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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2227**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 10 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 22 - 2021**

**2227. Ms B S Masango (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

What (a) processes has she found to be too complex for the analysis of the requirements for the integration of the system of gender-based violence (GBV) and Victim Empowerment Programme that was not achieved (details furnished), (b) strategies have been put in place to address the complexities, (c) were the reasons her department failed to address the specified complexities in the planning processes and (d) role does the programme play in addressing the scourge of GBV in the Republic? NW2531E

**REPLY:**

The Department of Social Development Expenditure Analysis for the 2020/21 Fourth Quarter report discussed in Committee on 1 September 2021, it stated in programme 1 that the 'analysis of the requirements for the integration of GBV and VEP systems was not achieved'. The reasons for this was 'due to complexity of the processes'.

(a) End to end processing of Victim requires not only DSD services but other Government Departments services which is SAPS, DOJ, DCS, DBE, NPA, HEALTH, NGOs. The complexity is as a result of defining/ mapping integrated processes which required full understanding of participating departments processes towards GBV and VEP in order to develop sound Interface Control Functionality which articulates the electronic messages that will be flowing between the departments. The main challenges it where processes are not standardised within respective Departments which requires more sessions of sector standardisation of the processes first before defining integration interfaces with GBV and VEP.

(b) The plan that was executed was to have a joint consultation with all affected departments to uniformly define processes which then required more time.

(c) The complexities have been addressed. Processes are fully developed. Requirements specification developed. Currently in a process of integrating the systems which will also takes into cognisance other participating departments processes which contributes in the victims’ processes.

(d) The programme is part of the DSD’s response and contribution towards addressing the scourge of GBV by providing victim support and empowerment to victims of gender based violence. Provision of victim support and empowerment in a holistic manner reduces secondary victimisation, encourages cooperation with the criminal justice process and reinforces socially desired behaviour. Victim support and empowerment therefore contributes to crime prevention and enhances the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. The DSD is coordinating and leading the Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP) which is the integrated programme that addresses the diverse needs of victims in a multi-disciplinary approach within the criminal justice value chain. The DSD has developed the Victim Empowerment Programme Information Management System (VEPIMS) to capture data of all victims that serviced by the Victim Empowerment Programme (VEP). Furthermore, the DSD) has since established the Gender Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC) which provides professional telephone counselling and referral services to victims of gender based violence from the national call centre that is available 24 hours a day. The process of integrating the VEPIMS and GBVCC is underway in order to ensure that data collected within DSD is integrated. This data will be used to inform strategies to improve services to victims of gender based violence. This integrated DSD VEP Information Management System will be connected to interface with Integrated Justice System (IJS) Hub in order to improve access to victims’ information for further criminal justice processes such as participation in the parole processes.