

To Jersey Overseas Aid Scrutiny Panel

I have been involved with working in Africa since 1990 and spend at least 3 months of every year in either Zambia or Tanzania where our charity is mostly active. During these 17 years I have had dealings of varying degrees with the JOA, primarily as a project volunteer then as a deputy group leader and latterly as an applicant for funding. So, I do feel somewhat qualified to comment. My feelings are outlined briefly below:

I have been very disappointed to note that, over the years since I first became involved, our contribution has dropped. Subsequent presidents have not had the political will to support the raising of our contributions to a more acceptable level - they have merely accepted that we have to "tighten our belt" or "we do well for the size of our island". This is not acceptable. The physical size of our island is irrelevant. They have used emotive terms and specific amounts such as '5 million pounds' - which does sound a lot when taken out of context but is far below the recommended level.

a) GNI funding - this system is a good measure of contribution but unfortunately Jersey's falls way below other countries with a similar or lower GNI.

b) Policies - imperative that JOA continues to work with NGOs instead of Government Orgs. However, I feel there should be more support of Jersey's charities which work in developing countries. I know other local charities are disappointed. But I can only speak for our charity, HELP AN AFRICAN SCHOOLCHILD. It is one of the most active organisations in the northern province of Zambia. The support has been in the form of building schools, churches and a health centre as well as providing bursaries for over 100 children on a regular basis. More recently we have built a day care centre for street children. This we have done with very little help from JOA - the bulk of our funding comes from damn hard work organising events over here and GUERNSEY OVESEAS AID COMMITTEE.

c) Measuring - follow up reports are not enough - there should be a policy of some sort of continual support - however small. As one small example; during the early 90s JOA provided Hombolo Leprosy Centre (Tanzania) with, amongst other things, a generator. The centre applied for funding for parts to repair generator some years later but this was refused by JOA. That generator then became rusted and useless., they subsequently had no power for the centre as they couldn't afford mains electricity when it eventually arrived. Likewise with building projects, be they health centres, schools or whatever; once an outside organisation builds in Africa it is very hard for the locals to acquire further funding from anywhere else for the smallest of requirements such as writing materials up to extra classrooms. They are merely referred back to the original donor agency.

d) Comparisons - this is pathetically far below the recommended - I am sure many others will provide facts and figures to support this view.

To sum up; I feel that, whilst JOA are travelling in the right direction overall, we will never reach our destination if we continue on the present course. Things must change.

Thanks for your time.

Vanessa Nash

FOUNDER TRUSTEE

HELP AN AFRICAN SCHOOLCHILD