



Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for International Development

Thursday, 3rd July 2025

Panel:

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade (Chair)

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement (Vice-Chair)

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North

Witnesses:

Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville and St. Martin, The Minister for International Development

Mr. E. Lewis, Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid

Ms. H. Hall, Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid

[14:37]

Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade (Chair):

Minister, welcome to this hearing with the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. We are pleased to have you in. We are just going to introduce ourselves for the record, and would like you to do the same please. I am Deputy Montfort Tadier, I am the chair of the panel.

Deputy M.B. Andrews of St. Helier North:

I am Deputy Max Andrews, a panel member.

Deputy K.M. Wilson of St. Clement (Vice-Chair):

Deputy Karen Wilson, vice-chair.

Deputy M. Tadier:

We will let you introduce your panel.

The Minister for International Development:

Deputy Carolyn Labey, Minister for International Development and chair for Jersey Overseas Aid.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Edward Lewis, executive director of Jersey Overseas Aid.

Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid:

I am Harriet Hall, monitoring and impact officer at J.O.A. (Jersey Overseas Aid).

Deputy M. Tadier:

Welcome. We are going to dive straight in, Minister. Can you provide us with an update as to what your workstreams are and what you will be working on in the next 12 months?

The Minister for International Development:

I will be working on Jersey Overseas Aid, chairing the Commission. We hold monthly meetings and we will be monitoring and deciding on our budgets and what we allocate in emergencies. We have just conducted the sift, that I think we described last time. We have got a huge great document here of what the officers put together on their visits. This was decided upon by commissioners at the end of April. So we have decided which sustainable development projects to start going forward, so these will be enacted. As I say, we have got the emergencies that are ongoing and as and when we get contacted by N.G.O.s (non-governmental offices) or we feel that we should be allocating monies, we address that. Local charities, we monitor what they are doing and assist them if they need assistance. The outreach work is obviously continuing in its various forms; the community work projects, which are the volunteer programmes open to all members of our community. We will be launching them in October for the following year. That is basically the normal things that we will be doing, plus other outreach things like our J.I.D.N. (Jersey International Development Network) programme. We are hosting one this evening at the Arts Centre on humanitarian aid. Hopefully you can come. Your presence last time was very welcome, Deputy. I have got a brochure here, or a poster here, if you wanted to come along. Yes, I think it is business as usual. We have just held a rather prestigious, I think for Jersey, event in June hosting the U.N. (United Nations) and hosting the Start Network, which is another N.G.O. that we deal with for smaller, less-known emergencies. There were delegates that came over here, so that was a very, very good event.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Was that the O.C.H.A. (Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs), is that what we are ...?

The Minister for International Development:

So there is U.N.O.C.H.A. at the beginning of the week, and then at the end of the week, there was the Start Network, which we fund. They are pooled funding, and they ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

Are you able to tell us about any of the outcomes of that?

The Minister for International Development:

The outcomes ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

Well, first of all, while you find that, do you think it was generally a successful event, would you say, from Jersey's perspective?

The Minister for International Development:

I think it was enormously successful, not only to get ... how many did we have?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

We had 17 Government representatives plus a handful of N.G.O. and I.N.G.O. (international non-governmental representatives) members representing countries from diverse as Venezuela to Yemen, the D.R.C. (Democratic Republic of the Congo), et cetera. So I think, yes. In terms of the outcomes, maybe I can answer on behalf of the Minister on this occasion because I was attending the meetings and they were officer level only. I think in terms of success, absolutely. In the current financial landscape of humanitarian funding, hosting the event in the first place in itself was a success. U.N. agencies, in particular, have their international travel frozen, so they thought it was important enough for them to travel from New York to Jersey to be part and co-chair that event. That in itself shows how important it is to the sector at this time. I think I said in some media engagements leading up until the meeting, normally these meetings are discussed in humanitarian hubs such as Geneva and New York. The sector is in a bit of shock, I should say, at the moment. The funding freeze, the withdrawal from funding at the moment, the rising needs globally means that we have to do more with less. So there is this thing called the humanitarian reset, which is what the premise of this discussion was all about. So hosting it in Jersey, having that representation from that donor base plus the community from my I.N.G.O.s, I think in itself demonstrates how important and how successful it was.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Do we believe the expression “do more with less” because the reality would dictate that you do less with less?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

I am afraid we have to because that is the reality. The needs globally are rising and the funding accessible is dwindling, so it is about finding ways to avoid duplication, to streamline, to be more efficient, and those are exactly the discussions we are having behind closed doors.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Okay, thank you. Minister, at the panel’s first hearing in April 2024, we asked you if you had felt there had been any impact on the work of your department following the change in the Council of Ministers. Could you let us know maybe a year on how you think your work has progressed with the new Council of Ministers? Have there been any changes? Has it been business as usual, would you say?

