and thank you for that question, yes, as the Department of Social Development, we are very much concerned about the underspending, and you are right when you say the

underspending reduces the services to our people. It is for this reason that I said earlier on, it is something that we didn’t do before. I now do not want the provinces to plan in isolation. That is why I have directed the acting director- general together with the HODs to take their annual plans and develop operational plans and even develop budgets towards that so that we are able to realize where the underspending is.

Yes, the zero-based budgeting is something that has been floating for a while now. I think that government overall ... because we cannot isolate ourselves from the overall. We would like this to be something that finally is adopted because it has been on the discussion for the past three years. You’ll remember that it was proposed even at a time when Minister Tito Mboweni was here. I am of the view that we either make a decision on it or we don’t it, and as a department I feel we can be able to it. Thank you very much.

Question 682:

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: House Chairperson, let me appreciate the question by hon Malatji. Just to indicate in terms of our audited statements for 2021-22 financial year it will be seen by, hon members, that we have confirmed and is

confirmed that we have made the following policy changes. The first one is around the increase in terms of quantum for subsidy for all housing subsidies or programmes. This one start with social housing income bracket that increase to R22 000 and then we also approve an exception on social pension recipients from income qualification criteria for housing.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): You are muted.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: Yes, it has automatically muted. I am not so sure, House Chairperson, if you can request Parliament not to mute us.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): You are fine now. You may proceed.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: Okay, thank you. We also approved the revised finance link policy but again what we have done is that we develop programme for the removal and replacement of the dismantling of the asbestos. Policy on rental housing has been revised and also the length issue which we have now decided to fast-track. Again, Chairperson, if I may indicate in terms of the title deed, this is an area

that we can acknowledge, hon members, that we have not been doing very well previously and that’s why we have taken a decision in terms of Cabinet. We have specifically now if we look at it, Cabinet has taken a decision that we will utilise Operation Vulindlela as part of the mechanism to fast-track the implementation and release of title deed but again part of what we have done is to be able to put in place processes for allowing for ownership disputes to be resolved and then it allows for the title deeds to be registered because there are various challenges that leads to slow pace removal of title deeds.

We have also requested that the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development assist us in addressing and reporting in terms of deceased estate. That is one of ... But more importantly, what we have done is to test in terms of fast-tracking what we call old stock in terms of our title deeds. For example, the declaration of the Ministerial Project to expedite the release of title deeds in Mabopane, Winterveldt and Ga-Rankuwa as part of the pilot for us to be able to see how we can fast-track the issuing of title deeds especially for our old stock. This is our houses that used to be owned by the apartheid government and people who were not allowed to own but can also lease.

So, this is part of the work that we are doing, hon members, in support of the work and fast-tracking. But more importantly, we have had an agreement with the Surveyor- General and the Deeds Registry in terms of the turnaround time once we have launch to this title deeds. And this has reduced the number of days but also improve the capacity and the number of title deeds that are issued across the country.

Thank you very much. Hon Malatji?

Mr C N MALEMATJA: Chair, migration of South African mainly from rural ...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): But you are not, hon Malatji.

Mr C N MALEMATJA: I said let me assist comrade, Chair. Thanks.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Okay. No, you just inform so that the records go well here.

Mr C N MALEMATJA: Apology, Comrade Chair.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Thank you, hon Madimetja. Proceed.

Mr C N MALEMATJA: Migration of South Africans mainly from rural to urban areas and foreign emigrants to urban areas has increased the demands for housing in urban areas, which also impact the cost of accommodation and housing, which bring increase in which growing beyond our intervention in order to supply houses. How is the department coordinating social partners in housing market to increase housing supplier to meet human settlements demands in our urban and rural areas? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: Thank you very much, hon Mr Malematja. Let me start by acknowledging that when we look at the reports that have been released, for example, by a new UN report, it is said that 70% of the population will be living in urban areas by 2050. And therefore, the response in terms of the new urban agenda that the department has been taken, its one that is necessary and as part of global action plan for us to be able to deal and respond urbanisation.

Hon members, as part of what hon Malematja is raising in terms of social partnership, one of the areas that we have been able to look at as the department is public private partnerships to expand in terms of our social housing programme because we believe that as people move to urban areas this is where you

find majority of them living in informal settlements in the country and when we do profiling of majority of the people who are in informal settlements within the housing subsidy ... [Inaudible.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon Minister ...

*Sepedi:*

... ga o kwagale ...

*English*:

... maybe the best ...

*Sepedi:*

... ke gore o tswalele vidio, sesi.

*English:*

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: Okay, thanks.

*Sepedi:*

Ke a leboga, Modulasetulo wa Ngwako.

*English:*

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: I was saying that if we look at that migration and how we respond and profiling it, of the people that we find in informal settlements, we are able to deduce that almost 60% of them are people who are not falling within the category of those who are looking for Breaking New Ground, BNG, of free housing subsidy. Its people who will fall within the category of social housing. And that’s why the importance of the public private partnership expansion so that we can across the country all urban areas be able to expand this so that we can provide rental accommodation for those who are looking for one but also affordable housing for those who qualify. Those are majority of people who are low income earners and who will fall in the category of our help me but by a house market and the policy that we have and the work that we have been able to do showcase that when we collaborate private sector we will be able to do this. This is in partnership we have doe, partnership with the Development Bank of Southern Africa, DBSA, through our National Housing Finance Corporation, NHFC and now we are working together with ... [Inaudible.] ... housing scheme to be able to provide this service to government employees and we will continue to expand with other private sectors. Thank you, House Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Thank you.

*Sepedi:*

Bokaone e tswalelwe ka gore e na le go duma. Ga ke tsebe gore bothata e ka ba e le netweke naa.

*English*:

But we can hear you.

Dr N V KHUMALO: Thank you, Hon House Chair, and thanks to the Minister for those ... [Inaudible.] ... that they work. The consequences of a continuous non-attainment of critical plan related to issuing of title deeds are many.

*Sepedi:*

MODULASETULO WA NGWAKO (Moh M G Boroto): Malebo! Malebo, tswalela. Tshwarelo, Mma Khumalo.

*English:*

Dr N V KHUMALO: Thanks House Chair. I will start afresh and thank you Chair and thank you Minister for the plans highlighted. The consequences of the continuous nonattainment of critical plans related to issuing of title deeds are many, including in some cases loss of life and the prevention of South African citizen’s dignity as well as their rights being trampled on. Can the Minister, please provide the details

around consequences against those responsible and any compensation for citizens who have been suffered as a result of poor performance of the department under your leadership. Thank you, Chair.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: House Chairperson thanks.

*Sepedi:*

Ke leboga Ngaka Khumalo ...

*English*:

... for the question. I think the issue here around ... let me start with the issue of consequences. You would understand that the work that is being done in human settlements is a concurring function. So, you have responsibilities for municipalities, which in terms of the Constitution are independent and have their own constitutional obligation. You have provincial government, which have been legal standing entities themselves.

So, as much as Minister is coordinating and responsible does not have powers, for example, to exercise consequence management to a metro, which is responsible, for example, on other areas. But how we do it that’s why we utilise them

intergovernmental relations within our legal framework to assist and fast-track in terms of implementation. And that’s why I reflect that what we have seen as a crisis in terms of these three spheres of government in issuing of title deeds is lack of coordination but also fast-tracking of areas where there are bottlenecks. For example, if this is a township like where I come from in Soweto and is an old township that is not declared, you cannot issue a title deeds until the municipality has been able to actually declared that settlement as an establishment and therefore declaring it so that we can be able to issue title deeds. So, it’s a multifaceted approach but also ... that is dispute within families, where, for example, there is dispute in terms of who is the rightful owner of that house so that they can be given the title deed. So, you can’t exercise what we call consequence management because it’s within the beneficiaries themselves. So, the inefficiencies are not own from the government point of view or implementation point of view from those who are responsible but also from the beneficiary point of view where you find some people are not supposed to be in those houses. Thank you.

Ms N TAFENI: Hon Minister, the national housing backlog sits at an estimated 2,6 million houses. That’s 12 million people

in desperate need of descent accommodation. In the Western Cape, there are over 600 000 people on the housing waiting list while the corresponding figure for Cape Town is more than

365 000 people. Has the government given up on eliminating homelessness in the country? If it hasn’t why had the backlog being allowed to balloon the way it has? Thank you, House Chairperson.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: Thanks, hon Tafeni. I think the first issue that we need to understand especially as we sit in 2022 is that the context of why the number of people who would have now fallen in the category of looking for houses or even subsidies from government would have been as well one of the areas consequences of COVID-19. If we look majority of the people you based on Statistics SA that analyses the ...

*Sepedi:*

MODULASETULO WA NGWAKO (Moh M G Boroto): E a sokotia, efela

...

*English:*

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: Sorry, house Chair. Can you hear me.

*Sepedi:*

MODULASETULO WA NGWAKO (Moh M G Boroto): Re a go kwa, efela e na le go kgaoga. Ga ke tsebe gore bothata ke eng.

TONA YA BODULO BJA BATHO: E ka ba e le netweke. Ke kgopela tshwarelo. Ga ke na nnete ya gore go diragala eng ...

*English:*

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): But you don’t cut for a long time. I think we can connect. Please, proceed.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: So, the issue here is that, for example, if we look at the COVID-19 impact based on the Statistics SA report but also United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, report that gave analyses of the impact of COVID-19 in the country, you would find that majority of the people who previously would have had houses now fall in the categories where they do not and therefore need a house.

That’s why you would have a backlog increasing instead of decreasing. So, this is link to more economic opportunities but also when you link it to job creation and Unemployment Registry. Part of why we want to correct it and digitise it, you will find that there are discrepancies in terms of duplication but also the unreliability of the data. And we

have taken a decision to digitise our data so that we are able to cleaning up and it can be transparent but also it can be reliable. So, that’s the work that we are doing, hon member, and across the country. So, we believe once we do that digitisation we will have a reliable data housing needs across the country.

Mr B N HERRON: Minister, we have seen during the recent review of the annual report that our housing programme is failing to address the need for adequate housing. In the last financial year, we saw that only about half of the BNG housing targets were met and insignificant number reflect opportunities were granted or approved. The delivery of social housing has made no mean for access or impact on access to affordable rental housing. And even the informal settlements that were identified for urgent upgrade during COVID were not upgraded or relocated.

