**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NO. 349- 2023**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER 02 OF 2023 DATED 17 FEBRUARY 2023**

**“Ms. A M Siwisa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture:**

What are the details of the (a) plans and (b) interventions of his department to popularise girls’ soccer and other male-dominated sport in schools for girls?   **NW364E**

**REPLY**

1. **Plans:** Currently the department has two main programmes that support the development of women in sport and in particular, football:
2. **School Sport Programme**: Through this programme, football is among the sixteen priority codes being supported. At the National School Sport Championships, provinces have been able to send at least 3 categories of participants which include male and female. These are Under 17 (Selected team), Under 16 (Top school) and Deaf football players. In each of these categories, there are women teams as well. So, it is a 50/50 representation, which is highly encouraged in all sporting codes as well.
3. **Club Development Programme**: The programme has concluded the pilot study in Kwazulu-Natal and Limpopo, which has among other women football clubs. The Club development programme is a dedicated programme to ensure the development of sport, including women football.
4. **Interventions:**
5. **Women in Sport Policy:** The department is in the process of developing a women in sport policy which is an intervention mechanism that will address the inequalities of funding and opportunities for women in sport.
6. **Safeguarding regulations:** We have also developed guidelines that serve as a barrier to women participation and serve to protect their participation in sport, through the introduction of these guidelines that will help curb the harassment of women in sport.
7. **School Sport and Club Development Programmes:** There is a deliberate effort to ensure that all schools and clubs establish women clubs and schools teams. This they do as they present their teams at the National School Sport Championships, where all provincial teams MUST bring women teams.
8. **Other Male-dominate sport in Girls Schools:** Girls schools are within the Schools Sport Programme, however majority are within quintile 4-5, which is not the target quintile. So, there is no direct intervention to such schools currently, what is being done is generally the same as what happens in public schools. The intervention is made through sporting codes, like Rugby, Cricket, Football, Basketball and all other school sport codes to ensure that the girls are adequately accommodated and provided the necessary coaching, participation, equipment and attire and general access in sport. It is for this reason that in School Sport Championships, Winter Codes are dominated by women participation, who represents 52% of the total participation and the Winter Championships are sitting at 50% of women participation.
9. **In addition we have also taken the following interventions:**
* **The Sport Ambassadors Programme:** Have appointed former professional players in football, like Portia Modise, Amanda Dlamini and Simphiwe Dludlu, to help promote the participation of girls in football.
* **Recognition:** Have gone to provide the necessary financial and performance recognition of the Mamelodi Sundowns Ladies Club for Winning the CAF Women Confederation Cup, and also the Banyana Banyana Ladies for Winning the Women African Football Confederation Cup (WAFCON).
1. **Achievements of Girls:** As a result of these measures identified here, through the school sport programme, the girl’s football has achieved the following:
* **Pan- African Schools Football Championships:** After winning the National School Sport Winter Championships in 2021, the girls Under 16 team from Edendale Technical School (KZN), took part at the inaugural Pan-African Schools Football Championships and went on to win a Silver Medal, after losing to Morocco in the final.
* **COSAFA Schools Football:** in 2022 during the School Sport Winter Championships, the Under 16 girls team from Edendale won and went to represent the country at the COSAFA Schools Football Championships, where they won Gold and a prize-money of US$100 000. They will be representing the region at the CAF Schools Football Championships to be held in Durban in April 2023.
* **National Under 17 Selections:** Due to this good performance by Edendale Technical High, five of their players were selected to represent the Ladies Under 17 National Football Team, together with their Coach, a woman as well. They went to represent the country at the AUSC Reg V Under 20 Youth Games, which took place in Malawi in December 2022.