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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 850**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 8 - 2021**

**850. Mrs G Opperman (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) What (a) number of shelters are currently operating in the Hantam Local Municipality and (b) are the relevant details of the persons and/or institutions assisting homeless people with food and shelter in the municipality;

(2) (a) what number of shelters that are supported by her department are within the Northern Cape and (b) in which towns are the shelters situated;

(3) whether all the shelters in the Northern Cape are operating and/or functional; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW1013E

**REPLY:**

(1)(a) There are currently no shelters for the homeless operating in the Hantam Local Municipality. During Level 5 Lockdown shelters were operational in Calvinia and Brandvlei respectively. Buildings at the Sport Grounds were utilized. A total of thirteen (13) individuals made use of the services during this time, (*11 in Calvinia and 2 in Brandvlei*). Upon investigation, it was found that eleven (11) of the beneficiaries were residents of the area, but were refused accommodation with their families, where they usually reside, due to disruptive behaviour. Family preservation services were rendered, and all persons were re-united with their families within three(3) months. Two (2) of the residents were from outside the Northern-Cape and were transported back to Pretoria and the Eastern Cape, respectively, as soon as restrictions on travel were relaxed.

(1)(b) No assistance or services are currently required.

(2)(a)(b) No shelters for the homeless are currently operational.

(3) No shelters for the homeless are currently operational in the Province. The approach of the Department of Social Development is to render psycho-social and family reunification services. If cases are reported the circumstances under which an adult male would report himself as homeless will be investigated. In most cases it is found that he has accommodation, but due to conflict or unacceptable behaviour could no longer stay there. Through family group conferences and other interventions, the matter is usually resolved and there is no need for accommodation in a shelter.

There are six (6) shelters available for women who need temporary shelter, or became homeless due to violence. Support and counselling are given in order to return these victims to a safe family environment as soon as possible. All these shelters are operational and funded by the Department of Social Development.

In cases of homeless children, one of the ten (10) funded Child and Youth care Centres are utilized for the placement of these children - if they cannot be returned to their families.

Maintaining shelters in the Province (at least one per District) will require a large budget. If only one (1) shelter is operational, beneficiaries might have to be transported up to 800 km to stay at a shelter for a few days, which is also not cost effective.

The number of adult males (the target group of shelters) reporting to be homeless is very low, and matters relating to their temporary housing problems can usually be resolved in a short space of time. The available budget in the Province will be much better utilized by funding existing VEP Shelters and Child and Youth Care Centres.