**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 570**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 4-2022 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**570. Mr M K Montwedi (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

Whether she has found that the failure to assist farmers with post-settlement support, now known as Land Development Support, contributed to non-payment of leases by farmers; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW638E**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

Yes, the non-payment of leases by farmers due to lack of post settlement support is partially correct. However, there are other reasons listed below, which the Department is trying to address:

* non-availability of lease agreements has resulted to some extent, in farmers not paying rentals;
* there has been a culture of non-payment from some of the farmers, despite having received post settlement support;
* farmers were incorrectly categorised as 1 and 2 instead of Category 3; according to the State Land Lease and Disposal Policy (SLLDP), Categories 1 and 2 are not required to pay rental, only Category 3;

In order to correct, this situation the Department has embarked on the following actions:

* when the land development support implementation manual was revised, a condition to force farmers to have valid signed lease agreements was included to ensure that there is a legal contract in place to deal with non-paying farmers;
* the process of making sure that all farmers have valid signed lease agreements is underway;
* when farmers are provided with land development support, their categorisation is confirmed and if it is not category 3, the process to correct this is undertaken;
* review and alignment of the SLLDP with other Departmental policies is also paramount in dealing with this matter and other issues, and is expected to commence in the 2022/23 financial year; and
* as the officials conduct site visits to farmers who have received land development support, the latter are encouraged to pay their rental, since this money will assist in expanding the support to other farmers who are still awaiting development support.