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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 261**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19 FEBRUARY 2021**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 2 - 2021**

**261. Ms L H Arries (EFF) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

Whether her department has conducted any study to find out what total number of children have been left orphaned as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; if not, why not; if so, what interventions has she made to ensure that the specified children are not left destitute? NW264E

**REPLY:**

No, the Department has not conducted such study. However, in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, the Department developed an Emergency Response Plan to address the needs of vulnerable children who have been affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The plan complements other services to orphans and vulnerable children which include psychosocial support services and social assistance in a form of social grants.

It is important to point out to the Honourable Member that the Department renders services to orphans and vulnerable irrespective of the cause of orphanhood as guided by the provisions of the Children’s Act (Act No. 38 of 2005). This is to avoid stigma and discrimination.

The department further implements Community Based Prevention and Early intervention programme to ensure early identification of orphans and vulnerable children. Others include training and deployment of Child and Youth Care Workers at a community level who work in a space of a child and support and empower children who are vulnerable and those orphaned with life skills, home works and household chores. They refer and link these children with other resources where necessary.