# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 860**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 17 MARCH 2023**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 10)**

**Ms N N Chirwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) Whether, considering the historical concerns with regard to the influence of Mr Bill Gates over the South African healthcare system, with specific reference to the vaccine programmes during COVID-19 and the funding of the SA Health Products Regulatory Authority, he will furnish Ms N N Chirwa with a detailed breakdown of the (a) funding that the Republic has received from the specified person since 1 January 2009 and (b) departments and/or entities to which the specified funds and/or donations were sent and/or directed by either his department or by the specified person as the donor; if not, why not, in each case; if so, by what date;

(2) what (a) programmes has his department been involved in with the specified person and any related affiliations since 1 January 2009 and (b) programmes and/or associations does he envisage will take place with collaborative effort and/or through the funding of the specified person with the Republic in the current year and/or envisaged for a later period? **NW966E**

**REPLY:**

1. The department is not aware of “historical concerns with regard to the influence of Mr Bill Gates over the South African healthcare system”. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is one of many philanthropic organisations that contribute to healthcare across the globe. The Foundation “provides funding to organizations to achieve measurable impact in the fight against poverty, disease, and inequity around the world”, and “funds entrepreneurs, companies, and other organizations to create incentives that harness the power of private enterprise to create change for those who need it most.”

The Gates Foundation supports several programs in South Africa with its major focus on health. During the period 2009-2022, the Gates Foundation invested approximately $907 million dollars in South Africa to some 764 grantees and vendors (which include NGOs, universities, science councils, implementing partners, and manufacturers).

With specific reference to the vaccine programmes during COVID-19, departments and/or entities to which funds and/or donations were sent and/or directed by, include only one government entity, the SAMRC for the Sisonke healthcare worker COVID 19 vaccination programme, plus several private and non-government organisations.

With specific reference to SAHPRA since 1 January 2009 the Gates Foundation direct support to SAHPRA is $7.6million to date.

1. The Foundation has provided no direct funding to the NDoH since 1 January 2009 to date. The focus of the Foundation’s health investments is related to TB and HIV response and span the spectrum from discovery, translation science, product development and delivery of new interventions.

<https://www.gatesfoundation.org/about/committed-grants?country=South%20Africa&region=AFRICA>]

According to the Foundation the programmes and/or associations envisaged through the funding of the Foundation, include:

1. in the current year:
* Technical Support to the TB Programme
* Technical Support on HIV quality improvement and HIV Prevention
* Technical support to the DDG NHI
* Catalytic support for scale up evidence-based TB and HIV interventions in South Africa
* SAHPRA was supported with paying for external reviewers (both South Africa and non-South African) selected by SAHPRA to address the large backlog (+/- 16000 applications) inherited from the MCC at the request of the SAHPRA Board. This included all products as the Gates Foundation support of external reviewers was not product specific
* Africa Resource Centre to provide technical assistance on Supply Chain management
1. envisaged for a later period:
* Provision of catalytic support to implement evidence-based TB and HIV interventions in South Africa
* Support to SAHPRA for digitisation of clinical trials records

END.