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**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 498**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 02/03/2018**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 5 OF 2018)**

**Ms H Bucwa (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education and Training:**

Whether she has found that the annual targets set by her department are (a) addressing all areas critical to her department and the entities reporting to her to achieve its mandate and (b) ambitious enough to ensure that the Higher Education and Training sector will perform in line with those of other countries with similar opportunities and challenges to those of South Africa; if not, what changes to her department’s set targets would she consider in order to measure performance in critical areas in the future?

**NW565E**

**REPLY:**

1. The targets do address areas that are critical to the Department’s mandate. The Department’s targets and that of its entities, were set taking into account the National Development Plan (NDP), White Paper for Post-School Education and Training and the 2014 - 2019 Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

The targets in the Department’s Strategic and Annual Performance Plans aim to create an enabling environment for the realisation of a *“skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path”*. Critical to this are targeted interventions to steer the Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system, e.g. the development of steering mechanisms to ensure that the system operates based on sound legislative frameworks, improved capacity through infrastructural development, provision of teaching and learning support services, as well as the facilitation of a strong stakeholder network. The Department has been phasing in these interventions since the adoption of the 2014 MTSF.

The Annual Performance Plan reflects these as the direct outputs of the Department over and above the planned performance targets of educational institutions, i.e. universities, Technical and Vocational Education and Training colleges, Community Education and Training colleges and its entities.

1. Due consideration of international contexts were made during the development of the NDP and MTSF targets. The Department is confident that the higher education and training sector will over time perform in line with other countries facing similar opportunities and challenges to South Africa. The implementation of the MTSF and NDP targets within this sector is progressive in many fronts, e.g. with regard to the national aim of increasing enrolments in higher education, as envisaged by the NDP and the White Paper, the university system is already achieving 61% of the 2030 target of 1.6 million student headcount enrolment at public higher education institutions. The system is also responding positively to Government’s research development priorities set out in the NDP and MTSF targets. Artisan development is at 71% of the NDP target of 30 000 artisans per annum by 2030, to mention but a few.

Notwithstanding this, the Department is aware that more still needs to be done and not all the challenges of the PSET system can be resolved in the short-term. Government’s next MTSF will continue to inform the plans and the targets of the Department going forward.