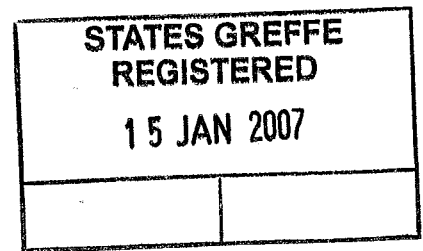


513/5 (2)



Scrutiny Review of Jersey's Overseas Aid

A view from the Jersey Oxfam Group.

I am pleased to pass on the following response from a member of the team at Oxfam who deal with Jersey's Overseas Aid Commission. They are generally very happy with the way the Commission has been working and the size of its grants year on year. We are glad to know that.

States of Jersey scrutiny panel – Oxfam response

- (a) The States' policy for upgrading the Island's Overseas Aid budget in line with GNI
- (b) The JOAC's policies and procedures for the distribution of its grant aid budget
- (c) The methods for measuring the effective utilisation of the JOAC's aid budget by recipient
- (d) The Island's Overseas Aid contributions in comparison with other jurisdiction

Response to (b)

Oxfam has a long-standing relationship with the States of Jersey going back over 20 years. Over that time Oxfam has received millions in grants for both our emergency and development work. We appreciate the commission's ongoing commitment to our work and are proud to be associated with the Island of Jersey.

The current Jersey funding criteria for development grants, we feel is very clear, concise and broad enough for most potential applicants to meet successfully. The wide criteria enables Oxfam to submit a wide range of work from all parts of world, including those areas which are not popular with funders such as the former Soviet Republics. Making the criteria more specific would lead to a reduction in the number projects and countries we and other charities could submit to the Commission. The proposal template and submission process is straightforward and we appreciate the opportunity to meet the commission to discuss the projects during the meetings in London.

The inclusion of a rolling three-year grant following the previous Jersey Overseas Aid review has been particularly welcome. Long term programmes such as these allows Oxfam to invest in projects which will help many more people over a longer period and gives Oxfam time to prepare beneficiaries to become self sufficient once the project ends. We hope that other Island governments will be looking to replicate the same with their own aid funds in the future.

When a disaster strikes whether it be manmade or natural the States of Jersey is one of the first funders Oxfam approaches. The emergency grants criteria is again clear and concise, the broad criteria allows us to spend the funds where the need is greatest, this reduces the time and money spent on administering a grant. The process of submitting an emergency grants is simple and the turnaround from the commission is very quick, which is important when you are dealing with fast moving emergency situations.

For many funders, media interest in a disaster does play a part when making funding decisions, which means many smaller emergencies are forgotten. In the case of the States of Jersey, we have found this is not the case and in 2006 the States of Jersey were the first and only government to have funded our work in response to the Tajikistan Earthquake - June 06 and the Philippines Typhoon - December 06. Without the support of States of Jersey, we would have had to scale our response down.

Response to (C)

The States of Jersey reporting requirements on receipt of a development grant are for a final narrative and final financial report at the end of each year. The reporting requirements are clear and concise and require no additional input that differs significantly from Oxfam's standard reporting requirements for all our projects. This means the transaction costs of administering a Jersey grant are minimal for Oxfam staff in the U.K. and the country where the project is based. We can see no reason why there would be a need to change either the development or emergency grants reporting requirements, any significant changes may lead to higher transaction costs for the charity.

Sam Magee, Trusts and Institutions Team
Oxfam, Oxford

Information

From Jersey Overseas Aid booklets (collated by Ed Le Quesne)

Year	Oxfam Projects supported (General + emergency)	Grants	Total grant	Local shop and group
2001	7 + 3	£389k + £90k	£479k	£94k
2002	5 + 3	£257k + £75k	£332k	£123k
2003	4 + 3	£251k + £75k	£326k	£105k
2004	6 + 2	£371k + £50k	£421k	£120k
2005	5 + 3	£296k + £75k	£371k	£142k

From Oxfam Finance Dept

A quick check reveals that 1175 individual Jersey-based supporters gave just over £100k in each of the last 2 years. In addition there are further donations from corporate / Trust sources based in Jersey.

This shows the high level of support for Oxfam in Jersey.

- * Aid given by JOAC is close to £400k each year on average
- * Aid given direct to Oxfam by over 1000 Jersey based people is over £100k each year
- * Amount raised by the shop and group over £100k gross each year.