So, we must surely admit, Minister, that the housing programme is not functioning. We suggest that part of the reason maybe the income household thresholds are too blunt and don’t respond to local housing market. Isn’t the time, Minister, for an overhaul of the housing programme and the Household Income Means Test. Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HUMAN STTLEMENTS: Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you to, hon Herron. I don’t think there is the need for overhaul of the policy but enhancement of the policy. Let me take, for example, one of the areas that he is reflecting. We did a review of the flisp subsidy. This is what we now call the help me buy a house. We realised that part of the problem was that how we had initial did especial in rural areas or areas where people cannot have ownership there was a challenge. Therefore, that’s why we reviewed it and started to implement, for example, even those who have permission to occupy. This is part of what we have been able to do to reflect in terms of the flips market.

Let’s go to the issue around the affordable financial for 2021-22 upgraded around 1 204 informal settlements, which are currently in various stages, 307 of them are currently in their final stages where they have been declared a settlement

we are proving services and we are about to build. We continue to build, hon member, will note in the report that we have already started to build and there are quite a number of houses that we are building.

Provision of bulk infrastructure has been one of the successes in terms of service sites across the country as well. And

that’s why we want to expand this. So, I do think that, hon Herron, as you indicate that there are gaps to say that nothing has worked is disservice. We need to identify where there are gaps. That’s why we say one of the performance areas that is weak is in the title deeds and we have brought in an intervention and we are working together with Operation Vulindlela to be able to expand this. But look at the areas we have gone to the Deeds Registry for the title deeds to be issued.

So, there are quite a number of areas where there is improvement. Coordination between the three spheres of government have been improved. Alignment of planning based on the business plan has been improved through the Minister and members of the Executive Council, MINMEC. You no longer have a situation whereby the left does not know what the right is doing. But again finally, you are able to see in terms of planning, a coordinated efforts and also a coordinated accountability method. You will see on the financial performance there is also improvement where we are starting to see less of expenditure within the portfolio. Thank you, House Chair.

Question 680:

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND

INNOVATION: Thank you hon House Chair. With your permission, I think if we break a bit I will turn off my video at that point but I will try and see how we are doing.

The Sector Education and Training Authority are juristic persons with accounting authorities responsible for the governments and oversight of the entities. Setas are therefore empowered by the legislative and policy framework to implement consequence management and corrective actions where there is non-compliance with relevant legislative and policy framework.

In March this year, the Minister met with all the Setas and directed them their accounting authority’s meetings must prioritise both performance of the entities and the implementation of the audit action plan.

The department in its priority list has written and met with all the Setas which received qualified audit opinions for the financial year under review such as the Construction Sector Education and Training Authority, Insurance Services Sector Education and Training Authority, INSETA, Services Sector Education and Training Authority, SSETA and Wholesale and Retail Sector and Education and Training Authority, W&RSETA as part of the monitoring the implementation of audit actions

plan for accountability. During this meeting the department has directed that the audit action plans must be incorporated to the executive and senior management performance.

Furthermore, the second phase on audit interventions and findings to all other 11 Setas which received unqualified audit opinions findings including the Legal Government Sector Education and Training Authority, LGSETA and the department’s senior management executive committee has also prioritized the audit findings matter including all our entities in the regular meetings.

So processes are still ongoing to determine if there was any money lost or not as provided for in terms of irregular expenditure framework or any steps to retrieve lost monies will be informed by the outcome of the set process. Thank you.

*Sepedi:*

MODULASETULO WA NGWAKO (Moh M G Boroto): Re a leboga. O kwagala gabotse.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND INNOVATION: Okay.

Ms Z MAJOZI: Thank you hon Chairperson. Hon Deputy Minister, this is not your only entity with loss of funds, Seta as you are saying that it is R1,6 billion that still has to be found whether it is irregular, you have also got the National Skills Fund, NSF, where there is R5 billion that is lost and why have you evoked rule 189 of the National Assembly instead of promoting transparency with regard to government spending?

That is not to give gate confidence to the public about government’s spending on their funds. This goes against the commitment made by the President to root out corruption. What I would like to know is why have you evoked rule 189 and where is this money that is lost going from, the NSF and SETA? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND

INNOVATION: Thank you House Chairperson. This is obviously a new question but we are going to respond to it. There were reasons which were given to the Portfolio Committee on Public Accounts, Scopa, on why the Minister was requesting rule 189 be invoked which was essentially to try and protect the investigations process involved as it relates to the findings by the Auditor-General in terms of the National Skills Fund.

We have since agreed with Scopa as well as the Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Innovation that the report be made public and the report has been made public.

There are also further steps that have been taken to ensure that there is consequence management. The officials have already been suspended in this regard.

Secondly, both the Hawks and the SA Police Service have been informed of the outcomes of the forensic audit which was initiated by the Minister through the department.

Thirdly, that report has also been submitted to the Special Investigative Unit, SIU, and that our department is in the process of engaging the SIU in terms of ensuring that we get to the bottom of the issues and problems at the National Skills Fund.

I must emphasize and reiterate that contrary to what has been paddled in the media is no intention from either the Ministry or the department to sweep the findings of the forensic investigations under the carpet or side-line the SIU investigations in terms of the NSF.

There are measures that have been put in place to ensure that the NSF is back on a corrective measure and I’m quite excited with the report that we have just received from the Auditor- General in this regard.

Ms J S MANANISO: Thank you House Chair. Hon Deputy Minister, the department has undertaken reviews on some of its entities which is a critical intervention to reposition the entities to deliver their mandate efficiently and effectively through business models which are fit for purpose. My question to you is, what additional mechanisms will the department implement to ensure audit outcomes are implemented comprehensively across the Setas and is there a need to review the Setas’ business models to ensure they are more impactful in our skills revolution. I thank you.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND

INNOVATION: Thank you hon Mananiso and House Chair. As I said the Minister had an engagement together with myself and the department with all the Setas earlier in the year and follow up discussions took place with the relevant Setas who had adverse findings from the Auditor-General.

We are monitoring the process in terms of the corrective measures that needs to be put in place so that we do not experience similar financial mismanagement or misappropriation and that we get the Setas on a correct footing.

Secondly, there are extensive consultations in terms of the review of the National Skills Fund’s work and I was trying to indicate with a response to the first follow-up question that the last year based on the interventions of both the Ministry and the department, we are starting to witness a turnaround as it relates to the National Skills Fund financial management and the findings are quite improving.

Our intention is to see effective, impactful skills authorities which includes the National Skills Fund and all our Sector Education and Training Authority and we believe that with all the reviews that we have done and all the ministerial task teams that have been appointed and the recommendations and implementations thereof, we should be able to see a turnaround and these institutions making an impact.

Dr W J BOSHOFF: Hon House Chair and Deputy Minister, I would like to know if the department or the Minister has ever considered rationalizing the bureaucracy created by Setas to

maybe be included in the QCTO, Quality Council for Trade and Occupations, or in one separate institution which deals with everything that all the Setas currently do?

We had an engagement at the portfolio committee with three of the Setas this morning and it appears like new institutions just getting out of the woods while they are running for more than 20 years. It seems that we have a superfluous bureaucracy build around Setas which could be rationalized, has it ever been considered? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND

INNOVATION: No, we have not considered any further rationalization of the Setas. We believe that the fact there are one, two or three Setas that there are empathies of experience challenges does not necessarily mean that we have to revamp the entire system.

Of course in the engagement between the Setas, the Ministry and the department it was quite clear that there has to be a turnaround and Setas have to make an impact in terms of the goals that they set as it relates to skills development and the impact that they should have.

We will continuously monitor the performance of the Setas in terms of finances and their mandate and all of that. If there is a need for any further review we will definitely do that but as is the case in point now, we are focused on turning around those Setas that have specific challenges. Thank you.

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Thank you Chairperson. My problem is why do we need to wait for the office of the Auditor-General to identify acts of corruption, mismanagement and maladministration?

What about the internal measures that we ought to have in place to prevent these kinds of incidents, particularly here we are talking about R1,6 million. What additional measures are you putting in place to prevent this in the future? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND

INNOVATION: Thank you hon member and House Chair. As I have already indicated, we have measures put in place to try and prevent these type of actions from recurring.

Also, over and above that, as I said in my initial response that we are monitoring the old three Setas that I referred to

in this question that we really want to see consequence management.

I think that we obviously have to understand that the Auditor- General’s role is stop gear and that we are continuously monitoring all of these institutions but beyond everything else, what we want to see is service delivery and yes service delivery includes preventing any form of wastage.

We hope that with all the controls that we have out into place, we will not see this situation recurring.

Question 683:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Hon Chairperson,

our Whip, Her Excellency, Comrade Grace, firstly, I want to indicate that there are new matters. And we shall investigate all these new matters, so that, on the basis of these investigation, proper action is being taken, on the basis that the action that would be taken is either disciplinary action or criminal referrals or civil recoveries. We will then be in a position to approach National Treasury for condonation, so that we can be in a position to reduce the irregular expenditure of the department.

We need to indicate that, on the basis of these new cases, we will increase the capacity of internal audits, by bringing in more panels of forensic investigators to look at the issues. We are proactively engaging with the Office of the Accountant- General. In the past, in the last two to three years now, we had 147 cases that had been investigated, which resulted in disciplinary action taken against officials. The number of fraud and awareness sessions that have been conducted by the department is 78, and more than 1 900 officials have been trained. There are cases that have been referred to law enforcement agencies. Ten of these cases are under investigation and the other 15 cases have been closed.

As you are quite aware, there are investigation done by the Special Investigating Unit in a number of issues in the department and those are being attended to. There is progress in terms of the recovery of funds. Out of the 15 cases, we are looking at R8,8 billion that have been investigated and it has been submitted to National Treasury for condonation. Fifty-two cases to the value of about R2 billion are with the internal audit for investigation. That panel that I spoke about is looking at those issues and 301 cases to the value of about R5,7 billion have been assessed for determination and for referral.

For some of these investigations, the department has been able to receive money back. If you look at that SAPS contract that we had, due to those particular issues, ... However, the department has stabilised. There is management at the top of the organisation, so that we can ensure that we provide leadership. To track corruption in the department, action is being taken against maleficence without any fear, favour or contradiction. Thank you very much.

*Setswana*:

Moh K G TSEKE: Ke a leboga, Modulasetilo. Ke a leboga Motlatsatona, rre Mahlobo.

*English*:

Hon Deputy Minister, the lifestyle audits and strong internal controls exercised by an official who is not pliable to corrupt practices can strengthen governments. We welcome the going process, which seeks to strengthen good governance in the Department of Water and Sanitation. What intervention is the department implementing to ensure it strengthens its internal controls on procurement processes, to negate the abuse of supply chain management, officials and senior officials and service providers who are duly influenced officials, and wouldn’t a lifestyle audit in the department

and its entities assist with identifying officials involved in maleficence.

*Setswana:*

Ke a leboga, Modulasetilo.

*English*:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Hon Chair, we

have strengthened our compliance and governance structures, in the main, our bid specification, bid evaluation and adjudication committees who have introduced the rotation for those particular committees. At the very same time, with any procurement, we do a validation through the use of internal audits, because it is one of the instruments that are very strong.

We are also promoting issues of awareness, so that we can raise the level of consciousness around morality and ethics, staff training and development. Our internal controls are being sharpened, so that we can deal with those issues.

I know that government has rolled out lifestyle audits and we are one of those departments who engaged with the Department of public service and administration, DPSA, to look at

lifestyle audits, especially for those who are working in procurement and in infrastructure.

Lastly, action is being taken against those who are not declaring on time, and around consequence management Thank you.

Mr N G MYBURGH: House Chair, hon Deputy Minister, whilst we would like to acknowledge that the needle seems to be moving ever so slightly in the department and there are glimmers of hope that there might be a new approach, some serious concerns remain however, given the high number of cases of financial misconduct, which remains under investigation. Could the Deputy Minister give us an indication and I know you threw around some numbers, but could you give us a ballpark figure in total how many ... What is the financial or the monetary value of the financial misconduct being investigated in total? Apart from prosecuting individuals – and hopefully, some will go to jail and serve time – what practical steps is his department taking to recover the much-needed funds, which have been lost for much-needed reconstruction, infrastructure and maintenance and would he not agree that the theft and the fraud committed under the watch of the ANC has done

irreparable harm to the people and to the economy of this country? Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms M G Boroto): Hon Deputy Minister, before you respond, hon members, please let us adhere to our Rules. Rule 1427 clearly states how follow-up questions are asked. You must ask one question. Even though we always say it is the prerogative of the Minister, let us adhere to our own Rules.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Hon Chair, we are

reconfirming that there were too many questions, as you say. Let us reconfirm one. An amount of 147 cases have been investigated and action has been taken against officials.

Currently, there are 25 cases that have been referred to the law enforcement agencies and currently, 10 are being investigated and 15 have been closed.

Out of those 15, there is an R8,81 billion that has been investigated and we are going to National Treasury for issues of condonation. The internal audit is still investigating R2,035 billion and our panel of forensic investigators are looking at ... [Inaudible.] And a total of R5,709 billion is

being assessed for the determination test and would be referred to internal audit for investigation.

If you do those calculation, hon member, you will find that it includes both the main account and the water trading account. However, as you agree, His Excellency, President Ramaphosa and our Ministry are actually dealing with issues of fighting corruption and maleficence. Thank you.

Ms M R MOHLALA: Hon Chairperson, Deputy Minister, in April this year, the Ministry issued an incoherent media statement, following revelations by the media of the fact that the Minister had ignored critical reports of corruption against senior and junior officials in the department. These reports were submitted by the designatory advisory committee. To date, has the Minister taken any action against any officials, based on the reports of the designatory advisory committee? If not, why has he continued to ignore these reports? Furthermore, are any of those cases taken as criminal or civil cases to court? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Hon Mohlala is

quite aware that we had an opportunity to have a presentation in their own committee about the allegations that were being

made by Deli Margaret, which we refuted, but at the very same time, quietly demonstrated the action he took. That committee meeting was so expanded, that more than 81 people attended on that particular day and the figures that are here are a quiet demonstration of the action that is being taken.

We reconfirm, there are internal disciplinary action that has been taken and people have been fired and others have been warned. Others have been referred for criminal action, as I have given the numbers, including civil. And we have started recuperating funds from those agencies or organisations that have defrauded the state.

That example of SAPS, where we have received more than 200 million is a testimony that we are trying to recover the money back to the fiscus, so that it can be redirected to provide basic services like water. Thank you.

Mr S M JAFTA: Hon Chairperson, hon Deputy Minister, how any cases were referred for investigation by the Former Minister of Water and Sanitation, and what is the best pace that someone has actually been charged with misconduct and for defrauding the supply chain management processes? I thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION: Hon Chair, I

don’t have a figure about former Ministers. What I have is an organisation called the Department of Water and Sanitation from the period 2019-2020 to 2022-23 financial years. An amount of 147 cases have been investigated and I have indicated that 25 cases have been referred in the same period to the law enforcement agencies, of which 10 are currently under investigation. The law enforcement agencies have decided to actually close the other 15 cases.

I have made reference to the figures around the money that is involved, but also the ability of the state to recover those resources that were unduly given to those organisations, as I have made the example of the IT company. However, there are many others that involve our own state entities like the Water Boards, which are not part of the main question today. Thank you.

Question 745:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: House Chair, firstly to apologise for the Minister who is held up in a Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Summit in Pretoria. To hon Ismail, the response is that the department currently received the information from the whistle-blowers in the office of the

Director-General through the office of the Public Service Commission that ensures confidentiality by requesting internal units to confirm allegations without indicating the source of information. These are labour relations and internal audit.

Other matters are submitted to the Hawks, the Special Investigating Unit or SA Police Service if involving criminal financial misconduct. However, the department is in the process of strengthening the processes to report allegations of fraud, corruption and protection of whistle-blowers by developing anti-corruption and fraud strategy, whistleblowing policies, standard operating procedures; and to communicate further to the hotline from the office of the Public Service Commission for reporting fraud and corruption cases to the department.

Secondly, the department in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has approved the concept by this United Nations body, to develop and establish a whistleblowing protection and risk assessment and mitigations in the procurements system within the health sector. Which is due to be launched soon. Details will be provided upon finalisation of the concepts by the Department of Health. I thank you, Chair.

Ms H ISMAIL: Deputy Minister, given the fact that even family members of high profile people are allegedly involved in possible tender corruption at Tembisa hospital, one of the many transgressions flagged by Babita Deokaran, before her brutal murder, what constructive steps are taken to address the serious irregularities? And please advise whether these companies will be sanctioned? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: In 2018, President Ramaphosa listened to the cries of South Africans who are health activists and stakeholders with regards to the dysfunctionality of some processes within health. And then the health summit was convened over two days. Amongst other things that actually came out of that two-day health summit, there was therefore a document called Presidential Compact. Part of it included an establishment of an anti-corruption forum within the health sector which has various bodies that are in there. So those are processes where all South Africans could even get into within those agencies probably time given would list them all.

So, there is a specific anti-corruption forum within the health which has since been established. All South Africans should probably assist us by going there, and there is a

website even for that. I mean if you call 0800-037-774 as an anonymous caller, that should actually lead into the processes of really establishing this. I thank you, Chair.

Dr K L JACOBS: Hon Deputy Minister, shouldn’t whistle-blowing be extinguished from a duty? And this is not a question, it is actually just a paraphrasing, which is a duty of non-voluntary duty to inform superiors or others on wrong doing? So the question is, does the Ministry of Health plan to enforce non- voluntary duty as part of its whistle-blowing strategy for the department? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Chair, maybe to even expand on the previous question by hon Ismail, the various agencies that have been brought together is; the Special Investigating Unit being the lead, Council for Medical Schemes, Health Professions Council, National Prosecuting Authority, Financial Intelligence Centre, Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, Corruption Watch, Section 27, Board of Healthcare Funders, Health Funders Association, national department and provincial departments. And also, when these forums sit, it also invites the National Treasury, the Compensation Fund, and the State Security Agencies, because it

is a duty of all of us. We have no choice. We have an obligation wherever we are.

So this will allow all South Africans through any of these agencies or institutions to report crime and make sure that anything that has to do with criminal activities, fraud and corruption within the health sector is reported to any of these bodies. It will assist us to really be able to nip it in the bud. So including what hon Ismail was saying, yes, we have no choice, it’s an obligation. We are mandated. We have created a body to really investigate and make sure we bring this to the court. Thank you, Chair.

Dr S S THEMBEKWAYO: Deputy Minister, Babita Deokaran was assassinated after she had flagged down dodgy payments amounting to R850 million in Tembisa hospital. The problem is that the audit that was initiated as a result of her whistle- blowing, was stopped on the day she was murdered. Have you done anything to get to the bottom of rot of Tembisa hospital? So as to ensure that Babitha did not die in vain? What measures have you put in place to ensure that many who wants to speak out do not suffer the same fate as Babitha? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Thank you, Dr Thembekwayo. Chair, that matter was a very sad story of a very responsible South African citizen who stood up and wanted to report crime and she did. And she was under the protection for that.

Actually, it was blowing the whistle that her fate went that way. It is going to be discouraging for me and you to continue to do that part of being whistle-blowers if we cannot protect and make sure that those that are whistle-blowing are protected to the core. So it is a challenge that we really ... [Inaudible.] ... I am very much aware how much the Minister is engaged with this.

Of course, happening at the Tembisa hospital in Gauteng is a matter that is a priority for the Minister. I will not have details now because that is something that we probably have to go confidentially and get that information. Of course, sensitively so, with the family affected to deal with it in that way. So I may not have details here but all I can say is that the matter of Tembisa hospital and the fraud that was actually investigated by the staff member who passed on is getting top priority attendance by the Minister of Health.

Thank you very much.

Mr N SINGH: Hon Deputy Minister, I always say when I speak at a funeral of anybody that passes on due to tragic circumstances, that when a person closes their eyes, others who are around should learn from what happened. And I think we have learnt a lot from a tragic incident of Babitha you mentioned. Hon Deputy Minister, you say that in 2018 there was a Presidential Summit and that your department is now looking at developing standards operating procedure and anti- corruption and whistle-blowing. Don’t you think it has taken far too long for that to happen in four years? Is there any time frame for when there will be a policy so that whistle- blowers feel assured that their identities will not be revealed, their lives will be protected, if they have to whistle-blow? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Singh, we are just but part of the entities that are working on the forum. And as health, we have very limited knowledge on issues of security and safety. We rely on some of the bodies that I have referred to with competency to lead and say how do we actually develop this. We would have wished to have developed this as of yesterday, but with our limitation in terms of understanding where to get everybody ... because some of the entities that I have listed here have other duties that are pressing on. So we

have to get everybody to be in the house or agree to lead us. So we are being led to work on a complete forum.

But where we are, I think that we should not despair. The only thing that I always say is that whenever you put any standard operating procedure in place and it works for you, you must actually know that criminals will always get better and also go around what you have already created and do other things.

Otherwise, our competency probably becomes a short lived one unless it is watertight. So we are avoiding doing that. We want to be led into creating those standard operating procedures by the competent people who have the skills to guide us because we just report a mess within the department. But we need other very competent people around us in the country who have much better competency to really guide and support us going forward. Thank you very much.

Question 673:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Chairperson, you will probably cut me down when I am reading this one, it is quite a lengthy one by hon Meshoe. The Department of Health administers and regulates the hazardous substances through the Hazardous Substances Act of 1973 as amended. Under this Act, there are regulations titled Regulations Relating to the Aerial

Application of Agricultural Remedies, Government Gazette Number 16880, 20 December 1995, which deals with the aerial application of agricultural remedies.

In addition, the department has developed a guideline in 2022. Titled, Guidelines for the Investigation, Environmental Control of Human Chemical Exposure and Poisoning Cases. A guide for environmental health practitioners. The Department of Health regulates chemical safety, which is implemented by metropolitan and district municipalities in their areas of jurisdiction, supported by both national and provincial health departments. This function falls under the municipal health services as defined in the National Health Act of 2003 as amended, and it is carried out by environmental health practitioners to protect those living in in targeted areas.

The regulations of 20 December 1995 requires that, the inspector who is in this case an environmental health practitioner, be furnished with the following information:

1. The name and business address of the aerial application firm;
2. The date of the aerial application;
3. The trade name or, if indistinct or unknown, the active ingredient of the agricultural remedy used, the quantity used and the application rate;
4. The name and address of the supplier of such agricultural remedy;
5. The names and addresses of the employees involved in the aerial application; and
6. The protective clothing used during the aerial application

Furthermore, during the course of duty, the environmental health practitioners are expected to create awareness and educate the public and community at large on pesticides and or chemical safety, to those living in targeted areas to reduce the potential risk of exposure to the chemicals involved, under whose jurisdiction such activity shall be carried out.

It should however be noted that there are other regulatory and enforcement authorities, that play a role in this area such as the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development. Thank you very much Chairperson.

Rev K R J MESHOE: Thank you, House Chairperson and thank you Deputy Minister for your reply. It appears that not enough is being done to promote the constitutional rights to clean air,

of citizens living in residential areas or working on or near industrial farms. Thousands of South Africans living close to industrial areas have reported respiratory and immune disorders, that have been proved by many studies to be the result of exposure to pesticides and other toxic chemicals used.

Countries such as Bulgaria and Britain expect commercial farmers as an example, to issue warnings to nearby residents before spraying their crops. Slovenia has banned

...[Inaudible] ... for buffer zones around farms. Now we want to see our government do the same.

What is government’s policy after what I have heard the Deputy Minister saying, with respect to protective equipment for farm workers, that is being implemented, because we see some farm workers spraying pesticides without protective equipment? What are the potential health risks of these chemicals that are sprayed into the air to humans from direct contact and also via ingestion of water and food contaminated by these chemicals? I thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Meshoe, as on my last part of the main question asked I was just saying, we should note

that there are other regulatory and enforcement authorities that play a role, in particular Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development. Most health facilities pick up patients coming into clinics and hospitals with the corner organophosphate poisoning because of that mishap, where they were doing aerial spraying and there was no other protection and all that.

Therefore, it is sometimes one or the other environmental health practitioners that are under the jurisdiction of a particular municipality not having been aware or not, were there to actually check, or is just the short-chaining of the protocol done by some farmers, where they probably would prefer to do aerial spraying without actually informing the citizens locally, and getting them to be protected or their employees.

So, is not just one body. It is not a policy that is coming from Department of Health. We are just coming there to assist and be part of actually reducing the impact that aerial spraying might have on citizens. But there are other agencies, particularly Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development that must lead in terms of awareness of the

farmers, farm workers and the citizens who stay next to those farmlands. Thank you very much.

Ms A GELA: The level of civic education and awareness can have limitations, which can result in citizens being negatively impacted by aerial spraying of chemicals particular in agricultural area. Dinangwe, what measures can citizens take in instances where there is no compliance with regulations?

What support does the department provide to affected citizens in instances of harmful chemical exposure? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Gela this is a difficult one, depending on what type of a citizen you are talking about. If that citizen happens to be a farm worker, it is very unlikely that if they have not been given protective clothing, they will complain about it. It has to take a very strong united group of citizens who are farm workers to raise complaints if they are actually expected to do aerial spraying without protective clothing.

Secondly, we also rely on a very strong civil movement on the areas that are bordering farmlands, to be able to raise this as a strong voice for their protection because of the pollution that can go to water, the land and including them if

they receive it. So, we might strongly advocate for citizens’ education. But again, whoever is responsible must be able to and readily support those problems. Some of them are out of human error but others are out of negligence, where people are not given what is supposed to be given to them to protect themselves against any hazardous ...[Inaudible.] I mean, really aerial spraying is good for insects, and if you are killing insects, please don’t kill people because that poison is also dangerous to human lives. Thank you Chair.

Ms M O CLARKE: Hon Deputy Minister, how many cases of hazardous substances has the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, NICD and the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority, Sahpra been notified of in the past five years? What processes have been followed in terms of these cases? Is there a list available in terms of these chemicals, pesticides and hazardous substances available and from the NICD? What processes will the department put in place in terms of regulating these substances? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Clarke, you will realise that, if you say how many cases of pesticide poisoning have been reported by NICD to Sahpra over the past five years, is probably somebody that needs to go and work and get back to

you. It is not possible to really - but I will know that and indicate. Because what you are actually saying will indicate how much of this problem do we have. Two or three may still be an issue to be followed up, but hundreds and thousands of those may just mean that we are really being negligent, or this matter has not been attended to. I may not be able to provide figures now, but I will follow up and send the responses to you if I do find it. Thank you very much.

Ms A M SIWISA: Deputy Minister, in in the in the case of a couple that passed on due to chemical spraying in a neighbouring flat where they were staying, and the couple passed on. Are there any programmes that have been put in place to educate citizens about dangers of spirit chemicals in residential areas? If there are any programmes, how many has the department embarked on? If there are none, what are the reasons that such programmes have never been initiated by the department? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: House Chair, as I indicated, we are just part of the stakeholders. In each and every municipality, district and metros, there are people employed called environmental health practitioners. They need to go out into the community to do awareness, health, education, and all

that process. They also need to monitor very closely where they are going to be aerial spraying to re-educate our people and monitor and champion the spraying has not affected the residential areas.

So, I may not have an idea now, how many in each municipality has been actually affected. But also in the case that you are referring to, I could not pick up where exactly it happened in that residential area. It is a matter that needs to be followed. But in principle, there are environmental health care practitioners in all municipalities in the country, especially those that are closer to places that have got farmlands, who will then have to monitor and actually evaluate effectiveness and the follow up of standard procedures when they do the aerial spraying. That matter is a matter that might be followed up and ...[Inaudible] ... it up again in municipalities where this is supposed to happen. Thank you very much.

Question 684:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: House Chair, is the Deputy Minister, my network is a bit terrible. The question is about the National School Nutrition Programme, the answer is in the main that the National School Nutrition Programme is

delivered by respective provinces in all the nine provinces, and they are also the fund recipients in terms of the Division of Revenue Act. The Department of Basic Education that is the holder of the fund transfers the funds to the respective ... [Interjections.] ... House Chair, it looks like there’s another meeting.

Thank you, House Chair. The fund holder like I said is the Department of Basic Education that transfers the funds to the respective provincial education departments on quarterly basis, and this is done on the basis of approved business plans by the provinces. No-fee schools and some deserving fee- paying schools receive funding from their respective provincial education departments to feed deserving learners on a daily basis. It has become a norm that schools procure the required food staff from small, medium and micro enterprises, SMMEs. Therefore, the SMMEs in some other instances do work with a smallholder farmers. However, it depends because they just give the SMMEs to be the one that supplies the food, but in other instances the schools procure direct from the SMMEs as well as the smallholding farmers.

Therefore, the Department of Education in monitoring the spending of the fund, there are quarterly meetings that are

held with the provincial departments because they have a responsibility to submit quarterly reports on a roll-out of School Nutrition Programme to the department. Therefore, in this quarterly meetings that’s where the reports are scrutinised and provinces are account to the Department of Basic Education. Thank you, House Chair.

Ms B P BINQO-GIGABA: Thank you very much, House Chairperson. Deputy Minister, government expenditure is important in stimulating the economy. Beyond compliance with the broad- based black economic empowerment, B-BBEE, regulations, what collaboration and intergovernmental programmes does the department have with departments in the economic sector to ensure its spending on goods and services and infrastructure development projects contributes to the transforming economy value chain in areas of its spending? Thank you very much, House Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Thank you, House

Chair. The Department of Basic Education is working together with the Department of Small Business Development. We hold regular meetings with the department to ensure that all the services that we provide as the department we use the small businesses. Therefore, even provinces on infrastructure like

the Small Enterprise Finance Agency, Sefa, and Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative, Asidi, projects, work with small businesses. That’s why we even push that they get paid within 30 days because failing which we are collapsing the small businesses to grow into bigger businesses. Thank you, House Chair.

Ms D VAN DER WALT: House Chair, I’ll take that. When the School Nutrition Programme is properly implemented, it improves regular school attendance, concentration, punctuality and the general well-being of more than nine million of our learners. According to the Auditor-General, AG, report this conditional grant is being ... [Inaudible.] ... in most of all provinces. During the coronavirus disease 2019, Covid-19, pandemic the Western Cape Education Department had to take this department to court in order to continue to provide learners with their daily meal. Furthermore, the Western Cape Education Department has helped to set up 571 food gardens at schools to provide nutritious meals to learners because of the current rise in the cost of living due to the weak economy.

Similar to the Western Cape education, Deputy Minister, what steps will your department put in place to ensure that all provinces decentralise the procurement and ensure that their

children’s rights to basic education and basic nutrition are met under the current circumstance of rising food costs?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Thank you so much, House Chair. There is nothing new that is done by the Department of Education in one of our provinces called Western Cape. What they are doing is exactly what other provinces are doing. The schools we visited have gardens. Most of the schools even in townships and rural areas would just support the School Nutrition Programme budget. Therefore, this programme, House Chair, is pro-poor, it’s meant for access to education, attendance and punctuality because some of the learners depend solely on this meal that they eat at school, and when they come home they have nothing to eat. Therefore, we really appreciate what Western Cape is doing which is exactly what other provinces are doing. Thank you, House Chair.

