Official reply: 03 December 2015

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION 3985 / 2015**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

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**3985. Ms B S Masango (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

With reference to her reply to question 2230 on 23 June 2015, (a) what progress has been made with the co-ordination between her department and the Departments of Finance and Higher Education and Training, (b) what are the details of the specified co-ordination in each case, (c) how many times have (i)(aa) the Minister and/or (bb) officials from her department met with (ii) the (aa) specified Ministers and/or (bb) officials from either of the specified departments in connection with this issue and (d) what agreements have been reached with each of the specified departments on this issue? NW4853E

**Reply:**

1. The progress made with the co-ordination the Departments of Finance and Higher Education and Training
* The Department of Education has engaged HWSETA and funding was made for the appointment of some of the social work graduates in Limpopo, KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape, and Mpumalanga Provinces.
* A budget Bid has been submitted to National Treasury by the National Department of Social Development whereby the employment of social work graduates was prioritised. The outcome is still awaited from National Treasury;
* In coordination with Treasury, the Department was advised to undertake

a process of re-costing of the funding of the scholarship programme. This is with an aim of determining how many social work graduates can be employed by reducing the number of intake of students for the MTSF period and also by utilising the savings from the scholarship funding due to drop outs and cancellations by students.

1. The details of the specified co-ordination in each case:
* The specified coordination with the Department of Education has been that they make funding available to appoint social graduates as interns whilst a through HWSETA whilst a permanent solution is sought;
* To prepare and submit a budget Bid has to National Treasury by the National which will include the tools of trade;
* Re-costing of the funding of the scholarship programme with an aim of determining how many social work graduates can be employed by reducing the number of intake of students for the MTSF period and also by utilising the savings from the scholarship funding due to drop outs and cancellations by students.
1. The number of times

 (i)(aa) the Minister met with the specified Ministers from either of the

 specified departments in connection with the matters indicated above

 six (6) times. These meetings include one on one with the Ministers of

 Education and Finance discussions and discussions of the matter in

 the Social Cluster meetings where applicable;

 (bb) officials from her department met with the officials from either of

 the specified departments in connection with the matters indicated

 above is eleven (11) times. These meetings include instances where

 general budget matters are discussed with Treasury and also Social

 Cluster meetings.

1. Agreements reached with each of the specified departments on this issue:
* The Department of Education has agreed to continue to make funding available for the appointment of some of the social work graduates as interns in the provinces whilst a permanent solution is sought. This is based on the availability of funding.
* National Treasury agreed that the Department of Social Development submit a budget bid prioritising the employment of social work graduates;
* The Department and Treasury agreed on a process of re-costing of the funding of the scholarship programme as a possible way of making funding available to fund social work graduates.