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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1949**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 26 MAY 2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 19 – 2023**

**1949. Ms L L van der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

What are the full, relevant details of the plans that her department has put in place to curb the teenage pregnancy crisis which, according to Statistics South Africa, has seen 90 037 girls aged 10 to 19 years giving birth from 1 March 2021 to 30 April 2022 across all provinces? NW2129E

**REPLY:**

The Department of Social Development (DSD) in partnership with the Department of Health and Basic Education implements the Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP) and this programme advocates for an integrated multi-sectoral approach in addressing teenage pregnancy.

As part of the implementation of ISHP DSD provides social behaviour and change programmes to build the capacity of young people through life skills, teaching sexual and reproductive health, empowering young people to make right choices and lifelong decisions about their lives, preventing risky behaviours that would lead to teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancy. DSD also provides Community Based Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (RISIHA) to vulnerable children, moving these children from vulnerability to resilience. These programmes are part of the 365 days child protection programme of action. The departmental approach is to focus on prevention measures but also empowerment of a family as a primary institution to socialise its members on values and morals. The department is therefore also implementing parenting programmes in this regard.

Currently, DSD is conducting a *Diagnostic Evaluation to Understand Government’s Response to Teenage Pregnancy*. The purpose of the study is to assess the relevance and responsiveness of government interventions (both programmes and services) in addressing the direct determinants of teenage pregnancies, as well as the budgeting and costing elements. In addition, the study will provide empirical evidence on the different interventions, legislation, policies and guidelines to manage teenage pregnancy. The study will draw on a variety of evidence types (mixed methods) which includes quantitative and qualitative data.

The evaluation will be conducted in five (5) provinces namely: Gauteng, Northern Cape, KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape and Limpopo. The Steering Committee for the study will include officials from Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disability, Department of Health, Department of Basic Education, Development Partners (UNICEF and UNFPA) and stakeholders from Civil Society Organisations.

**Benefits of study**

Through the study the DSD and stakeholders will:

• Provide empirical evidence-based solutions for decision making, accountability and learning;

• Engage with a number of stakeholders including government from all three spheres of government, developmental partners and civil society;

• Understand the “*As Is” Situation on Teenage Pregnancy*;

• Identify common and unique teenage pregnancy programmes implemented across government;

• Conduct mapping exercise on available evidence on teenage pregnancy; and

* The findings and recommendations will be utilised to develop an Improvement plan to enhance services and policy areas with a number of stakeholders.