

**Your Ref: 513/5(1)**

Senator James Perchard,  
Scrutiny Office,  
States Greffe,  
Morier House,  
St. Helier,  
JE1 1DD.

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2007

Dear Senator Perchard,

**Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel**  
**Review of Jersey Overseas Aid**

Our apologies for the long delay in replying to your letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2006. We have been in The Gambia, and have only just returned to Jersey.

The Jersey Gambia Schools Trust have been supported by the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission since the year 2000, receiving Grant Aid for the installation of wells and latrines in several schools in The Gambia, for which we are very grateful. We visited two schools for which we received grants on our recent visit to Gambia, and are pleased to report that the wells and latrines are still in good working condition. The fifty/fifty grant system is of great benefit to smaller charities, and we would like to see this facility ongoing.

In 2004 the Jersey Gambia Schools Trust were successful in their application for a Grant for a major project in The Gambia, this being the building of a Skills Centre in the Provinces, in the village of Sohm some 20km north of the town of Brikama. The construction of the five buildings, one of which was constructed by a Team of Jersey Overseas Aid Volunteers, is now complete. We now have a Board of Governors, as required by the Gambian Education Department, to oversee the recruitment of Tutors and other employees to run the Skills Centre.

Whilst we are very grateful to the J.O.A. Commission for their grant for building purposes, we have to say that it is extremely difficult to raise funds for the initial opening of the Skills Centre and would suggest, if financially possible, that any future projects of this nature supported by the J.O.A. should have the opportunity to apply for a grant to help fund the opening and running of similar projects for the first year of their operation. In our view it is detrimental that the J.O.A. give grants for the construction of buildings, [Schools, Clinics, Skills Centres etc.], in Third World countries and then have little or no further input into the projects. As you will appreciate, smaller Charities such as we are do not have such a wide profile as for instance Hospice Care, Headway, or disasters such as the Tsunami. When disasters of the magnitude of the Tsunami happen the small charities have great difficulty in raising funds. Although we have not approached the J.O.A.C. on this matter as yet, we believe we now have enough experience to be bidding for larger amounts of money as the major N.G.O's do.

In the nine years that our Charity has been in existence we have developed a very strong relationship with the Department of Education in The Gambia. We also have many contacts here in Jersey, and have been able to send six 20ft container loads of equipment including school furniture, machine and hand tools, building supplies, paint, computers and various office equipment. This continues with much help and support from Huelin Renouf Shipping, who allow us to load the containers at the docks here in Jersey and who also ship the full containers to Portsmouth free of charge. Due to the generosity of business houses and schools here in Jersey the Skills Centre has been almost fully equipped, and many schools in The Gambia have also benefited.

For your information and interest I have pleasure in enclosing our Skills Centre Brochure and an Information Leaflet about the Jersey Gambia Schools Trust. I would also add that the Island of Jersey is now well known and respected in The Gambia.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Mallet.

Carol Mallet [Mrs]  
Honorary Secretary  
Jersey Gambia Schools Trust.