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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 4082**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 4/11/2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 44 OF 2022**

**Ms N N Chirwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(a) What is the purpose of the Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority Smart Skills Centre which was recently opened in Saldanha, (b) what is its current (i) functional status and (ii) capacity in carrying out its purpose and (c) how is it anticipated that the centre will improve the lives of unemployed youth in numerical effect? **NW5093E**

**REPLY:**

a)  The purpose of the CHIETA SMART Skills Centre project is aimed at bridging the digital skills divide between urban and rural communities. The Centre’s services are free and include access to data plus training courses aimed at job seekers, business start-ups, and SMMEs that wish to grow their operations. The centre will focus on basic digital skills aimed at addressing the digital skills divide in the district and at helping surrounding businesses and rural community members to learn technology-related skills.

b) (i)The Skills Centre was lunched on 25 October 2022 and will become operational effective from December 2022.

   (ii) Two staff members from Freeport Saldanha Industrial Development Zone will be responsible for receiving the learners and providing access to the various online training programmes. The above personnel will also be assisted by two interns who will be selected from the local community.

c)  The Centre will be opened to both unemployed youth and members of the community. The Centre is expected to target between 5000 and 10 000 unemployed youth over the next three years. This number excludes unemployed adults and other community members who will access the Centre to gain skills as well as to access the free services offered by the Centre including the use of the boardroom by local SMMEs. The Centre will help equip unemployed youth with basic ICT and digital skills needed which will enable them to become more marketable.