The Minister for International Development:

Certainly with J.O.A. it has been business as usual because there were no changes there. With the change of Government obviously ... well not obviously, but fortuitously I retained my seat as Minister for International Development and the commissioners stayed the same, so J.O.A. was very much business as usual.

[14:45]

I was, however, also appointed as an Assistant Minister for External Relations, specifically looking at the soft power, the soft diplomacy, if you like, which overlapped quite well with the Island identity work that I continue to pursue. Yes, so my workload has increased since then.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Thank you. Just maybe going back to the work of J.O.A. more specifically, can you let us know if there are ... have you identified any areas where you think Jersey can potentially have more impact and greater visibility on the international development level? We have spoken in the past, I suppose just to give context to the question, about the - we just mentioned it now - changing landscape of overseas aid, the reduced budgets, freezing on budgets or cuts to budgets. Does that have some potential opportunities for Jersey?

The Minister for International Development:

Well obviously it impacts on us because we are getting greater demand on our budgets from N.G.O.s who might have had their own budgets cut, stopped, whatever. I feel personally, because we have

got the 3 themes that we pursue in Dairy for Development, Financial Inclusion, Conservation Livelihoods, I feel that Jersey presents itself really well and can add value to our projects. They are themes that resonate in Jersey with the Jersey cow, with Durrell and the wealth of knowledge we have in the finance sector. I am not entirely sure how ... I mean there is always more we can do. There is more educational work we can do. However, we have a limited number of staff. We have touched 800 pupils, I think. We have spoken to them in schools with our outreach. I am struggling to think what else we could do to raise our profile.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I suppose the political question is, given the fact that other Governments throughout the world are cutting their overseas aid budgets, are you coming under any pressure ... do you think, is there likely to be any financial pressure, (a) from the Council of Ministers in terms of their budget next year? If so, will you be asked to respond by potentially freezing or cutting your budget, and if so, what will your response be?

The Minister for International Development:

Indeed I am coming under pressure for my own budget, as we all are with the cost-of-living issues and demands on our health and education services. It is inevitable every single budget is being looked at. We have reached the 0.3 per cent of G.D.P. (gross domestic product). We reached that this year, which was our goal. I personally feel if I can maintain that this year, 0.3 per cent, that would be an achievement, given the pressures. It was mooted that it should come down.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I suppose the issue is G.D.P. is not linked to government income, is it? Or government expenditure? Do you know what the GDP figure is likely to do? Is it going up?

The Minister for International Development:

In the last couple of years it has been going up based on our financial services; the gains there in the investments. However, I do not have a crystal ball, but I would say it will be ... it is probably going to plateau somewhat now. I would expect it hopefully to plateau and not go down. But obviously with it being linked to G.D.P., my budget will go down as well as up.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Could you remind us what your budget is roughly?

The Minister for International Development:

I can tell you exactly, it is £22,221,000, which equates, as I said, to 0.3 per cent of G.D.P. We learned today, actually, that the O.E.C.D. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) average, which we have always had our sights set on, has come down.

Deputy M. Tadier:

It was 0.7 per cent, was it not?

The Minister for International Development:

No, that is the U.N. goals. Some countries achieve that. The Scandinavian countries usually achieve that and a few others. But the O.E.C.D. average is now 0.33 per cent.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Just to reiterate or re-ask the question: are you likely to be asked to cut that funding?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Have you been asked that already?

The Minister for International Development:

I have not been asked directly but I have seen a few slides that indicate that there will be reductions to my budget, which I intend to ...

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Can I also ask as well, in the last public hearing that we held, there was a discussion about the U.S. (United States) and their stance with foreign aid. I just want to know whether you have seen an increase in demand for assistance and if so, to what extent has that been an issue for you in your position as a Minister?

The Minister for International Development:

There has most certainly been a demand for assistance. I have got my budget. We have gone through the sift, so we know what we are allocating; 75 per cent of our budget ... what we are allocating in sustainable development grants. We allocate another £5 million, we earmark that for humanitarian assistance, which can fluctuate. When we get nearer the end of the year, we will look at it again. But certainly U.S. humanitarian agencies have been contacting us just to see if there is a small amount that we could give, which would bridge them to the end of their project.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

I think the majority of international N.G.O.s that we support are registered in the U.K. (United Kingdom) or Europe and receive the majority of their funding from the E.U. (European Union), the U.K., et cetera. We do have a couple of organisations that do have large segments supported by U.S.A.I.D. (United States Agency for International Development) and they have come under increasing pressure to streamline, to reduce their staffing costs, et cetera. I would say that the biggest impact we have seen are probably in the U.N. agencies, because they have had to, as a direct result of U.S.A.I.D. funding cuts, shrink their operations by 20 per cent. So that limits their operational capacity. Obviously the organisations that we support through the U.N. have been hindered. I think it is worth pointing out that it is the small organisations that have felt these cuts the most. It is the small N.G.O.s, grassroot level organisations, that are the sub-grantees of the bigger ones that almost overnight had the lights switched off, do not have any safety nets necessarily, and cease to stop, which obviously impacts the ability to reach beneficiaries.

