

RESPONSE BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD WELFARE

1. Can the Honorable Minister please explain on this House why the nation is not educated on the provision of this Act on this matter? If such education took place, can the Honorable Minister inform this House when, where and how the nation is/has been educated?

Answers: Honorable ^{Member} Nekundi, I thank you very much for the question therefore I am confident to inform this Honorable House that the Ministry of Gender Equality and child welfare has a Legal Literacy Programme in place and has started as far as ^{the} year 2003, targeting to educate members of the general public including traditional leaders who are the custodian of our traditions ^{and} culture in ^{the} all community ^{es} of our society. The main aim of this programme is to educate all our people on all Gender related laws and policies in order for them to understand their rights and obligations as well as where to go and what to do when their rights have been violated by any members of the society which include families or non-family members. The laws which the Ministry is educating the communities among others are:

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia especially Article 10, Article 6, Article 8, Article 66, and Article 95 of the constitution.
2. Maintenance Act Part II, which is on **Duty to Maintain**, whereby Section 4 is very well explained by our officials and other service providers such as Legal Assistance Center to all members of our community. Parents are entitled to claim maintenance in terms of the Law, therefore they ~~are at~~ liberty to ^{have} exercise their legal rights ^{to} and approach the court to claim for maintenance against their children who are neglecting them in terms of section 4 (2) of the Maintenance Act No 9 of Year 2003. This information are also given/explained to the members of the community through ^{the} media such ^{as} radios in ^{the} official language as well as ^{in the} local languages, ^{all the} newspapers, ^{also} ministries newsletters that are available in ^{the} 4 Regions. Therefore, this programme is an ongoing programme in our Ministry; we have staff members in all 14 regions who are educating communities on those Laws and policies that are of paramount importance to improve the living standard of all our people at all levels.

3. Can the Honorable Minister please explain to this House why the Provision of this Act on the matter is not enforced? Or if it is enforced can the Honorable Minister inform this House how many cases were reported to the relevant authorities and how many parents were granted the right to be maintained by their children?

Answer: As a Ministry we cannot say the provision of the Act is not enforced because is a legal duty for each and every person who is affected to report to the relevant authority, in this case to the magistrate court of his or her jurisdiction whereby the court must enforce the Law as provided for. Therefore it will be misleading information if we say the provision of this Act on this matter is not enforced. The reason being that someone have to report to the court in order for the court to grant maintenance in terms of the Act.

4. On the case of how many parents were granted the right to be maintained by their children,

The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare does not keep the statistics in this regards; the Ministry of Justice through the courts have the mandate to hear the cases.

I thank you!

Otherwise the Hon. members can visit any time our Head Office ^{or} ~~and~~ our regional offices at any time. This information ^{also} is ~~also~~ available ^{at} ~~the~~ all ^{the} regional offices.