**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Question No. 3276

For Written Reply

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**QUESTION NO. 3276**

**Ms. T Gqada (DA) to ask the Minister of Energy:**

1. What are the full reasons for the delays in the implementation of the National Solar Water Heater Programme;
2. Whether his department has established working relationships with municipalities to roll out the implementation of the specified programme; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the (a) nature of the relationship that his department has with municipalities,(b) Meetings that have taken place to date; and (c) Decisions that have been made to date resulting from these meetings;
3. Whether he has found that the municipalities are willing to participate in the programme even though it is not generating revenue; if not, what steps has his department taken to encourage participation in the programme;
4. Whether he has found that municipalities have the capacity to support the programme; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details of the support that the municipalities are providing?

**REPLY:**

 In the main the implementation of the National Solar Water Heater (SWH) Programme has been delayed by the need to and meetings, and agree with critical stakeholders such as the municipalities.

1) (a) Following the consultation referred to in (1) above, collaboration with participating municipalities has now been formalised through the signing of Municipal Framework Agreements.

(b) The Department convened consultative meetings with the following municipalities:

* Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (on 03/03/2017);
* Ventersdorp/Tlokwe Local Municipality (on 30/03/2017);
* Bitou Local Municipality (on 09/05/2017);
* uMgungundlovu District Municipality (on 13/11/2017);and
* eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality (on 14/11/2017).

(c) The meetings resolved that:

* Municipalities will:
* Select and propose to the Department the areas in which SWHs will be installed;
* Identify government owned warehouses that are in close proximity to the installation areas;
* Submit databases of job-seekers that reside within, or are closer to, the targeted beneficiary communities; and
* Fast-track the outstanding Municipal Framework Agreements (where applicable).
* The Department will send to the municipalities the technical standards, specification and requirements which will apply to the SWH(s) that are compatible with the climatic conditions of the Designated Installation Areas(s).

3) The municipalities are willing to participate in the Programme particularly because the targeted households are in the main low income segments who also benefit from free basic energy programmes.

4) Most municipalities that the Department has engaged to date have demonstrated capacity to support the programme in accordance with the municipal obligations contained in the Municipal Framework Agreement. For example, some municipalities have provided the Department with the list of installation areas as well as the database of job-seekers, The Department continues to consult and support municipalities that are lagging behind in terms of fulfilling their obligations.