The Minister for International Development:

I feel Harriet wants to add something here.

Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Just an addition really, and I think it is linked to your question from earlier about our international reputation too. Obviously with our pool fund working group co-chairship, we, as an Island and as an aid agency, our reputation grew and had a much wider understanding across the sector. As we are a small donor, we operate from a list of closed partners. What that means is we are not overwhelmed with applications for either development grants or humanitarian grants. We review that. We receive applications to join this list on an annual basis and it is presented to the board for their sign-off on an annual basis. What we found this year is that there has definitely been a spike in inquiries from organisations ranging from large U.N. agencies to much smaller organisations expressing interest to how to become a partner of J.O.A. I think that is, in part, down to the fact that budgets are tighter across the world but also in terms of our reputation as well as being a decent donor too.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Can I also ask, Minister, in terms of the number of organisations that have come forward to you, how many cases have you declined compared to how many cases have you accepted that you are willing to grant assistance?

The Minister for International Development:

I will let one of the officers answer that because we ... as a commissioner, I would only see those that the officers are recommending that we fund.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

In terms of the bridging grants that Deputy Labey was talking about in terms of giving a small amount for them to see through until perhaps other donors come on, we have not given any bridging grants to any organisation.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Thank you. I am just going to pass over to Deputy Wilson.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Minister, in other jurisdictions, policy on migration and even energy fall under the remit of the Minister for International Development. Are there any areas of policies that you feel would be best suited to fall under the responsibility for the Minister for International Development in Jersey? If so, would you provide some examples?

The Minister for International Development:

Can you repeat the list?

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Well, the one that we talked about was policy on migration and energy.

The Minister for International Development:

Right. I do not think that should come under my remit.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

No, okay.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Are there any areas which you feel frustrated at sometimes that you think maybe should come under your remit or that you would like to have more say on, in terms of ...?

The Minister for International Development:

Specifically for international development?

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes.

The Minister for International Development:

Off the top of my head, no. But I might walk out of here and think of some.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Okay, thanks for that. I know the question seems a bit out of the blue. I suppose in the sense that you are also an Assistant Minister for External Relations ... we are not here to ask you about that because it is not the purpose of the ... but does that provide a useful synergy for you to be able to have oversight of what is going on there as well as your International Development hat?

The Minister for International Development:

I would say it does not do much for international development, however, the 2 portfolios are outward facing, so for that it can be quite useful, and External Relations have a lot of contact, notably in London. If I want to go and speak to a Minister, an M.P. (Member of Parliament), someone like Sarah Champion, who was over last week, they can facilitate that much better. We have a very good relationship with the Foreign Office. We sometimes help one another set up meetings and that sort of thing. Because the portfolio is about both outward facing, I think that is the synergy and obviously using the Island identity project, that enhances the External Relations remit that I have.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Thank you. I was going to ask I suppose - and it relates to this question as well that Deputy Wilson asked - in terms of the U.N. development goals, is there a sense in which ... your focus is very much on helping countries overseas but is there a sense in which the U.N. Development Goals would also be applied to Jersey and that you would compare notes to benchmark, if you like, to make sure that actually they are being applied at different levels locally through the Council of Ministers' wider work?

The Minister for International Development:

I do not know. I think maybe they could be considered, yes, when Government are making policies and deciding to fund certain projects. I think that is not a bad idea.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Let us just move on to some of your overseas visits that you do and maybe have done recently. Could you just give us some highlights of visits that you have taken part in, either yourself or J.O.A. more generally, and any visits that you plan for the remainder of this year?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, this year. I wish I could find my list but I cannot, so I will have to remember it. This year most notably I went to Zambia to have a look at our projects there, notably the Dairy for Development, because I signed an M.O.U. (memorandum of understanding) a couple of years ago with the Agriculture Minister. So a new Minister was elected recently. We went down to meet him and

introduce ourselves. There is also a new high commissioner in Zambia. So we met her and we also looked in on our Financial Inclusion projects there.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Is that a pre-existing relationship that Jersey has had with Zambia?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, Zambia is one of our focus countries.

[15:00]

We enjoy a good relationship with them. That was good. The Minister may pay us a visit later on in the year because they are quite interested in coming to see the cows in their original place.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Another objective of that trip was to expose our new patron, the Lieutenant Governor, to the work we do in Zambia; and he accompanied us on that visit. That was an excellent opportunity for him to see the work the Jersey Overseas Aid does, but also feedback to His Majesty about the work we do, given his interest in conservation and also in livestock as well. That was another objective. As the Minister said, meeting with the British High Commission there, looking at where we can collaborate and potentially co-fund with initiatives there, pooling our resources and making maximum impact with a partner such as the F.C.D.O. (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) was another objective.

