# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**WRITTEN QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2751**

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**2751. Ms R N Komane (EFF) to ask the Minister in The Presidency:**

Whether, given the current outbreak of the new Omicron variant of COVID-19, and the resumption of Statistics South Africa’s (Stats SA) data collection period, Stats SA will continue with the face-to-face data collection; if not, how will data be collected, especially in remote areas; if so, what has he found will be the impact of the outbreak of the new Omicron variant to face-to-face data collection process? NW3266E

# REPLY:

Yes, Honourable Komane

Stats SA intends to roll out multi-modal data collection tools, namely (i) Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI), (ii) Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviewing (CATI) and (iii) Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). The latter is also referred to as face to face interviewing.

The CAWI and CATI modes allows us to collect and interact with the public remotely, hence we encourage all people/households and institutions to register to be enumerated on our data-free platforms ([getcounted.statssa.gov.za](http://www.getcounted.statssa.gov.za/)) or call our Tollfree service (0800 110-

248) to help them register. This process triggers members of the public to share with us their contact details, which will aid us to engage them even remotely (telephonically- CATI)

Face to face has been undertaken during the last pilot (August 2021). The challenge has been the discomfort from the public to open their doors to the field staff. The level of restrictions imposed at a given time will determine the roll out of face to face (e.g., any restrictions from level. 3 and lower still allows us to conduct face to face- with appropriate PPE equipment.). Any higher levels of restrictions (level 4-5) will lead to the rescheduling/ delayed deployment of face to face).

We are aware of limitations in rural areas either due to literacy levels or connectivity challenges, hence we advocate that CAPI is still the best mode to reach all settlements and population groupings (homeless, transients, households and the institutionalized).

We therefore intend to use all these methods in rural areas. In areas/cases where these other two modes cannot be deployed, we intend to deploy face-to-face primarily with the appropriate levels of restrictions as determined/pronounced from time to time.

The approach will be to provide all our field staff with (appropriate PPE’s, face masks and sanitizers), in addition our training includes a module on adherence to Occupation, Health and Safety (OHS) measures/guidelines in line with COVID-19 regulations. This includes either conducting interviews in open spaces within, outside the dwelling unit or asking for telephone numbers and calling the respondent immediately thereafter via using the tablets (over the fence or otherwise).

Finally, we also have a workplace vaccination program, wherein we encourage our employees to be vaccinated by setting dates for vaccinations within our various national and provincial offices in collaboration with GEMS.

Thank You.