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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1735**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 16 OF 2021**

**Mr M N Nxumalo (IFP) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(1) What is the status of transformation in Government universities as reflected in the percentage of black (a) academics as a whole, (b) female academics vis-à-vis white female academics in the sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects and (c) female academics vis-à-vis male academics in STEM subjects;

(2) what (a) is the Government strategy to enhance transformation through inclusion of black female academics STEM subjects as reflected in the above percentages and (b) are the anticipated timelines?

**NW1946E**

**REPLY:**

(1)     According to HEMIS data (2019), overall there are still more male than female staff occupying instruction and research posts in the sector. African women are significantly under represented. The table below illustrates the breakdown of the numbers according to race and gender:

Table 1: Headcount of instruction and research staff in 2019:

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| **Population Group** | **Instruction and Research** |
| **Female** | **Male** | **Total** |
| **African** | 3 416 | 4 807 | 8 223 |
| **Coloured** | 792 | 655 | 1 447 |
| **Indian/Asian** | 888 | 731 | 1 619 |
| **White** | 4 397 | 3 807 | 8 204 |
| **Unknown** | 94 | 314 | 408 |
| **Total** | 9 587 | 10 314 | 19 901 |

The HEMIS data does not provide a breakdown according to field of specialisation.

(2)     To address this, the Department is implementing the Staffing South Africa’s Universities’ Framework (SSAUF) as part of the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP). The UCDP is an implementation programme that is intended to enable an integrated approach to capacity development across three focal areas: student development, staff development and programme/curriculum development. For the purposes of the UCDP, staff development activities are activities that enable the development of university academic and professional staff in a range of roles, including teaching, researching, leading, managing and administering.

The SSUAF comprises sub-programmes that are designed to intervene at important transition points along the academic staffing career trajectory. There are five programmes focused on the recruitment of black (African) female academics, and these are the Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme (NESP), the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP), the University Staff Doctoral Programme (USDP), the Future Professors Programme (FPP) and the Higher Education Leadership and Management Programme (HELMP).

The NESP aims to recruit honours graduates who demonstrate academic ability, who express an early interest in the possibility of an academic career and who might be lost to the system if structured, attractive prospects and opportunities for recruitment into academic positions do not exist. NESP Master's graduates then become a resource pool from which new academics can be recruited. The NESP is implemented in phases by the Department with Phase 1 having started with implementation in 2020 with 97 candidates supported through the programme. Five of these candidates were given an opportunity to study for Master's degrees in France and three of them are women. The rest will be confirmed this year. Each phase of the NESP will be a 3-year programme for all selected participants, comprising two stages. Stage 1 will comprise of a 2-year scholarship programme and Stage 2 is a compulsory 1-year internship programme at the recruiting university. The NESP was implemented for the first time in 2020.

The nGAP involves the recruitment of highly capable scholars as new academics to be appointed in permanent posts at universities, against carefully designed and balanced equity considerations and in light of the disciplinary areas of greatest need. To date, seven phases (Phase 1 - 7) of the nGAP are being implemented, and posts have been awarded and continue to be filled by the universities. Phase 7 commenced in April 2021, and the recruitment and contracting for these posts must be concluded in March 2022.

Out of a total of 542 nGAP lecturers in the system currently, 252 (46%) are appointed in STEM positions. Out of the 252, 140 (55.5%) are women and 112 (44.5%) are men.

The USDP, which supports existing permanent academics to obtain doctoral degrees, also follows suit with the majority (56 out of a total of 101) of participants in the programme being women.

The FPP**,** which supports lecturers and senior lectures who demonstrate academic leadership potential to transition to the professoriate, started implementation in 2019/20 with the majority of participants being women.

The HELMP seeks to build leadership and management capacity in the university system and has a special programme that focuses on the development of women as leaders in higher education.

All these programmes emphasise that of the selected candidates, 90% must be black South Africans and at least 55% of the beneficiaries must be women. The sustainability of these programmes is secured as these programmes form part of the annual performance targets of the Department and are allocated funds in the Ministerial Statement for University Funding each year.

These programmes are as per the need for each university with some of them demonstrating a need in the STEM subjects. However, due to a limited pool of qualifying female prospective candidates, recruitment of this group of the population is often difficult, a matter that the Department is trying to attend to.