Deputy M. Tadier:

What does the M.O.U., by the way, tend to include? I do not know if you are able to disclose any of that.

The Minister for International Development:

It is just a partnership with the country. It is just almost to say that we would like to do these projects in the country and what we hope to achieve and bring them feedback on them and establish a relationship rather than a foreign body coming to their country, sort of doing projects.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Is that expectation?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

It essentially creates an enabling environment which will make our programmes be able to deliver higher impact.

Deputy M. Tadier:

But it is not two-way in the sense that Jersey does not get anything out of it as such? You just want to make sure that the ...

The Minister for International Development:

No, we are really, really careful about that aid and trade, but also I have always maintained we can go into a country and do projects there. What we will not do is if E.R. (External Relations) have got target countries that they wish to pursue business in. I mean if they coincide, happy days, but we are not there to set the scene for trade.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I suppose, the M.O.U. is really just to set out the parameters, the expectations, what you are allowed and expected to do ...

The Minister for International Development:

Exactly.

Deputy M. Tadier:

... and also how the aid will be received and the underlying purpose of it.

Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid:

I just have something to add from the practical side of it. With the projects that get allocated funding on a yearly basis, when they are implemented in country, they will have a specific line Ministry. The organisations that we work with will have to both report to us as a donor, but also report to the line Ministry. In the example of Zambia, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock is usually the line Ministry for quite a few of the different projects that we have, so it just solidifies both our reputation as a donor, but also helps with the actual implementation of the projects because they are more aware of what is going on and what is happening and who J.O.A. is, for example.

The Minister for International Development:

You also asked about possible future visits. We are looking at the moment at Syria, because we have funded Syria consistently over the years. I think the total for Syria since 2018 is £2.7 million. We are trying to set up a visit there, and also possibly a visit to the Ukraine.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Is Syria safe to visit?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

As safe as anywhere, I suppose.

Deputy M. Tadier:

And Ukraine as well.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

We are in close ... the organisation that we will be traveling with and who will be organising and co-ordinating the visit is the Red Cross. Obviously, their widespread reach, their reputation, and the international esteem in which they are regarded will elevate that security level, but they will be the custodians of ourselves when we travel. They will be arranging the access points. We will receive security training in advance of that visit as well.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Are these Ministerial visits or is it the J.O.A. team? Or either?

The Minister for International Development:

Both.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Okay, thank you. We will move on, if that is okay. We have got a lot to cover, but thanks for the answers so far.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Okay, I am going to ask about your annual report. It was reported in the annual report of 2024 that the volunteering programme had received record numbers of applicants for projects in Nepal, Rwanda and Malawi. Are you doing any work to encourage and garner this increase in Jersey volunteering overseas?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, we have got a small team at J.O.A. and this is the area that probably uses up the most amount of time; booking flights, insurance, making sure all the volunteers are properly equipped to go. So it is very human resource hungry. We feel it does us huge amounts of good. It does volunteers huge amounts of good on their C.V. (curriculum vitae). We see it is an investment in Jersey people who are coming back here. But I think at the minute, they are probably at manageable levels for our staff.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

How many are we talking about?

The Minister for International Development:

About 45 a year.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Co-ordinated by 2 individuals whose job is 20 per cent of that, dedicated to that; so all of the logistical issues that Carolyn has talked about, all of the booking, all of the transport, the training, the feedback, all of that is done by 2 individuals who dedicate maybe a quarter of their time to that. It is a huge amount of work, but it does generate a huge amount of goodwill on the Island. I would like to think that there is a cascade effect there, that when they come back and they have done a J.O.A. C.W.P. (community work project), they will like to look at other volunteering opportunities that are not necessarily with J.O.A., but with other organisations, or on their own, hopefully.

Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Yes, because before each of the volunteer placements, the team spend a lot of time doing training sessions and awareness-raising sessions with the volunteers before they go, both around what J.O.A. does, but also the international development sector more broadly, and what does sustainable development mean. It is not just a matter of people turning up and going on these placements, but they have all that kind of background and time and work that they have put into.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Do you think there is anything more that Jersey can do with regards to its participation in overseas aid?

The Minister for International Development:

In what respect, sorry?

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Well in terms of how you are actually starting to assist communities around those 3 particular dimensions that you talked about before.

