

**MINISTER**

**HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, WATER AND SANITATION**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 2822**

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**Mrs M R Mohlala (EFF) to ask the Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation:**

How effective has she found the COVID-19 interventions to have been in areas of water and sanitation supply to help the Republic to curb the spread of the coronavirus? NW3646E

**REPLY:**

The COVID-19 Water intervention Programme (Phase 1) supplied about 1 335 million litres of water to targeted communities in the period between 28 March and 31 August 2020. These communities were thus provided with an interim form of water supply to assist the Water Services Authorities (municipalities) in their areas of jurisdiction. This intervention allowed these communities to have access to water to allow for hand washing and other hygiene purposes.

As a means to improve the sustainability and efficacy of these interventions, an allocation of R689 million from the Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG) was made directly to the relevant municipalities to connect the tanks to water sources and ensure sustainable water supply.

Further, it should be noted that the legislative mandate of the Department of Water and Sanitation is to ensure that the country’s water resources are protected, managed, used, developed, conserved and controlled in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all people and the environment.

The Water Services Act, 1997 refers to **municipalities** as Water Service Authorities (WSAs) responsible for distribution (reticulation) of water and to supply sanitation services. The Water Services Act in section 3 outlines the right of access to basic water supply and sanitation which mandates that “everyone has a right of access to basic water supply and basic sanitation” and places the responsibility on Water Services Authorities to ensure that they develop a Water Services Development Plan (WSDP) to ensure the realisation of this right.

Section 11 of the Water Services Act, 1997 mandates that “every Water Services Authority has the duty to all consumers or potential consumers in its area of jurisdiction to progressively ensure efficient, affordable, economical and sustainable access to water services.”