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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1985**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 26/05/2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 19 OF 2023**

**Mr T Mogale (EFF) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

Considering that financial insecurity has over the past years caused numerous problems pertaining to food insecurity for university students and noting that with the rising cost of living on a daily basis, the situation could only be exacerbated, what (a) steps has his department taken to date to resolve the crisis of food insecurity for university and tertiary students and (b) different and specialised interventions in different facilities has his department implemented over the years to curb the frustration and inhumane conditions? **NW2240E**

**REPLY:**

a) I reported that the South African government allocated R47 billion to fund approximately 900 000 NSFAS beneficiaries in the 2023 academic year. This represents a 7% increase in the number of students that are eligible for NSFAS compared to the previous fiscal year. In 2023 academic year, an inflation linked increase of 5% was also applied on all allowances (excluding living allowances). Living allowance increment across the board NSFAS was R 1 650 per month.

Different entities or institutions have responded differently to crises of food security, and food bank projects were developed in most cases, to illustrate:

1. Cape Peninsula University of Technology has an interim food support programme wherein students are supported with food parcels and vouchers.

1. University of Cape Town provides care packs with non – perishable food items and toiletries from donated goods and donated vouchers.

1. Central University of Technology introduced the Thusanang project aimed at assisting all students who are financially challenged and academically deserving, particularly those without any form of financial support such as loans or bursaries during their period of studies.

1. Durban University of Technology initiated the Phakimpilo (Serve life) programme which commenced in 2020 during lockdown period. The programme provided spar vouchers to mostly postgraduate students.

1. University of Fort Hare introduced a food programme to assist students identified, assessed, and approved to receive assistance.

1. University of the Free State has food banks on all three campuses that provide nutritious food packages to students on a weekly basis. UFS launched a vegetable garden initiative that provides fresh vegetables that are distributed in addition to the standard items included in the food parcels.

1. University of Johannesburg provides a student meal assistance programme which offers meal packs to qualifying students.

1. University of KwaZulu-Natal has established a Food Security Task Team to develop a strategy and action plan that will realise the vision of one meal a day for every student going forward. Currently, limited food parcels/ meal vouchers are available to students on referral/ request.

1. University of Limpopo has through the Hands of compassion – donations to needy students provided a Soup kitchen or a meal a day offered during the examination period.

Food parcels are also available to non-funded students.

1. University of Mpumalanga was approached by a non-profit organization, Kago Yabana Foundation to provide free meals to needy students for a period of one month.

1. Nelson Mandela University signed an MOU with Tiger Brands who provide contents for nutrition packs for indigent students. This MOU has been in place since 2003.

1. North – West University supplies food hampers to needy students

1. University of Pretoria’s Student Nutrition and Progress has been in practice since 1990.

1. Sefako Makgatho University has a vibrant food security project called Hands of Compassion established in 2016 to assist students who are not beneficiaries of any financial support.

1. Stellenbosh University has a main food project called #Move4food which is focused on assisting in emergency situations and is usually a once-off financial assistance.

1. Tshwane University of Technology has established the Food Hamper Crisis intervention programme.

1. University of Venda provides food parcels through its project Thohoyazie. It also has a

Social Responsibility Fund, which is intended to assist needy students, coordinated by

the Convocation and Alumni Office. Students are assisted as and when they approach the university for assistance. During the second semester 2020, the university received food parcels donated by the Professional Provident Society Foundation and handed them to indigent students.

1. University of the Western Cape provides ad-hoc food support programs for residence students, sports athletes and for emergency relief, especially during the examination period.

1. University of the Witwatersrand supports gardens and a daily meal programme.

The following TVET Colleges also provide food parcels to their students: Goldfields College, False Bay College, Northlink College and South Cape TVET College.