The Minister for International Development:

So we are talking about our sustainable development grants? I think 75 per cent of our budget focused on the sustainable development grants and the themes that we have chosen are the right

ones. We do revisit our countries and the thematic areas that we are in. We did that quite recently, and we came out we are quite happy with what we are doing at the moment.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Like every sector in the world, there is always more you can do, but you have to rest on the resources that we have. I think where we are now compared to where we were 5 years ago, in terms of our approach to international development grants, how we select our partners, the rigorous due diligence that we go through to ensure that we have the best possible partnerships from the outset, the monitoring and evaluation that we have implemented in the last few years, including mid-evaluation points, external evaluations as a mandatory requirement of our grants, feedback loops, mechanisms, so enable us to receive feedback from the implementation partners saying: "Maybe this donorship, it was good here, there are gaps here." We are always, always looking to get feedback from the field so we can potentially tweak how we go about our grant making. But I would probably echo the Minister to say that I think we punch way above our weight for the resources that we have and the cell face that we have.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Is there anything else you want to add on that?

Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid:

No.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Minister, what are your thoughts on poverty reduction as a marker for value for money in terms of aid programmes?

The Minister for International Development:

I am not entirely sure how I go about answering that. Yes, you have a go.

Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid:

That is a really interesting point. When you are thinking about value for money, it is not always about financial. Social impact is a really important part of that. I would say the majority of our development grants that we work with, we are working with marginalised populations, be that women or people from low economic backgrounds. I think a lot of our programmes do relate to that. It is a demonstrated impact and value for money. I do not know if you want to come in.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

No, I think that is right on. I think the fact that we are measuring that, and that is a standard indicator within a lot of our programmes, demonstrates again that we take that very seriously in terms of how we measure impact. That has come front and centre in terms of our approach in the last few years.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Are there any programmes that you think have not delivered that value for money outcome that you were seeking?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Off the top of my head ... I mean, I can follow up in writing. We have had projects that have not hit the mark. In fact, yes, we have had one recently where we, after the midterm evaluation, were not convinced by the progress that had been achieved, that the targets that they had laid out were not being met. We imposed a level of scrutiny on top of them. Usually we have a 6-monthly cycle of reports. We increased that number. We increased our engagement to get communication with and more information back. After a bit of back and forth, we took the decision that this was no longer a value-for-money grant, so we terminated it. We have received, I think, not quite 50 per cent back from the organisation. The activities have been completed. Not completed, they have been terminated. But it is a delicate one, because obviously you do not want to suddenly withdraw all of that funding from an organisation that is relying on it in the next 6 months or so. So it is a delicate phase-out, but at the same time you have to be accountable. I think we have engaged and managed that grant as carefully and as responsibly as we can, but we do go to organisations that are not meeting the standards and we do get the money back.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Can I just ask you very quickly, Ed, what would you do with that return? Do you reinvest it in new projects?

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Yes. Ordinarily, the de facto, the default, would be it would go into a humanitarian allocation. Not always, but that is the first 2, and then we will see where there are other opportunities. But as you know, we do not have a crystal ball. We do not know what is going to happen down the track, whether there is going to be another earthquake in Turkey or more landslides and floods in Libya. So I think having that headroom is a sensible use of funds when they come back to us.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Thank you. Minister, can I ask you how effective you feel Jersey's international aid has been thus far?

The Minister for International Development:

I think recently, not wishing to brag, but when I took over as chair, along with Simon, when we restructured Jersey Overseas Aid, I think it has been incredibly effective for a small agency and one that is small and can act very quickly. I think it has been hugely effective. I believe that it is an agency ... it is an area where Jersey and the Jersey taxpayer needs to be justly proud of.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

So you have an officer who is focused on impact. What would your comments be in relation to what the Minister has just said around the effectiveness? How and in what way would you demonstrate that?

Monitoring and Impact Officer, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Yes, so I could give you a bit of a background to my remit, if that is helpful. So as monitoring and impact officer, as the Minister said, it is something that we pay a lot of attention to. We are taxpayer funded, so we need to make sure that the projects that are allocated funding are doing what they are meant to do and that they are serving as they should. We have quite a robust approach to monitoring and evaluation and impact at J.O.A. We have a policy that is online, but it hinges on both regular reporting cycles. So every grant that we allocate will have a legally binding grant agreement, and within that it stipulates what their reporting requirements are. Typically, they will submit 2 reports each year. One is a lighter-touch informal report, and then one is a much more extensive narrative report. It has a full financial report for that year. There are also technical documents. One of them is a logical framework and one of them is ... we call them the J.O.A. standard indicators. It is a set of metrics that all projects will have to report against. Together with the other programme officers, we are each responsible for reviewing those reports. Then we also have added layers. There is the midpoint monitoring visits. As a donor, we reserve the right to visit projects halfway through their implementation. I will usually lead on those visits with the thematically as well. I am actually going to Zambia next week to do a monitoring visit for a financial inclusion project. What those visits consist of is usually between half a day and a day, a round table at the organisation's office, their implementing partners will be present, we will run through due diligence, updates, governance questions. Then it is followed by between 3 and 4 days in the field visiting various project sites, meeting stakeholders, speaking with project participants. It is a really good opportunity to get a holistic view of how the project is going.