A response to the 4 points from the terms of reference in turn

(a) 20 years ago I put forward the view that Jersey's aid is shiny coppers rather than silver. Jersey's aid budget is well used but its size doesn't match up to the scale of the need and our comparative wealth. We have recently become a Fairtrade Island, showing a level of concern about the conditions of people in developing countries. The number of people regularly supporting Oxfam appeals made through the national media also shows a desire to help people help themselves, which is Oxfam's philosophy. Jersey should set itself an aim to reach the UN target of 0.7% of GNI within the next 10 years and agree on a stepped programme to achieve it

(b) JOAC are wise to work through established agencies, rather than governments to distribute their aid. I am also glad that they have begun to use 3 year funding for some projects, with Year 2 and Year 3 funding following on successful completion of Year 1. However I feel that this policy should go further. Looking again at 2001 to 2005, JOAC supported 55, 47, 47, 51 and 58 different agencies through their grants. I didn't analyse the countries but there seemed to be an equally wide spread. How does the committee decide which project to support and which to reject? Also how much is linked to what else is happening in Jersey?

Close to £2m has been given to Oxfam over these past 5 years, but no information has been passed back to the Jersey group by JOAC to celebrate or inform us, beyond project titles and occasional A4 pages in the annual reports. The project proposal submitted by Oxfam, the JOAC comments and Oxfam's final report should all exist in electronic form and should be publicly available. This raw material would help us to raise the level of public understanding about the effectiveness of Jersey's Aid programme. To my surprise, people commonly think that Jersey's Aid programme consists simply of sending work parties, yet this is under 3% of our Aid. To release this information would be a minimal extra cost, because the spreading of the information would be done by Oxfam Group members, school teachers looking for project material etc.

I would like to suggest that at least a proportion of the aid starts with a community overseas that has some link with Jersey. It could be Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, all often visited by work parties or Madagascar, with strong links with Durrell Wildlife or the Caribbean with strong links with Durrell, banks and holidays or Rwanda, linked with Jersey cattle. We would already have links with community leaders in the chosen areas. We ask the agencies to suggest projects in chosen area, hopefully getting more than we can allocate and let the community leaders have some say in which is chosen. The commitment should be to the chosen area for a number of years. There should be some positive publicity of the area and its people, a visit to Jersey by someone from the area to share something of their culture, perhaps secondment of teachers, nurses, technical people of all sorts sharing skills and widening the horizons of the Jersey person chosen to go. In a whole variety of ways, people can add value to the grant of £30 to £50k or whatever, and people in Jersey would become well aware of the people there as friends. Jersey side by side was a great image for the response to the tsunami and we gave and gained much more than the raw money raised, through friendship links built upon or established. Much of the link work can be done on a

voluntary basis by Jersey people but even if it costs an extra 1% of the Jersey Aid budget it would be money well spent to raise the profile of Jersey's Aid programme and how it transforms lives and would in turn make it easier to persuade the States to vote for an increased budget.

c) The present reporting requirements are satisfactory in so far that a school or clinic or water project can be ticked off as completed in the year of the grant. But development involves people. Has the school got teachers and pupils 3 years later, is the clinic languishing for lack of a doctor or generator? By dotting round the world each year we don't know or have the means to find the answer to these questions. By focussing on particular areas for a longer time we can help to ensure they are sustainable. Development doesn't happen in a tidy fashion and long term partnerships are important.

d) I think there is some force in the argument that Jersey's Aid is direct to projects involved with people and by-passes governments where there is sometimes waste and/or corruption. Except for some part of the spending on work parties our Aid is not tied to purchase of Jersey products. However we should help to build up democratically elected governments by working in partnership with the local leadership. We could also offer training opportunities in Jersey for people to come here for short spells or send specific people with skills to work there for a time. . However we do wish to raise our international profile and so we should work by international standards. The long--standing U.N. aid target is 0.7% of GNI. As a major finance centre we also will make a big contribution to development by full co-operation with international moves to track down capital flight by companies and wealthy individuals.



Ed Le Quesne

Chairman, Jersey Oxfam Group

These views have been discussed with members of the Jersey Oxfam Group and developed through long-term involvement with Oxfam but are not an official Oxfam view.

13/1/07