

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY QUESTION 1510

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Mr G G Boinamo to ask the Minister of Education:

Whether a plan will be implemented that will make provision for (a) funding, (b) counselling and (c) medical services for victims of violence in schools; if not, why not; if so, (i) what plan and (ii) when will it be implemented?

N1974E

REPLY:

Yes, a plan is in place for counselling victims of violence in schools. Agreements are being reached with the Department of Health for the provision of medical services.

The plan is being implemented in stages. The first stage started in 2004 and should be completed by 2009. The next stage will continue from 2009 to 2020. The plan is part of the implementation plan of Education White Paper 6 on Building an Inclusive Education and Training System. The plan is part of the overarching development of safe and inclusive school environments, the improvement of discipline in schools and developing effective district support.

Education White Paper 6 outlines the services to be provided by the district-based support teams and institution-level support teams. All psychologists and social workers, who are currently employed in the system, will become part of these transversal district support teams that will focus on building the capacity of schools to run preventative as well as intervention programmes at schools.

Funds were allocated in the 2006/07 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement for the creation of 150 posts for counselling and support staff based in districts, starting with the poorest districts in the country. The responsibilities attached to these posts have been outlined as follows:

- Supporting the development of institution level support teams through ongoing mentoring, consultation and monitoring
- Building capacity of teachers through school-based training and mentoring to provide curriculum support to learners who experience barriers to learning
- Building capacity of schools to introduce effective counselling and intervention strategies
- Performing crisis intervention

- Running and coordinating support and intervention programmes in targeted schools for vulnerable children, with specific attention to victims of violence, street children, orphans and other out-of school children and youth
- Ensuring the effective functioning of health advisory structures and coordinating and monitoring the assistance programmes of the social partners in an area