[15:15]

We are a third party, so our partners ... yes, we get the good and the bad. Then the outcome of those visits are I will draft an executive summary that has what is working well and areas for additional consideration. Then there will be a more extensive full report. We always invite partners

to give feedback on that so it is transparent. But yes, I think in terms of impact, the thematic areas really help with that. We have a depth of knowledge across those and we can create useful linkages as well. I think that is another nice thing of being a small donor. It is not just about the financials, but it is also about spending time to meet with partners, build that trust and also facilitate connections across sectors. Partners might come to us with a problem and, if it is a bigger donor, they may not get a response, whereas we are able to quickly connect them with another organisation and maybe a different country that has had a similar challenge and they can navigate that quite well. I think that is also a nice positive impact of what we are doing too.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

I will just quickly, maybe it is another reflection of how we are seeing ... I think within the development of humanitarian sector, it just goes hand in hand with the fact that we were chosen, selected to co-chair a major U.N. working group. That, I think, demonstrates how we are seen. I think, just hot off the press, I would say that our Deputy Director, Gillian Challinor, has just been asked to be on the executive committee of a World Bank Financial Inclusion Think Tank, along with other experts in the sector representing the Netherlands, other Government donors, U.N. agencies, World Bank. I think that is a huge indication of how we are viewed as well. If it is okay with the panel, I would like, after we have shared with the Commission, to share with you a recent partner survey we did with all the organisations that we provide grants to have given us feedback on how they see us as a donor. I think you would be very pleasantly surprised by the comments and feedback that we receive.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

Thank you very much.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Deputy Wilson, I think you need to leave us.

Deputy K.M. Wilson:

I do apologise.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I will continue though. We are going to change the theme slightly and I am going to ask a little bit about your work providing for countries which are in conflict zones, essentially. I am going to ask specifically about Ukraine in the first instance. Could you let us know how has aid to Ukraine changed over the last year, if at all, if it has changed? Also, given the prolonged nature of the war, are there any challenges globally around aid in that area, and also for the Jersey more specifically?

The Minister for International Development:

Ed will be able to speak about specific projects, but if I could just give an oversight. You may know that the amount of donations that Jersey have given is £4.1 million; £1 million came from the Bailiff's Fund, £1.4 million came from public donations, and £1.7 million has come from Jersey Overseas Aid in various projects. We have got one ongoing project at the moment with Caritas. We also have a placement, a Jersey person who has got a 2-year placement with the U.N.. working in Kiev. We support her financially as part of our emergency relief. I will let Ed go into specifics.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

It is a classic example of when the ... although Ukraine has been in the media eye, but there is a degree of fatigue, I think, among donors and among others as well. I think that is reflected in the level of funding that it is receiving more generally. We have maintained consistent support, albeit in lesser levels. But we see a particular area, winterisation, as something that we support. As you can imagine, the freezing conditions in the country from October to March present a multiple of challenges to communities, not just in order to reach them because of the frozen roads, but also in terms of access to basic services and living conditions. We see the winterisation programme as an area that we consistently support. As the Minister said, having a J.P.O. (junior professional officer) in Kiev, who works external relations, so she is generating reports for potential donors, is a really smart way of using our money because hopefully her work is influencing other jurisdictions to continue their contributions to the ongoing conflict.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Presumably the Bailiff's Fund, that was a one-off, was it? It was an appeal.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

And the other donation you talked about, is that ...?

The Minister for International Development:

So the public donations is collected by the charity Side by Side. But they came via us to find the projects for ... and so did the Bailiff's Fund came via us.

Deputy M. Tadier:

So the overall amount for next year is not going to be £4.1 million, is it?

The Minister for International Development:

No.

Deputy M. Tadier:

But your contribution will be the same roughly?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, it will not be ... it is £4.1 million since the conflict began. So, as Ed says, we will pick the projects. We tend to like their winterisation projects. They resonate with us, really, the Red Cross parcels, and we give parcels, winterisation parcels, to the Ukrainians.

Deputy M. Tadier:

If I can just tie into a question I was thinking about earlier, is that if we think about the U.N. development goals, and there was a question about poverty and zero hunger, is of course a second goal, is there a sense that some of those needs - and I suppose winterisation is another example - those are dealing with specific immediate needs and it is not about development as such. Is what you tend to find is the split between development aid, so give a man a fish, et cetera, or teach a man or woman to fish, I suppose is the dichotomy. How does that figure into the thinking and the stats that you see in terms of your funding?

