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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER 1738**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 12 MAY 2023**

**1738.   Ms S A Buthelezi (IFP) to ask the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs:**

1. To what extent is the Government prepared to assist numerous municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal that have been warned to expect and prepare for heavy rains which may cause flooding and infrastructure damage, in the event that the municipalities need to act swiftly and move citizens who are at risk to safer places;
2. whether the affected persons will be taken to the same temporary shelters which were provided to flood victims a year ago and who are still in those shelters; if not, where will affected citizens be accommodated; if so, what are the relevant details? NW1986E

**REPLY:**

* 1. The municipalities and areas at risk are prioritised by government on the dissemination of early warnings and advisories as issued by the South African Weather Service (SAWS) for informed decision-making by responsible organs of state including communities. The department through the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) has been working together with relevant organs of state and the province to coordinate efforts in the implementation of sustainable interventions such as finding suitable land for rebuilding and settlement of communities for building back better, to promote resilience, prevent or minimise the impacts of flooding incidents.

Furthermore, the department through the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) is assisting municipalities in developing or reviewing the Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) and Land Use Plans which incorporates the review of the high flood lines and prohibiting future construction of infrastructure in flood prone areas, and wetlands. This minimises the risks of flood damage to infrastructure.

MISA is assisting municipalities in design standards and upgrading of flood prone infrastructure by reviewing, among other things, design return periods (useful in calculating the riskiness of the structure) to take into account the new maximum probable flood trends due to climate change. Municipalities are further being assisted with reviewing by-laws and building scheme controls. These measures aim to prohibit building in high-risk flood zones as well as reducing the damage that floods may cause for example through enhancing flood attenuation measures such as discouraging paving surfaces unnecessarily and enforcement of the by-law provisions. MISA also advises municipalities to develop yearly Summer Season Flood Mitigation plans that includes activities such as road stormwater drainage systems cleaning.

* 1. The information from the Provincial Disaster Management Centre in KwaZulu-Natal province indicates that alternate temporary shelters are identified by municipalities concerned. In most cases, nearby community halls are identified as alternative shelter. In some instances, available churches identified for support. There is currently no active shelters accommodating affected communities in the province.

**End.**