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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2709**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 29 - 2022**

**2709. Mrs G Opperman (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) With reference to her reply to question 1602 on 30 May 2022, what number of the 38 037 children has the department assisted to obtain documentation;

(2) will she furnish Mrs G Opperman with a breakdown of the type of documentation that was provided for each child such as birth certificate, asylum seeker permit and/or study permit;

(3) what number of the referred children received each of the specified documents;

(4) what number of the referred children that have been documented so far (a) have been declared citizens of the Republic and (b) are still non-citizens? NW3099E

**REPLY:**

1. All the 38 039 children were assisted with online applications by the Implementing Partners of the Children in the Move Project contracted by UNICEF in supporting the Department, for documents and through referral to the Department of Home Affairs.

The process of assisting children on the move is briefly outlined here and is more on care and protection of these children as per the provisions of the Children’s Act 38 of 2005:

The children are admitted in Child and Youth Care Centre through the Children’s Court Order as per the provisions of Section 151 and 152 of the Children’s Act. During the admission children usually undergo a panel review process to ensure a joint decision in the best interest of the child.

While in the Child and Youth Care Centres children are cared for by providing them with basic services to meet their immediate needs.

Services that are also provided relates to health education for improving hygiene and nutrition. Children are also provided with professional counselling and emotional support. Therapeutic services are also provided to them.

The following is the core component when assisting children on the move namely:

* Identification

Identification of children on the move is part of the intervention by Social Service Professionals (SSPs). Outreach work is done by Outreach Workers who are mainly Child and Youth Care Workers (CYCWs). Children are identified through the Outreach Programme which is a programme that reaches out to children to empower them to express their rights and needs and to link them with the necessary resources when required. Some of the resources are: their families; Drop-in-Centres and Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCCs). Social Service interventions are used to engage with the children and explore the reasons that led them to be on the move.

The identification of children on the move is two-fold:

• Focus on those children who can be re-unified with their families; and

• Those who cannot be reunified and would therefore have to be admitted in a Child and Youth Care Centre for further interventions.

Information on the home circumstances of the child emerge as the Social Workers engages the child. Through the engagement the Social workers are able to obtain the details of the family which he/she uses to contact them. In this regard, the contact becomes extended to family to establish the home conditions and reasons for the child to end up on the move. At this point, the family also becomes the focus of intervention until the child is fully re-unified with them. When the child is re-unified, there are other services which are recommended for the well-being and psycho-social support of the child.

A decision about a child who cannot be re-unified with the family is based on the outcomes of the investigations done into the home circumstances. The impending danger that is posed by the child being on the move is also a reason for immediate removal of the child from the situation.

Social workers further facilitate the provision of documentation by linking them with the Department of Home Affairs.

1. The breakdown of the types of documentation provided for each child is not available as the Implementing Partners do not receive feedback from the Department of Home Affairs about the document applications that are completed.
2. The number of the referred children who received each of the specified documents can be confirmed by the Department of Home Affairs as this falls within their mandate.
3. The number of the referred children that have been documented so far and have been declared citizens of the Republic and those that are still non-citizens can be confirmed by the Department of Home Affairs.