The Minister for International Development:

That is why we divide our budget up as we do at the beginning of the year, we roughly allocate 25 per cent to humanitarian emergencies and 75 per cent to sustainable development grants, because that is your give a man a fish.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

It is about the enabling environment, really. It is about having that context where you can realistically implement durable long-term solutions. In lots of the contexts that we operate humanitarian-wise, that is just not possible, because you might start something and 2 weeks later it is bombed or ... so it is about having the enabling environment, and that is where the difference is between humanitarian and development. There is this very convoluted word, the nexus, which is about trying to find the solution where humanitarian and development link up. If we find that, that would be a silver bullet, but that is a nut the whole sector has tried to crack for decades.

Deputy M. Tadier:

This is a more global problem, it is not for Jersey, but is there a sense in which the direction of funding from overseas aid in certain countries towards the war effort to security, shall we say, is that actually potentially going to see ... it is supposed to have a more secure world, but actually in the short term we are seeing potentially a lot more dangerous world. Is that having a knock-on effect in terms of need in terms of emergencies?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, absolutely. We see global budgets or different jurisdictions switching their international development or humanitarian budgets from humanitarian into defence. It is not a good situation.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Counterintuitive, is it not, to a certain extent? Deputy Andrews, are you happy to carry on with the similar line of questioning?

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Yes, indeed. We will just move on to Jersey Overseas Aid and the assistance to Gaza. Obviously the panel is aware of recent events in terms of the blockade with many countries trying to provide foreign aid to Palestinians and of course it has been blocked. I just want to know, Minister, what has to change in Gaza in order to provide the assistance that the Palestinian people need in order to survive?

The Minister for International Development:

Well first and foremost, the Israelis need to open up the border crossings so that we can get aid in. As you may know, the hostilities escalated hugely on 18th March. Our aid before then had all got in. Our last aid donation to Gaza was in February, and that all got in. However, from 18th March, as I say, the hostilities escalated and we have been monitoring the situation really closely, waiting for an opportunity to get aid in. It looked slightly more encouraging, shall I say, because before 18th June, I think there was a 23 per cent of the humanitarian aid getting in. As of last week, there was 40 per cent going in. As a commission, we are currently considering and waiting for a time when we can give the money so we can get them in. We might use some of our agencies that are there on the ground now in order to give them the money so as soon as there is an opportunity they can deploy those monies.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Can you just say in terms of aid that is going to Gaza, are we talking about the food aid or is it medical aid? Is it a mixture?

The Minister for International Development:

It is a mixture.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

Multi-sectorial, yes.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Sorry if this question is slightly political, but in the sense that what we are seeing in Gaza, I think, is very much a situation where, from what I can see, is that you have some egregious actions being taken by the Israeli Government defence force just firing on people as they are waiting to get food, including children. We have seen the images on the news. Is there a sense in which you think enough ... I mean are there conversations that other Jersey Ministers can have with international counterparts to say: "Look this kind of stuff needs to stop" because actually it is like filling a ... sorry to use the expression, it is like filling a bucket with a hole in terms of the humanitarian impact, is that you ...

The Minister for International Development:

Well yes, but if it keeps people alive for another month, to get the aid in that is buying time.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I guess what I am saying is that it would be better not to have to get the aid in if the international community were applying pressure for Israel to stop killing civilians.

The Minister for International Development:

I think they are. I personally have written to the Foreign Office, or me and the Minister for External Relations signed a joint letter when we were discussing this last grant that we were considering when we knew that it was very difficult to get the aid in. We wrote in those terms to the Foreign Office that we are here ready, willing to send monies for aid in Gaza. However, we are being prohibited because we cannot be assured that the money is going in. Obviously the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation is not something we are prepared to support, as you have alluded to. People are going to get food and being shot at, so we are certainly not donating anything there.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Is this something you were able to raise with Sarah Champion when she came to Jersey?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, indeed. I spoke to Sarah Champion in ... I wrote to Sarah Champion in February and had a long meeting with her about this. She is very much prepared, when the opportunity arises, to make our points of view, as they are very similar to her own, about what is happening in Gaza. She was prepared but, as I say, at the beginning of June the Minister for External Relations and I also wrote to the Foreign Office. The Minister for External Relations has previously written letters after your debate, Deputy.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Finally, what is the Government's view about what is happening in Gaza?

The Minister for International Development:

They, like everyone, I would hope, want the hostilities to stop, but obviously ...

Deputy M. Tadier:

Is Government applying pressure on the U.K. to ask for Israel to stop killing civilians?

The Minister for International Development:

It is my understanding that the Minister for External Relations has made representation. He was here a couple of weeks ago; I assume you might have asked him those questions. I think that his most recent letter was the one that he co-signed with me.

[15:30]

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Minister, as you are probably aware, the Co-op made the decision to no longer sell goods from Israel. I want to know whether this is a decision that you support and do you think such pressure is needed within the international system and only then would that be the case that Israel will maybe back off?

