



Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Quarterly Hearing

Witness: The Minister for International Development

Thursday, 27th July 2023

Panel:

Deputy M.R. Scott of St. Brelade (Chair)

Connétable R. Honeycombe of St. Ouen

Witnesses:

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

Ms. G. Challinor, Senior Programme Officer

[12:32]

Deputy M.R. Scott of St. Brelade (Chair):

Welcome to this quarterly hearing of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel. The aims of this hearing are to gather information about your Ministerial objectives for the next quarter, covering the areas within the Ministerial delivery plan and any other areas within your remit. It is also to follow up on issues raised at the last hearing, which was held on 26th April 2023, to see how these have progressed. We do not have any members of the public, but the hearing will be filmed and streamed live. The recording and transcript will be published afterwards on the States Assembly website. Please ensure that all electronic devices, including mobile phones, are switched to silent. For the purpose of the recording and the transcript, I would be grateful if everyone who speaks could ensure that you state your name and role. I will point out, for the purposes of the transcript, that Constable Honeycombe is attending by Teams, but maybe I could start with panel members introducing ourselves, followed by the Ministerial team. I am Deputy Moz Scott. I am chair of the

Economic and International Affairs Panel. Online we have ... I do not know whether you could ... do you mind repeating that because there was a very noisy motorbike, Richard?

Connétable R. Honeycombe of St. Ouen:

Connétable Richard Honeycombe, and I am a panel member.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you very much.

The Minister for International Development:

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

Senior Programme Officer:

My name is Gillian Challinor. I am senior programme officer at Jersey Overseas Aid.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you. I am sorry that the director is unable to attend today. We have one hour scheduled for the meeting, starting on the subject of your overseas visits. We understand that you have undertaken a number of these in your capacity as Minister. What would you say are the benefits of these visits in terms of when you are going overseas?

The Minister for International Development:

The benefit is usually to make contact with the delivering agent, the N.G.O.s (non-governmental organisations), that are delivering our projects. In my capacity as Minister, if I am able to do so, I visit the British High Commissioner and then the Minister of the relevant subject. For example, I have just been to Zambia. Last year I signed an M.O.U. (memorandum of understanding) with the Minister for Fisheries and Livestock. This year I went back to launch the project. Now everything is in place. So I visited the British High Commissioner and I visited the Minister again, and we were lucky enough to have that particular Minister come to the launch of our project. So it is to flag fly for the Island, to meet the relevant Ministers, to meet the N.G.O.s. We like to build relationships with the countries that we are in. The last visit in Zambia and Malawi was because there was an African Jersey Forum taking place. So I spoke at that, attended that. It builds relationships with the countries where we are working in. I think it also demonstrates that Jersey is an outward-facing international jurisdiction and wanting to sort of progress our projects in those particular countries.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Could you just expand on why you believe it is important that you, as a Minister, are carrying out these visits as opposed to, say, a member of the J.O.A.C. (Jersey Overseas Aid Commission)? My

particular visits are usually to see the Ministers of the country that we are working in because we get far better co-operation if the particular Minister has, for example, signed an M.O.U. with us. It advances the project and enables things to happen probably an awful lot quicker than if I was going there just, for example, as chair of Jersey Overseas Aid. The staff at J.O.A. (Jersey Overseas Aid) obviously visit the particular countries, but they go and have a look at the programme specifically.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Were any M.O.U.s produced in respect of the visits you have done this year or more recently?

The Minister for International Development:

Not this year. However, I was in Madagascar at the beginning of the year, and the Minister for the Environment is meeting me in London later on in the year. We are launching a Conservation Livelihoods Environmental Conference in London, and hopefully she will be visiting Jersey at some point after that.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay. Just at this point, I will mention that I am going to be asking all the questions because Constable Honeycombe has an issue with his eyes at the moment, so I am afraid you will be hearing more of my voice than normal. But I will be looking out in case he wishes to add anything. How do you prioritise visits or do you attend all those you are invited to?

The Minister for International Development:

I think if ... for example, I visited Zambia last year when we wanted to start a dairy project in the country. so to visit the British High Commissioner and the Minister to talk about the projects that we want to see. I mean it is out of courtesy really. We are going there with aid to work in their country and the initial visits are sort of courtesy but, as things progress, if there are M.O.U.s to sign, that is when I would go out there. Malawi I visited, as I say, because there was an African Jersey Forum, which is the third forum of its kind, and it is good that a member of Jersey Government is speaking at that.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

How many invitations, say, have you had for this year and how many have you declined?

The Minister for International Development:

We work with our partners. I would not say I have declined or I have had loads of invitations that I have accepted. It is normally as we work in the country with the N.G.O.s, as we formulate the projects, that is when I would go out.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Generally in respect of new projects or do you have a policy in terms of ongoing projects?

The Minister for International Development:

It can vary. Zambia was a new project. Malawi, we have already been working in the country and we held ... that was a chosen country for the African Jersey Forum. A couple of years ago we held the African Jersey Forum, the first one in Rwanda, whereby we met the Minister for Agriculture there. So it certainly raises the profile of the projects; the Jersey cow and Jersey.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Would the Minister for External Affairs carry out any relevant visits in conjunction, such as discussions relating to trade agreements with developing nations on these visits?

The Minister for International Development:

No.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So it is always just you?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Sorry, but I have got quite a few questions to go through, so if that is ... I think a yes or no answer is fine for this one. What visits do you plan to undertake in the coming year?

The Minister for International Development:

Possibly Gaza and Palestine later on in the year. But we are liaising with the Foreign Office at the moment to see if I can actually go in to Gaza.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Is that in connection with a particular project?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes. We have some ongoing projects in Palestine and the occupied territories.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

It is not in response to an invitation then?

The Minister for International Development:

No, that is to see the project.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right. And you do not intend to be signing anything in respect of that?

The Minister for International Development:

No.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay. We are going to move on to the Jersey Overseas Aid grant allocations. We discussed our grant allocation during our April hearing and are grateful for the provision of the J.O.A.C. International Development Grants 2023 Decision Support Pack, which is very big.

The Minister for International Development:

Indeed.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Can you update us, please, on the commissioners' decisions on grant allocation?

The Minister for International Development:

As you will know, in that pack - a very, very comprehensive pack as you alluded to - the commissioners decided on 10 projects for this year. Four were for financial inclusion, 5 were for conservation livelihoods and one was new dairy projects.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

This pack had certain projects that were recommended or not recommended, so were any recommended projects not progressed?

The Minister for International Development:

I have not got the pack in front of me, but yes.

Senior Programme Officer:

These were the ones that were recommended and all of those went through.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So the answer is no. So we are double negatives here. Basically in response to any recommended projects not progressed, no recommended projects were not progressed. They all went through?

The Minister for International Development:

All the highly recommended and recommended were progressed, yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Were any projects that were not recommended progressed?

The Minister for International Development:

No.

[12:45]

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, thank you. What actions are you considering to provide for greater publication of the information contained within the decision pack?

The Minister for International Development:

We do not intend making the decision-making pack public, although it is available. If people are interested, they can certainly contact J.O.A. and come and have a read of these packs. But these packs are developed for the commissioners, to enable the commissioners to make decisions.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Presumably they also feed into data. