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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1025**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 19 - 2020**

**1025. Mrs D van der Walt (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development: *[Interdepartmentally transferred from Basic Education on 5 June 2020]***

What (a) measures does her department have in place to (i) identify homeless children and (ii) ensure that they go to school and (b) challenges has her department experienced in implementing the specified measures? NW1315E

**National Assembly written Reply: 1025 of 2020**

**REPLY:**

(a)(i)According to the Department of Social Development’s prescripts homeless children are considered as street children. Therefore measures used to identify them are provided for in the Children’s Act 38/2005. For an example,section 191 (2)(k) makes provision for therapeutic intervention services for them.

Furthermore, section 150 (1) (c) makes room for street children to be found or identified as children in need of care and protection after the social worker has conducted the home investigation and recommended to Children’s Court that they be found children in need of care and protection.

(ii) Like any other child, street children are covered by section 28 of the Constitution of the Republic, 1996which guarantees right to education.

(b) Rendering services to street children is not easy because they have lived long on the street, have learnt street life and it may be difficult for them to live a normal life.

The department has developed Stabilization programme to assist the Child and Youth Care Centres to manage the behaviour of street children.

Furthermore the Department has developed Strategy and Guidelines on Drop in Centres to inform provision of services of Orphans and Vulnerable Children, which includes street children. The Department also developed a Strategy and Guidelines that inform various programmes for street children using the following levels of interventions: Prevention; Early Intervention; Statutory Services; Reunification and After Care.

At all levels, children are encouraged and motivated to attend school. It is compulsory for those who have been admitted in a child and youth care centre to attend school, therefore all of them do attend school once they are in a child and youth care centre.

The main challenge is that the street children are nomadic and most of the time they abscond from the intervention centres. They are used to uncontrolled environment.