Chairperson

This department and its entities have an important role to play particularly with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic and the new vulnerable of our population.

As I have mentioned multiple times before, I believe that the department and its entities have skewed priorities when it comes to its expanded mandate of sustainable development and upliftment.

Yes, it is the mandate of this department to provide social relief, but it’s also the mandate to develop people and communities so as to become independent of social assistance. This is currently lacking, as we are seeing a society that is becoming more and more dependent on the State. As the saying goes: give a man a fish and he eats for a day; teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime.

What is also worrisome is the deep-rooted corruption within entities such as SASSA. A few rotten apples can rot a whole basket.

There are exceptions, and I would particularly like to thank the team that assisted me with SASSA payments in Hobhouse, in the Free State. They assisted in bringing the necessary relief to our pensioners and disabled community that had to sit in wind and weather for FOUR DAYS before sufficient money for grants payments were available.

But this also goes further to prove my point. Had I not been informed by my constituents and been able to call the right people, our vulnerable pensioners would’ve been forgotten. Agbare minister, maak u huis skoon van persone wat net vir eie gewin by u department is en nie werklik omgee oor die welstand van ons mees kwesbares nie.

The R350 SRD-grant. I actually have no words. What I have is rage, frustration and tears.

How do I encourage the man that has R0 in the bank and qualifies in terms of all the criteria yet he was declined? What do I tell the grandmother whose granddaughter is unemployed and qualifies for the SRD-grant but still has not received an outcome to her application of two months ago?

Hoe vertel ek vir nóg ‘n maand vir die man wat met sy dogtertjie by sy ouers moes intrek dat dit nie sin maak hoekom hy afgekeur is nie?

En so kan ek aangaan en aangaan….

Hoe edel hierdie toelaag ook mag wees, hoe ‘n totale gemors is dit ook.

I understand that we had to develop systems on the go, but surely to make promises and create expectations that cannot be met, is not right and is not fair to the people that have already lost so much. It has been 10 weeks and four days since the official application process opened and it has been 13 weeks and three days since this grant was first announced and it has been as long that people have waited for their R350…

Had there just been better communication and better mechanisms for the grant applicants to get into contact with SASSA.

Chairperson,

I am also deeply concerned and frankly quite disappointed in the way all ECDs matters have played out during this pandemic. In my view, had the necessary consultation happened and had the department and the minister been more open to discussions from the get go with organizations across the board, maybe we would not have seen this department in court spending money on litigation that could’ve been used during this pandemic to provide assistance and upliftment.

Ek het verder my kommer in die komitee hieroor uitgespreek, maar ek sal weer sê: Deur die begroting wat geoormerk is vir nodige instandhouding van VKOs te herprioritiseer is uiters riskant.

To fullfill the mandate of sustainable development Early Childhood Development should be prioritized. A child that is left behind during these developmental years due to governments neglect of this sector will not be sufficiently equipped for school, will fail and will become part of the unemployed and dependent on social assistance.

Agbare minister, ek wil glo die goeie bedoeling is daar en dis nie net alles sleg nie. Die pandemie is ‘n ongekende omverwerping van wat ons ken en die nuwe normaal gaan gewoondraak vat, MAAR daar is te veel foute, daar is te veel leemtes, daar is te min wilskrag, daar is te veel voorbeelde van waar ons vorige mees kwesbare, maar veral ons nuwe kwesbares in die steek gelaat is.

T Breedt, MP

FF Plus