Dr S S THEMBEKWAYO: It will be taken by Dr Thembekwayo. Thank you very much. Deputy Minister, we just would like to ask on specifically the schools that used to have their own gardens. Yes, from the answer that you gave you said something about it. However, what we want to know from you is that these own school gardens have been decommissioned and what is the

purpose of this dramatic decommissioning of agriculture from mainly schools attended by African children. Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: Thank you so much, House Chair and thank you for the question by hon Thembekwayo. On this one I would love hon Thembekwayo to give us a specification because we have not learned about where there’s a decommissioning of school gardens. We encourage school gardens and we encourage that even school governing bodies, SGBs, must make sure that there are gardens in schools to supplement their School Nutrition Programme. We will check on that one because we also wish to support the small and emerging farmers. Therefore, however, it should not that one works over at the expense of the other because we are not only feeding learners, but we are also supporting the economy of our country. Thank you, House Chair.

Ms Z MAJOZI: Hon House Chair, I’ll take it from the House. Hon Deputy Minister, taking into consideration the cash flow limitations of small farmers and also resources that they do not have, historically, disadvantaged farmers and co- operatives have producers of this type used in the National School Nutrition Programme over the past year, all received their financial compensation within the 30-day payment

compliance window for the payments to service providers. If not, why not, if so, please provide details.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION: House Chair, what we support and push as the department is that all SMMEs must be paid within 30 days. Therefore, if there’s anyone who has not been paid, they do report to members of executive council, MECs, and or the Minister and we attend to that one and push because there’s no reason why they should not be paid. The money is there, that’s why we send trenches every quarter to provincial departments that they must pay the people. It’s unlike where we would say that we still have got to get the money somewhere, the money is there. When they deliver the service, they get paid. Thank you, House Chair.

Question 731:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): The hon Minister. The hon Minister. I will pass. The first supplementary question will be asked by the hon B Herron. Let us hope the hon Minister will respond to this one.

Mr B N HERRON: House Chair, do you want me to ask the supplementary without the answer?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: [Laughter.] Yes, can I,

please, give the answer first.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Okay, hon Minister.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon

Chairperson, we have seen a significant increase in the number of eligible applicants since the implementation of the amended regulations. Before the amended regulations came to effect the average number of monthly approved applications were in April, we had 8,1 applications and we approved 4,7 applications; in May, we had 10,6 applications and we approved 5,7 applications; in June 11,3 applied and 6,8 were approved and in July ... We have an entire table actually that goes right up to the current month.

What I want to clearly indicate ... and obviously I wish to thank hon Herron for asking the question. However, I do say to him and the members that I am not really happy with the numbers that have been applying and approved. I will tell you why I am not happy. It is because I am looking at the last alterations with the numbers that were quite high right up to

11 or 15 million, and then the last alterations which is now,

which in my view ... it was 12 million applications actually. We approved quite a huge number of those.

However, with the new regulations and the new alteration the numbers went down and I have asked the SA Social Security Agency, SASSA, in particular to really do an analysis of why we are in this even though I can say, just as a start, because of the regulations and all and the changes I knew that was what was going to happen. I have asked SASSA to do an analysis on the decrease month to month, year to year and also be able to present what the variables are. When all is said and done, we shouldn’t be very far from what we were paying originally because if you look at it, the number of the people that have been able to go back to work are small. So, once that report has come through, I think it will enable us to make a proper analysis.

Nevertheless, when all is said and done it is also about the budget that we get from the Treasury. We are pushed to stay within the budget itself but at the same time I am personally saying to SASSA and the department which does an oversight of the SASSA that let us do a proper analysis and get to see where exactly the problem is, why are so many people not being approved and this thing of checking obviously with the bank

statements and all that also has got an effect and impact on it. Hon Chairperson, I just want in short to say that I have already asked for the report so that we can do a better analysis than what we have right now. Thank you.

Mr B N HERRON: Thank you, House Chair and thank you, Minister, for the response. Minister, obviously the declining numbers of approved beneficiaries is worrying because clearly poverty is not declining. However, without the real numbers at hand and if it is estimated to be around 6,8 or 11 million beneficiaries that is a lot of people who are dependent on the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant. We welcome that the Finance Minister announced a temporary extension of the grant.

However, Minister, you must know that the millions of South Africans who are the poorest amongst us who are dependent on the small income can never be placed in a position where the income is completely withdrawn. I think it is common sense, let alone any questions about morality and legal duties that our state has to those who have no access to income. Once we have given some financial support to that large proportion of our population, we can’t simply ever withdraw it. I think we have to recognise, Minister, that social security is a right in terms of section 27 and it is not a gift. It would be good

for us to stop treating those who need the ... [Inaudible.]

...

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): You are frozen, hon Herron.

Mr B N HERRON: ... think that we must make some binary choice between basic income and growing our economy in a way that creates jobs. We obviously have to do both. The reality is that even if we doubled our economic growth projections, we would still be stuck with about 8 million unemployed people for the next 15 years. So, unemployment is not going away in the medium term.

So, we believe, Minister, that it is common sense and a moral and a legal imperative that we implement a basic income grant which will meet the lower bound poverty line of approximately R890 per person per month. Does the Minister have any plans to implement a permanent social security plan in the form or which would include a basic income grant or guarantee which would use the SRD, as the foundation upon which to build it?

Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, hon Herron. As I have indicated in a number of platforms as well as Parliament itself, as the Department of Social Development and the SASSA, we have already indicated that ... firstly, we were happy obviously with the extension of the social grant because that for us was a worry considering all the issues that hon Herron has indicated here. Yes, we think that the SRD, which we started with at R350 is a steppingstone towards the basic income grant. Yes, the basic income grant is now about the how of it and where we will get the money. As to the question of whether we need it or not, that question we have gone past that already. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

*Xitsonga:*

Man N K BILANKULU: Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu. Xivutiso xa mina ndzi ta xi kongomisa eka Muchaviseki, Holobye Zulu. Kambe ndzi nga se va vutisa, ndzi lava ku xeweta MaAfrika-Dzonga.

Ndzi xeweta na n’wina hinkwenu kwale xigazeni.

*English:*

Hon Minister, my supplementary questions go like this: How is that department creating opportunities for innovative applications and financial technology innovations to transform and enhance the grant payment system to ensure small

enterprises benefit through a distributive model which enables recipient to support small businesses, local and township businesses?

*Xitsonga:*

Inkomu. Ndza khensa, Mutshamaxitulu.

*Xitsonga:*

HOLOBYE WA NHLUVUKISO WA VAAKI: Ha khensa ...

*English:*

... hon, Bilankulu. Thank you very much for that question. Yes, quite frankly the issue of trying to ensure that the money of the social grant rotates or is spent and spends time within the township and in rural areas through the usage of your small and medium enterprises is at the center. If we are to talk about economic transformation some people might think economic transformation is about big monies. Even this money that is being spent on social grants it is money and this is a financial muscle of the government that can give us an opportunity to improve economic development in the townships and in rural areas.

We are in conversation also, by the way, with the Minister of Small Business Development as well, Minister Ntshavheni, about what can we do to make sure that beneficiaries are able to access whatever they want to access or procure what they want to procure in this small and medium enterprises both in the townships and in the rural areas. Of course, as the Minister who was the Minister of Small Business Development before, I do appreciate and understand the importance and the opportunity that is being presented by this financial muscle.

That is the money that is being given to our people and the expenditure thereof. All the time, that money is being spent in big shops when it is still possible for us to create systems that are enabling for your small and medium enterprises. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms G OPPERMAN: Thank you, Chair. Minister, food prices are rising and the cost of living are rapidly increasing yet the new means tests for eligibility for the Social Relief of Distress (SRD) R350 grant, the online only process, outdated databases, closed post offices and smartphones that can no longer be used to apply, are excluding millions of beneficiaries who previously qualified. Fewer people than before are getting the grant while poverty are increasing.

What measures has the Department of Social Development put in place for the millions of qualifying vulnerable South Africans who are now excluded from that safety net?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. Yes, I fully agree and one of the reasons why I indicated earlier on in answering the question by hon Herron about us doing an evaluation and making sure that these people are not left out and also the system does not kick people out, is part of the process that I was talking about. It was not just about the issue of why do we have so many people being rejected by the system, it is about the system itself.

Hon member, by the way, the applications are still as high as they were. So, the issue of people applying using the same system that they were using before, it is still very effective. The issue is the means test and the issue is the regulations that we needed. That is why we even had to change the threshold because the threshold was also what was making it very difficult for us. We do not want as a Department of Social Development to have so many people that are left out.

We are raising this issue particularly with SASSA to say that let us go back to the drawing board because we had so many

people that were receiving and those that actually do not qualify, we can still check in as far as the data is concerned. The data is not necessarily that outdated when it comes to the applications, the people who are applying through SASSA, because we need to check the data against Home Affairs and all other departments relevant. We do not also want people who are getting other form of grants now to be collecting the R350.

However, at the same time, I am very conscious of the issues you are raising, plus the issues that were raised by hon Herron earlier on. That is what I have requested that both the department and SASSA look into. Again, as I say, we can't afford to have so many people lost in the system and not receiving the money. Thank you.

Ms L H ARRIES: Thank you very much, Chairperson. Minister, despite the announcement that the SRD grant will be extended for 12 months, what concrete plans have you put in place as you have indicated that you will assist young people to get jobs and get skilled? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, hon Arries. It is always a pleasure to answer your questions. I have got

hundreds of them for written replies. Thank you very much. Yes, as a department recall that in our answering the questions even on written replies we have said that we are plugging in as a Department of Social Development: One, to the Expanded Public Works Programme, EPWP; two, to the Youth Employment Service, YES, programme; three, not only the department but also if we consider the fact that our National Development Agency its role is also to empower a co-operatives and also to empower small businesses on the ground to make sure that they are able to run their businesses.

We even uh ... let me just make an example, this month we were in the Northern Cape and I was very excited to find that a co- operative of young people in the Northern Cape, which is funded by the National Development Agency, which falls under SASSA, is growing. It is growing because the National Development Agency did not only just fund them, it also made sure that they are connected to training and it also made sure that they are connected to market.