The Minister for International Development:

I think it shows our feeling. It is something that I would support. I also think that we have to be quite cognisant of our community here and how ... we are a peaceful community and we have to consider everyone in it. But what the Co-op are doing, I think, is admirable.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Also I just want to ask, as well Minister, obviously Hamas have spoken out about not being in agreement with Trump's demands, and I just want to know what pressure does that put on bodies who are trying to get aid into Gaza to assist the Palestinian people when there are 2 opposing sides who are potentially posing a threat to one another?

The Minister for International Development:

The humanitarian workers, as we know, are working in a very difficult situation.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

Can I also ask, in terms of the support that has been provided, has any of it been damaged due to the effects of the war or has any of it maybe potentially come to harm because of somebody trying to obtain what is available?

The Minister for International Development:

We do not believe so. We predominantly deal with 3 agencies and we have got a very good relationship with them and they report back to us. We have done all the due diligence on them and they are trustworthy partners, and indeed they will be here this evening.

Deputy M.B. Andrews:

What information are they feeding back to you, especially in the last few weeks? Obviously we have seen geopolitically a few politicians have spoken about the conflict, and of course there has been some level of discussion but there has not really been any agreement in terms of making sure that that there is a ceasefire and to open up the border so the Palestinian people can obviously get the support that they need.

The Minister for International Development:

I do not believe there have been any broader conversations here. We have been, as I say, considering this grant that we will hopefully be sending in the next week, because we have been encouraged. The feedback that we are getting in reports, as I alluded to earlier, that earlier in June there was about 23 per cent chance of getting the aid in. As of last week, there is 40 per cent. It is going in the right direction, but we are monitoring.

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

I would say the feedback we get from the organisations that we are in close contact with is one of immense frustration. They have the capacity, the capability, the staff, the infrastructure, and often the resources to actually allocate this funding, but they are preventing doing so, which goes against the whole humanitarian imperative. While no aid of significance is able to access into Gaza, the needs in the West Bank are rising, which is in direct correlation to the events since 2023 as well. It is a perfect storm because there are 2 organisations, and I would say the Trump administration is wholly culpable in supporting the G.H.F. (Gaza Humanitarian Foundation) as well, preventing humanitarians from doing their job, weaponising food. It is a dire, dire situation. I think Deputy Labey, J.O.A. and Jersey in general should be applauded for its continued and consistent support of the ongoing crisis there.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, maybe I should ... before the atrocities on 7th October, Jersey Overseas Aid had made 22 allocations of £1.6 million. Since 7th October, we have made 8 allocations of over £1 million. So it is £2.6 million we have donated to Gaza. There is a small amount to Lebanon.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Minister, I think about 140, 150 countries recognise the state of Palestine. Do you think it is time that Jersey's Government perhaps took a step to recognise Palestine? Would that send an important message out to the international community?

The Minister for International Development:

I mean, Jersey could, yes, but what impact it would have, especially when constitutionally our foreign policy is dealt with by the U.K. One has to be realistic. I mean we can say things, but it is up to the U.K.

Deputy M. Tadier:

We talked about the Co-op freezing ... not freezing but adding to the list of boycotts for the countries, so they now boycott certain products from Israel. Do you think Jersey's Government should consider maybe financial sanctions against certain Israeli investors, maybe if the Israeli Government has any assets in Jersey, like we have done for Russia, should ... with your other hat, would you speak to the Minister for External Relations perhaps about whether there is anything that could be done around that? Would that be appropriate?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes indeed, I believe there are 2 people that have sanctions ...

Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:

There are 2 Israeli Ministers we have sanctioned.

The Minister for International Development:

... against them already here because the U.K., so we will follow suit.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Yes, of course, but we know Benjamin Netanyahu has got an arrest warrant out against him, which seems to be singularly forgotten I think by the international community, certainly in the west, but it is ... would that be something that could be considered about actually wider Israeli investments that Government might have in Jersey? Because we do not even know if those 2 individuals have ... it is going to be relevant.

The Minister for International Development:

This is not my field. I do not know what Jersey would have to do, independent of the U.K., to make these sanctions.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I think I am looking at the bigger picture, really, about how we do whatever we can in a small way to try and bring around the end to the conflict so that less aid is needed ultimately, which should be a benefit to J.O.A..

The Minister for International Development:

Well yes, unfortunately there is always need for our budget. In an ideal world, we would not have to give any of it out. These are all areas that, yes, we can make a stance but I am not sure about the mechanics, as I said, what would be needed to bring in sanctions independently of the U.K.

Deputy M. Tadier:

I am sorry that we have run over slightly. I think we will leave questioning there. I think we have covered, by and large, everything we wanted to ask you, but have you got any additional points for us?

The Minister for International Development:

I will leave our posters there for this evening's humanitarian relief talk with some of our partners that we are working with in Gaza. That should be really interesting. It would be good if you could come.

Deputy M. Tadier:

Thank you. We will just finish the recording.

[15:38]