**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2094**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 21-2021 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**2094. Mr N P Masipa (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

1. Whether she will provide detailed reasons for the failure of agri-parks in each province across the Republic; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
2. whether any persons were charged with corruption in relation to the failure of agri-parks; if not, why not; if so, what total number of persons were charged;

(3) whether any persons were charged due to maladministration and incompetence in relation to the failure of agri-parks; if not, why not, in each case; if so, what (a) corrective human resources are in place to change the situation and (b) timelines are in place to ensure that (i) charges against corrupt officials are brought forth and (ii) corrective human resources are implemented for those found to be incompetent?  **NW2376E**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

1. No. The Agri-Parks programme was conceptualised to be implemented through its defined three legs as outlined in the programme simultaneously. An Agri-park comprises three distinct but interrelated basic components:
* **The Farmer Production Support Unit (FPSU)**: A rural small-holder farmer outreach and capacity building unit that links with farmers and markets. The FPSU does primary collection, some storage, some processing for the local market, and extension services including mechanisation;
* **The Agri-hub (AH)**: A production, equipment hire, processing, packaging, logistics, innovation and training unit; and
* **The Rural Urban Market Centre (RUMC):** The RUMC has three main purposes. Linking and contracting rural, urban and international markets through contracts. Acts as a holding-facility, releasing produce to urban markets based on seasonal trends. Provides market intelligence and information feedback, to the AH and FPSU, using latest Information and communication technologies.

However, noting the less than desired and envisaged private sector investment and active involvement of other government departments, it became evident that implementing all three legs of the programme at the same time is not affordable. The approach of prioritising the first leg of the programme (FPSUs) became the obvious one and is what the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development is focusing on.

The implementation of the programme is not unfolding as originally planned but we would not classify it as a failure given the fiscal constrains the country faced post introduction of the programme.

There are success stories that can be shared with regards to Agri-Parks. One of the success stories is support provided by the African Development Bank. In an effort to build capacity of the Agri-Parks, the African Development Bank has recently approved Technical Assistance (Transaction Advisory Service MIC TAF Grant) of UA 400,000 (about R9.9 million), to support the development of two Agri-Parks, namely Tsiame Agri-Park located in the Free State Province and Springbokpan Agri-Park, located in the North -West Province. This grant is intended to upscale the South Africa Agri-Park program to the Sustainable Infrastructure Development System (SIDS) methodology at the Infrastructure Investment Office (IIO) in the Presidency. This grant will also assist with coordination, bringing the project to financial closure and provide an operations and management structure that will enable investors to provide investment funds for infrastructure development and attract private sector investment to the respective provinces.

A letter of Agreement is currently under preparation by the legal team of the African Development Bank for review and signature. Once this process is completed it is estimated that the launch will be in November 2021, whereafter the process of recruiting a Transactions Adviser will commence.

1. No. There has not been corruption detected or reported on the Agri-Parks.
2. No. No maladministration and incompetence have been detected or reported.

 (a),(b),(i),(ii) Falls away.