Some of these people that we are supporting they start their co-operatives and they produce ... like these ones, are producing uniforms but they were not having the market where to sell their uniforms but because of the SASSA, the National

Development Agency and the department have gone out to also speak to schools for them to be able to procure from them. It then means that these co-operatives are growing and they will soon be out requesting for funding from the department. They are a good example to others.

Our plan as a department is also to say that the young people, especially the mothers who are having children who get social grants, because we give those mothers the grant for their children, we are trying to see what else we can do to encourage them to build out of the social grant that they get. There are a number of women who started businesses already from a combination of the R350 as well as the child support grant. We would like to encourage that. Nevertheless, when all is said and done, it is about us contributing to the growth of the economy and the creation of jobs overall and not see ourselves in isolation. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

Question 685:

THE MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much,

hon Chair. Thanks to hon Sibiya. The department has taken a deliberate approach to implement the revised ... [Recording glitch.] ... entities and the departments that have a stake in the ecosystem of the cultural and creative sector such as the

Small Business Development, Communications and Technologies and Department of Trade, Industry and Competition. The policy approach has five key areas which include digital technologies and responses to their impact from the sector. In addition, the recently approved creative and cultural industry master plan pays targeted attention to the digital technology.

Currently, the department is supporting initiatives at various stages of the value chain of the cultural and creative digital economy. I must say that this master plan of the action plans within it, which is number two of those, deals with this very question the hon member is talking about. The key performance action area is product development and innovation support, the manufacturing and access to technology. We also partner with people and companies here on the continent and abroad. For instance, our partnership with the French audiovisual company for digital technology skills transfer happened over years of success hence we are now standing on our own as a department implementing this particular skill which we fit.

Some of the outcomes of this is, for instance, the Rivonia Trial - the whole 230 hours of the Rivonia Trial on audio tapes, the TRC also on audio tapes, Convention for a Democratic South Africa, Codesa, records and many others which

we add with. Fundamentally, we actually work according to research through our SA Cultural Observatory. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

Ms D P SIBIYA: Thanks, Chairperson. Minister, as you know that social media has become a dominant social platform which influences users as it enables rapid distribution of information. This creates vulnerabilities from different influences for children and the youth who are using digital platforms.

*IsiXhosa*:

uMbuzo wuthi ...

*English*:

... how does the department work with artists to promote positive values as enshrined in the Constitution to ensure artists do not discriminate others or promote values and norms which expound social ills in their exercise of their freedom? Thank you, Chairperson.

THE MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much,

hon Chair. Thanks, hon Sibiya. You would know hon member that

one of our flagship programmes is actually run by social cohesion advocates which is mainly about values and good values and good ethics and support moral regeneration movement in this very aspect we are talking about. The issue of values in society is very important if we are to build a society which is ethical, a society which is going to be able to withstand the tide of influences such what you see in the social media and so on. But not all what comes from that front is negative. One positive thing is that the pedestal which our society is at of digital technology and the Fourth Industrial Revolution is important for social progress.

Ms V VAN DYK: Thank you, House Chair. Minister, the game and animation sector has the potential of nearly established cultural and creative industries, CCI, firms to contribute to the growth and job creation of South Africa. While our wholly entrepreneurial sector has faced ideal challenges of skills shortages, particularly with regard to the mix of creative and technical skills and the need for transformation. Minister, how will you address these challenges?

THE MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much,

hon Van Dyk. I think that’s a very important question. It’s precisely why we decided in 2019 to convene an inaugural film

summit for the present and the future. Out of that summit a lot of resolutions came to ensure that we take forward challenges which come about as a result of ourselves being seen to be a bit on the back foot of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Thank you, Chair.

Mr B S MADLINGOZI: Chairperson and Minister, whatever strides the South African artists make locally or globally it is because of their own sweat and blood, and not anything from what you and your department have done. Artists are on their own in this country. If you have any sense of dignity left you would be ashamed. How are you planning to change the widespread perceptions amongst artists that your department has not done anything for the South African artists and that you are only good for appearing at funerals of deceased artists? Thank you.

THE MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much,

hon Chair. For a moment I thought the hon member is singing, actually. Firstly, this is another question. It has nothing to do with the digital endeavours the department has. Well, it’s well and good. But I can tell you that this very department has assisted artists. It has identified artists through the cultural diplomacy programmes of the department through the

developmental approach and so on. We have exchanged programmes, we have exposed a number of artists of this country in the world and taking them through these very programmes we are talking about.

I know this uninformed sentiment by the hon member which is being peddled all the time. But as and when we have to explain and we do that. For instance, currently we are one department which was very concerned about our ... [Recording glitch.] ... and athletes during the past two years. We have actually reached out to close to 60 000 artists. I know that we have not reached everybody, but that number is not a small number. We have invested in the pockets of the artists R808 billion and created more than 30 000 jobs and retained jobs. So we will continuously and engage and educate people who do not know what the department is doing or who choose not to know what the department is doing.

Ms H DENNER: Thank you, House Chair. Hon Minister, as I hope you know, arts and culture infrastructure like theatres and community halls are in a dilapidated state and deteriorating by the day. There is a great need for such spaces that is not being met. What is being done to empower creative artists in their own communities and to influence and uplift these

communities especially in rural areas with regard to the maintenance and renovation of existing infrastructure like community theatres and other creative spaces, and what are the department’s plans to provide new much-needed infrastructure, if any?

THE MINISTER OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE: Thank you very much.

The department is actually working with the artists at the grassroots level - as we speak in this very financial year more than 300 community art centres throughout the country.

Through our programme of undermining the apartheid spatial development as you know, Chair, we used to have four theaters in this country, namely, for the former Orange Free State, Market here in Gauteng, Play House in Durban and Art Scape.

Currently, in undermining that and ensuring that the infrastructure for artists is up to scratch we have last year thus opened the Mandela Bay Theatre Complex in the Eastern Cape. We have opened a theatre in Kimberly, in the Northern Cape. We are at an advance stage ... [Recording glitch.] ... in Mpumalanga and North West. In that way we would have undermined the apartheid spatial development.

We are very much involved even in the academies. The National Academy of African Performing Arts in Jo’burg, for instance, next to Jabulani Amphitheatre under Ntante Caiphus Semenya, such we are taking to other provinces to ensure that at a higher level artists’ work is professionalised. As the research points to us that their work has to be monotised and digitised.

THE HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Thank you, hon Minister. It is a pity that there are technical glitches, but of course members are at liberty to follow the Rules. We know what to do.

Question 753:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

With regard to the issue of the bucket eradication system in informal settlements we want to report that in 2016 in the North West those that were classified in informal settlements were eliminated, in the Northern Cape we still have 596 that still have to be eradicated and in the Free State there are

10 222 that we still have to eradicate.

We need to indicate that contractors have been appointed for the remaining seven projects and they are currently on site to

complete this work. Several sections of the outflow sewer have been completed while others are in progress. Work on the construction of the pump station in the respective projects has also commenced. There were delays in these projects but we are happy to report that, after all systems have been put in place, the intention is to conclude and commission them by August 2023 in the Northern Cape, and in the Free State by the end of the financial year which is March 2023.

The challenge that caused our underspending is that there was an institutional arrangement where this project was transferred to the Housing Development Agency, HAD, and when the Ministry was made a single Ministry we then had to bring back the project. The challenges that we have faced are related to issues of procurement, especially where we use our internal construction unit. An infrastructure programme and policy and strategy is being put in place. Local business forums have disrupted some of these projects by demanding to be given some work. For example, in Setsoto and in Nketoana and as a result we lost more weeks. However, this matter ultimately dealt with by the end of October. In some of the projects there were disputes between the main contractor and sub-contractors and this was been resolved in September. Some of these projects had issues of high water table and you know

that you can’t impact on the water table in terms of our water laws. We could not do these projects in those particular areas and these matters are being dealt with by our hydrologists and the other issues of conditions on the ground.

Other issues are with bulk infrastructure which is the waste water treatment works and these works, as part of the feasibility studies, are being attended to because it is useless to increase the reticulation for waste water when you don’t have the waste water treatment plant to treat the effluent into standard without polluting the rivers.

We have taken the following steps: Our project management capacity, the department and the implementing agency have been improved, there are ongoing engagement with communities and how to facilitate so that projects will not be stopped and we have learned lessons in working with the two provinces including putting an early warning system to ensure that additional capacity is being put in place so that the budget can be used and used wisely. Thank you, Dlukula.

Mr N G MYBURGH: House Chair, I would like to ask the hon Deputy Minister that whilst we have heard many excuses from him this afternoon and heard very few reassurances about his

department meeting their obligations, would the Minister not agree that the fact that his department has, for instance, only spent a mere 17% of the budget allocated for the eradication of bucket toilets and we have just heard that over

10 000 remain in only one province alone, would you not agree that this kind of underspending is not only an indication of departmental inefficiencies, mainly due to, of course we know the scourge of cadre deployment which brings this about, but also that it demonstrates a serious lack of commitment to deliver the most basic of sanitary services to the poorest of the poor? Would the Deputy Minister not agree... Is it not time that the government which he forms part of should follow the very good example of the Western Cape government? A government which leads the country in every respect by all accounts and by every measure? And is it not high time in order to get proper delivery ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon member, stop this. Go ahead, hon member, you still have 15 seconds.

Mr N G MYBURGH: Would the Deputy Minister not save his department and government and follow the good example of the Western Cape by getting rid of the indignity of bucket toilets in the rest of South Africa once and for all?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

Malandela, the ANC-led government will never follow what the DA is doing. In the Western Cape, because of the colour of their skin, black people are being treated as subhuman in their own land of birth. Our people who stay in townships are swimming in sewer as we speak, and they are subjected to inhumane conditions where they use toilets with health hazards and a stench. We will not follow the example of the DA where in Gauteng, in Tshwane in Hammanskraal, our people are forced to drink water that is inhumane and not fit for use on the basis that their waste water treatment systems are not being addressed to.

We are committed to bringing dignity to our people especially for the people of Free State and the Northern Cape Emfuleni by resolving these issues and our people can be testimony to that. The DA must stop politicking about these issues when their own performance, whether in Johannesburg or elsewhere, is so appalling and our people are being treated as second class citizens. I thank you, Dlukula.

