****

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER 721**

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**QUESTION:**

**721. Ms CM Phiri (ANC) to ask the Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities:**

Considering that 8 March 2023 is the International Women’s Day, commemorated under the theme DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality, what is the approach of her Office in dealing with the prevalent digital gender divide? **NW802E**

**REPLY:**

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities is partnering with various stakeholders on developing a 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) Youth Skills and Employment Initiative. This Initiative seeks to equip the youth with digital skills, so that young people (including young women and youth with disabilities) can participate in the digital economy.

This Initiative is a solution which seeks to prepare the youth as the current and future workforce by training 4 000 young people in skills that are required now and in the future. It is envisaged that once trained, young people would be more employable or become entrepreneurs. The targeted beneficiaries for the 4IR Youth Skills and Employment Initiative are unemployed young people between the ages of 18–35 years. These youth will be equipped with technical training and will receive internationally recognised certificates upon completion.

It will provide training in the following areas:

a) Technical skills in Digital Literacy;

b) Information Technology Essentials;

c) Technical Support skills;

d) Web Development skills;

e) Cell phones and Computer Repair skills;

f) Information Technology Trainers skills;

g) Cybersecurity skills;

h) Entrepreneurship skills; and

i) Sales and Digital Marketing skills.

There have been consultations with the Economic Sectors, Investment, Employment and Infrastructure Development; the Governance, State Capacity and Institutional Development; and the Social Protection, Community and Human Development Directors-General Clusters on the initiative.

The DWYPD will coordinate the 4IR Youth Skills and Employment Initiative and ensure reporting. The implementing partners who have committed to be part of this Initiative are:

a) Department of Cooperative Governance;

b) National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA);

c) Digiconnect; and

d) CISCO.

Two Memoranda of Agreement have been signed between the DWYPD and the Department of Cooperative Governance and CISCO. The Memoranda of Agreement with the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) and Digiconnect have been finalised and are being processed for signature by both partners. The 4IR Youth Skills and Employment Initiative will be presented to Cabinet once all Memoranda of Agreement have been signed.