Mr M R MASHIGO: Minister, having heard the answer as you gave, in the portfolio committee a commitment was that March 2023 is the deadline for both the Free State and Northern Cape. Would

you want to tell us the separation of Free State from Northern Cape on dates committed, from March to August 2023?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

Through you chair, I thank the chairperson of my portfolio committee, Comrade Mashigo. The reason why there are these different dates is that we have now done the proper assessment including our own planning. The terrain in the Northern Cape is a little bit different. We have managed in some areas where the project must take place. In terms of our design the soil condition has a problem. The other problem that we have that is pushing the dates about four to five months is that the capacity of the bulk waste water treatment system is not going to be ready. It will be irresponsible then for us to connect those households on the distribution network when the pumps and the treatment plants are not ready because we are going to clog the system. When we clog the system we will then have problems of water pollution.

Our commitment through yourselves those who are in our portfolio committee will bring the detailed work breakdown schedule to demonstrate that the date for Free State which is the end of the financial year and the Northern Cape, with our own oversight including the oversight on those members that

are deployed in our committee, will ensure that we meet the deadlines. We are very confident that from engineering and planning point of view, for the first time all the ducks are in a row. Dlukula, thank you.

Ms B T MATHULELWA: Deputy Minister, what sort of work has your department undertaken to present and secure a picture of the extent of backlogs in sanitation in the country? For example, a City of Cape Town reports that they have eradicated the bucket system while there are hundreds of hundreds of people in informal settlements that do not have any kind of sanitation where people are relieving themselves in the open fields. How does the department account for such instances in order to have a clear picture of the backlogs? I thank you.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

Chair, our responsibility as a department is to put up a clear policy on norms and standards. The responsibility to have sanitation services is that of the local government. We have finalised our national sanitation framework so that we ensure that the kind of sanitation services that are given to South Africans are humane and meet the standard in terms of environment and health. We do agree with the hon member on the performance of the DA in the Western Cape and other

municipalities. They should not try to claim any easy victories. What we are doing is to support those municipalities that have problems especially in expanding their sanitation services because when the population grows the investment on water waste treatment and sanitation services was not very consumer rate. We are catching up right now especially on the issues of formal settlements and metros. In rural communities we are still using a non sewered system and it is our policy that when we provide access to water we upgrade our people from a non sewered system to a sewered system so that we can restore their dignity. I thank you, Chair.

Ms S A BUTHELEZI: House Chairperson, to the hon Minister, considering that the under expenditure of your department will result in a backlog of adequate sanitation facilities yet to be built, what will you and your department be doing to tackle this backlog and ensure service delivery targets are met?

Please provide details. Thank you, Chairperson.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION (Mr M D Mahlobo):

Malandela, we have to try to separate two issues. The bucket eradication system programme we are speaking to is the support that the national Department of Water and Sanitation is

providing to the province of Free State and the Northern Cape. There is a clear plan on how we want to accelerate to meet the indicated deadlines of March 2023 and August 2023. Other sanitation services, whether in one rural municipality somewhere in KwaZulu-Natal or in the Eastern Cape, is the responsibility of local government to provide these basic services and ours will be to support them. They do not receive any funding from us but we intervene and support local government in areas where there is sewage spillages.

The under expenditure in the year under review is a result of the reasons that I have already given and I have demonstrated that there is a plan of action and we commit to be judged on that particular plan that we have put on the table. However, the broader sanitation challenges of South Africa must still be addressed, especially for those communities in rural areas that are still being subjected to inhumane conditions that can cause problems to both environment and health as a result of sanitation facilities that are not secured. Thank you, Chair.

Question 717:

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, hon Chair. In response to hon Marais’ question. The South African Social Security Agency, Sassa, does not have any legislative

powers to blacklist any individual who were found to be defrauding the social grant system. The Social Assistance Act

13 of 2004, as amended, makes provision for Sassa to review all suspended cases and refer them to the South African Police, SAPS, for criminal investigation.

In 2021, Sassa compared the persal database of government with social grant payments system – the popularly known [SOGPAN] database, and identified 165,297 public servants who were receiving social grants. Following this, Sassa undertook a process of review of all these grants as per the process outlined in the Social Assistance Act, with a view to ascertain the eligibility of the identified beneficiaries.

By 31st July 2022, Sassa had conducted 80, 626 review. The remaining balance of 84,671 were suspended. The Sassa Chief Executive Officer, CEO, has written to all directors-general and heads of concerned departments requesting their assistance to finalize the reviews of the outstanding civil servants.

This will include recovery of debt and appropriate disciplinary action. And I know that hon members would say we have heard that before. The processes of recovery of debts and appropriating disciplinary action takes a very long time.

I have already indicated to Sassa and the department that we cannot allow this anymore. We have to quicken the system so that members can feel the comfort that there are people who have either paid back the money or disciplinary action has been taken against them. We have also sought the assistance of the Department of Public Service and Administration and the Public Service Commission to assist in monitoring the implementation of loss recovery and disciplinary action.

It is important to indicate that blacklisting is generally applied in debt collection matters and many of those people who have been under blacklisting, they know that very well. There is a process to be invoked, which includes a written claim for repayment, initiation of court proceedings, obtaining of court order against a debtor or defaulter before the person or debtor or defaulter can be blacklisted.

As I reported in the NCOP last week, Sassa has since implemented various measures to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. These include application programming interface, API, which is used to interface with other databases, bank account verification and implementation of biometric identification for Sassa employees as part of the multi-factor authentication required for access to Sassa corporate system

in particular [SOGPAN]. Plans are underway to work jointly with the Department of Home Affairs to harvest and validate facial recognition as alternative biometric identification. Technology is going to also help us a lot in reducing such cases of fraud in our system. Thank you, Chairperson.

Ms P MARAIS: Chairperson. Over and above blacklisting these public servants the main issue is to ensure that they are sufficient checks and balances to ensure the window for corruption doesn’t exist for initiatives such as these. What have you done to address the weakness that allow public servants to access this ground? Thank you, Chairperson.

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, Chairperson. As I have indicated in answering the question we have as a department and Sassa, have extended the memorandum of understanding, MOU, with all data hosts. I think members would recall that the issue of data hosts has always been a problem for us, not even in terms of the civil servants who are applying. I spoke to the API that we build this to validate the data set.

Chairperson, one can talk about technology and all kinds of things, this is what I also would like to say because this is

a public platform and is not only a platform for parliamentarians. Some other people are looking. What is important is to insist on those that are applying when they know perfectly well that they don’t qualify for this application, but they go ahead and they qualify. I don’t know what happens to their conscience because many of them are civil servants. They are working in government and are getting their salaries. So it’s not only about fixing the system, it’s also about fixing the moralities or actions of what some civil servants do. Thank you, Chair.

*SiSwati*:

Nkt. A S MHLONGO: Ngiyabonga, Sihlalo. Mphatsiswa, yenteka kangakanani imitamo leyentiwa ngemacembu ebugebengu kanye nalabanye bantfu labenta bugebengu bokukhwabanisa kuleligatja lahulumende lokutfutfukiswa kwemphakatsi. Lekungilo lelisita litiko letenhlalakahle ekunikeni bantfu baseNingizimu Afrika imali yesibonelelo. Futsi ngitiphi tindlela leninato tekuvikela loku?

UMPHATSISWA WELITIKO LEKUTFUTFUKISWA KWEMPHAKATSI: Ngiyabonga

kakhulu lunga lelihloniphekile, Nkt. Mhlongo. Nami ngitawuphendvula ngeSiswati njengoba nawe ubute ngaSiswati. Sisenkingeni siyiNingizimu Afrika ngobe tigebengu tinyenti.

Noma sitsi sizama kutsi sitivalele ngekusebentisa tinhlelo tetfu, ngalesinye sikhatsi siyehluleka. Kodvwa ke sinebuchwepheshe lesebukhona kuletinsuku kanye netinhlelo letikhona kaSassa. Sitawukhumbula kutsi kukhona labanye labasebenta khona kaSassa lebebangayifuni le-*biometric*.

Bebangalufuni loluhlelo le-*biometric* ngoba bebati kutsi mhlawumbe kukhona labanye lebakhwabanisa nabo ngekhatsi esikhungweni se-Sassa.

Nyalo-ke sesilungenisile loluhlelo le-*biometric*, sesiyalikhipha, kantsi sesintjintja nema-*password* nalokunye. Sentela kutsi nalabo labasebentela ngekhatsi kulesikhungo saka Sassa bangakhoni kusita tigebengu letingaphandle. Intfo lebuhlungu njengoba ngikhulumile ekucaleni kutsi ngulaba labafaka ticelo babe bati kahle kutsi akumele batifake. Ngibo lekumele sibajezise kakhulu ngobe bayati kutsi kukhona bantfu labanyenti labahluphekako emphakatsini lekungibo lokufanele bayitfole lemali yesibonelelo lengema-R350. Bona bayatitsatsela nje. Kantsi angeke sisabavumela nyalo kutsi bente njalo. Ngiyabonga, Sihlalo.

Ms T BREEDT: Thank you, House Chairperson. Hon Minister, do you foresee that all the funds that have been incorrectly paid

to public servants will be recovered? And is there a timeframe that you can share with us for the repayment of these monies?

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, Chair. Hon member, as I indicated earlier on, it’s the problem of our own system that takes very long and I have indicated to Sassa that I’m not really accepting these long processes because members want answers, I also want answers and the people of South Africa also want answers. I cannot necessarily give the timeframe. And I think what makes it difficult to give the timeframe, it would have been easy if these people who applied were people that belong to the Department of Social Development, were the Sassa employees themselves. The challenge is that many of them are outside or in other departments.

I think what also complicates the situation is the fact that some of the applicants who are in government, some of them do qualify because of the basis of the low salaries, that they are getting. They do qualify but not for the R350. And so I’m hoping that our engagement with other departments and in particular, with the Department of Public Service and Administration we will be able to speed up the process. I am anxious as yourself about it hon member because if we are

unable to get the money back, it means our system is failing the people of South Africa. So I’m doing everything I can to engage with Sassa and the department to make sure... If I could, I could actually walk into the offices of those ones who have taken the money and demand that they give the money back. But that’s not how it works. There are processes that need to go through. But I’m trying by all means to shorten the process. Thank you very much, hon Chair.

*IsiXhosa*:

Mr N L S NKWANKWA: Sihlalo weNdlu, ngaphambili Mphathiswa ubukhuthaza abantu ukuba basebenzise esi sibonelelo sama-R350 ukuqala amashishini.

*English*:

There are instances where ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... beyenzile loo nto kodwa la mashishini abulawa ngootsotsi abaphanga imali ngelithi yeyokhuseleko. EDunoon ukhona usisi odutyulwe kumgama okufutshane emva kokuba engavumanga ukunikisa ngale mali yakhe kaSassa kuba eziqalela indawo yokwenza iinwele. Umbuzo endifuna ukuwubuza ngowokuba ...

*English*:

... you have been speaking about building this fully secured, integrated and automated end-to-end system to improve your administration. However, this question ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... isoloko ivela kuba kukho ...

*English*:

... these leakages that are happening there which we have already sited there. In addition to trying to recover money from civil servants and other people who were not supposed to benefit, are we taking steps now to make sure that the foreign nationals that also unduly benefitted from the system to countries who are held to account or probably ...

*IsiXhosa*:

... basibuyisele imali yethu le iye kubo ngendlela egwenxa? Enkosi.

*English*:

The MINISTER OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: Thank you very much, hon Chair. Hon Nkwankwa, it really is painful when you find people who are creative and innovative who want to build on top of

the little that government has been able to give them ... and then ...

*IsiZulu*:

... kunezigelekeqe ezigijima emgwaqeni. Noma ungabanika lemali engo-R350 abanye babo ngeke baze bafune nokuzama nje ukwenza lutho ngayo. Sibuhlungu ke ...

*English*:

... with the loss of life and I am hoping that our continuous engagement particularly with the SAPS in terms of creating security for our people. Maybe we will win this battle of crime. Some of us might be talking about this crime in high places but this crime is affecting the most ordinary people who are trying to make a living for themselves.

We also want to make sure that in the development of our system ... In fact, hon Kwankwa you might have seen a few cases recently of Hawks going and swopping on some of our own who have been found to have been ...

*IsiZulu*:

... abantu abakhwabanisayo.

*English*:

We are hoping that working together with the Hawks can be able to strengthen that. When all is said and done we will then be strengthening the motoring and evaluation within the system itself. Leakages that continue to be there, one of the ways - I’m not saying is the only best way. One of the ways that we can deal with it is to remove less of people in the value- chain, even though I know sometimes the very system that we put in place, people are always looking at how to break the system. However, there are systems that are very, very difficult to break. This is all about algorithms. If we get the right one, it’s going to be difficult for people to break into it. Yes, we are doing our best to cut the leakages. And if you look at the broader picture of how many people we are serving, how much money we are spending and the leakages that are there, it is now become very minimal. But the bottom line is that we must do their best to make sure that we don't have those leakages at all. Thank you chair.

Question 686:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Chair, it’s factually not correct that patients at Rob Ferreira Hospital in Mpumalanga are getting one meal a day. Not only are we saying that

because we got the information from the Department of Health in Mpumalanga.

On the day we received ...

*IsiZulu*:

USIHLALO WENDLU (Mnu M L D Ntombela): Baba Dinangwe! Baba Dinangwe, engathi ungasondela embhojeni lapho.

USEKELA NGQONGQOSHE WEZEMPILO: Kulungile. Ngiqale phansi?

*English*:

Hon Chair, it’s factually not correct that patients at Rob Ferreira Hospital in Mpumalanga are getting one meal a day. We are not saying this because we got the information from the Mpumalanga Department of Health only, on the day we received this parliamentary question, one of our staff members called the nutrition unit, who were visiting Mpumalanga province and they also had visited this hospital; because in the Department of Health we do have a system where this unit is monitoring food services routinely in hospitals. Annually, they visit about 90 hospitals in food services and assess them, the standard that they use, which is always reflected in our

annual performance plan, as we have indicated also in our 2021-22 on the national Department of Health.

Therefore, according to the information that was supplied by the Mpumalanga Department of Health and also by our officials who visited from national.

There are five meals a day given at this hospital. The first one is at five in the morning, where they get tea and bread. They get their breakfast ...

*IsiZulu*:

... badla ngo-9 ibhulakufesi, ngo-12 bathole isidlo sasemini. Isidlo sakusihlwa sidliwa ngo-5. Ngo-8 ebusuku bathola futhi itiye nesinkwa. Ngakhoke kukhona ukudla, kukhona ukudla kulesi sibhedlela. Bakudla izikhathi ezinhlanu ngosuku njengoba kwenzeka kwezinye izibhedlela. Ngiyabonga, Sihlalo.

*English*:

Mr E K SIWELA: Deputy Minister, you will agree with me that economic empowerment is the programme in which all sectors can contribute to local economic development.

The question is: How does the department leverage its expenditure to support small holder farmers and cooperatives to be part of the suppliers of local produced goods such as bread, fruits and vegetables? And how does the department support people who are sick but not hospitalised as we have significant population below the poverty line?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Siwela, it is a challenge where there is an economic policy called Public Finance Management Act, PFMA, that would regulate how you could procure. At the same time, we will wish that there should be an empowerment of the local citizens who have grouped themselves into being small local farmers.

It’s very easy and convenient for officials to say: no, it should be that Benson enterprise that must supply the hospitals with food and because it is too tedious to look at MaGumede who is putting things together and can supply just only potatoes.

So, it’s a challenge that we don’t think we have won but it is an ongoing process where we need to really work and educate and really appeal to our officials, not to bend the rules in terms of finances, but to look how they could be innovative

and really still be able to get products from those small businesses out there who are trying their best to put just that product, and not conveniently say: aye, no, no, no, I need that big truck that comes from this big enterprise to supply me. But be innovative in small areas where you are.

That part, we have not really won, it’s a work in progress and we hope that we will be able to get somewhere with the officials helping us. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms E R WILSON: Deputy Minister, I’m afraid I’m not entirely agreeing with your initial response to this question and I don’t think people have been truthful with you.

We receive calls from all over the country regarding to starving of patients and people only getting minimum meals, throughout the country, and these are people who need proper nutrition to heal, it is essential to the healing process.

Given the dismal performances of the provinces, the

125 billion in medico legal claims which is provinces millions and the recent personal protection equipment, PPE, corruption and R10 million spent on unusable scooters, which leaves these hospitals underfunded and patients unfed.

Surely you need to address the problems by putting an end to cadre deployment in the health sector and employing more skilled management personnel, number one, who can be honest and, number two, who can prioritise the health of patients. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr M L D Ntombela): Hon Deputy Minister, I hope you found the question!

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Yes. The question was about whether there are or no meals at Rob Ferreira Hospital and the answer has then since been provided.

But if hon Wilson has also another hospital that she has information on and probably making a generalization that there are patients in a particular hospital who are not properly fed and not mixed to say because you buy scooters, therefore, you don’t have food, we would have to investigate that part. I would not be able to say right now is there no or food at Tshilidzini Hospital or De Aar Hospital, I would not have that data, but if she could provide information that on this specific day on that hospital there was no food, we would then have to follow up and investigate. Like what I’m saying, there is a unit in the national department that ... [Inaudible.] ...

by visiting hospitals to monitor, because in hospitals there are two service points, one, is an in-service of the kitchen that we have created as a department where we employ people to cook and ... [Inaudible.] ... feed, and there’s another category of a service provider that cooks elsewhere and brings food within the hospital and, therefore, serve patients.

Either or we could find inefficiencies if there is and if there are any we would be ready to really investigate and support. There’s no way you could starve a patient because having operated a patient who was not well, part of the patient getting better is to eat and support and get proteins and get out of the hospital as quickly as possible.

So, there is no way you could a patient to the hospital and not feed because part of giving food is improving their health and get them back to the community as soon as you can. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms A M SIWISA: Deputy Minister, I hear your answer maybe it’s a perfect answer for Robert Ferreira Hospital. But most of the public hospitals are in decaying state.

Recently we noted that at Kalafong Hospital the linen was dirty, not washed at regular intervals, there was no food for

patients, that nurses were generally fed up with the poor state of management at the hospital. And this is not the only hospital, we can also make reference to Steve Biko hospital in the Northern Cape in Kimberley.

What have you done to develop a set of standards that all public hospitals must adhere to in terms of food provision and hygiene in hospitals?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Chairperson, in my earlier reply to some of the questions raised I did make reference to a package of what I call presidential health compact, which has got nine pillars in it that we need to actually work towards. They were put down there not because we have achieved, but because these are things that are actually ... some of them we even call the non-negotiables.

The cleanliness of the hospital is a non-negotiable, the security of our staff and patients is a non-negotiable, the provision of medication is non-negotiable, so, there’s a whole range of issues that we worked on towards that. Infrastructure decay is part of it. The improvement of staffing in hospitals

... so, these nine pillars are like a guide.

Among other things, the Office of the Health Standards Compliance use these tools to actually visit clinics, hospitals and just indicate how far we have gone in these processes, and they mark us down or up regarding what their findings are.

So, yes, there may be challenges in those hospitals, but then there are also plans to improve each and every ... based on this because the target is to move on towards National Health Insurance, NHI. No one is going to be happy at clinic A and B if things are not improved this side and improved on one side. So, there is a plan, guide and there’s this document that guides us as we improve on all these facilities. Thank you very much, Chair.

Ms Z MAJOZI: Hon Deputy Minister, the issue of adequate food provision in hospitals is not limited to Rob Ferreira Hospital. It speaks a greater and more common problems in our country and we have received reports of patients in Nkonjeni Hospital receiving food full of ants.

Have you sent health inspectors to all these hospitals to ensure that the quality of meals given patients as well as food preparation processes is in order? Thanks, Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH: Hon Majozi, it talks to what one has said, to say if there are issues at Nkonjeni, we still need to investigate.

But I can actually say this because it’s another province that I worked into: There is a tendency to give supply of food to far-flung hospitals from the centre and not develop local people who could actually support a fresh cabbage, fresh carrot there and there. So, those things are things that are in the system to say: it’s convenient for me to just get from this big enterprise and distribute food as far wide as 300km from the Durban centre rather than to actually get it from the local supply of Nkonjeni.

I may not be able to say on and when was this happening but it’s over and above that. We do have what I called nutrition units in the national department. They may not be at Nkonjeni tomorrow but they will always be visiting hospitals. They try and visit about 90 to 100 hospitals per year going to investigate. Of course, things may just fall apart last month when they’ve been there two months ago because it’s human performance that you are talking about.

We will continue to monitor but there will not be any plan to disadvantage patients in hospitals to not to get proper food because it’s part of the healing process, it’s part of getting them to get better. So, the tendency will always be leaning on that, how far do we get food on time locally and get them to get it fresh, probably without ants. I can’t comment whether there were ants or not. Thank you very much.

Business concluded.

The House adjourned at 18:07.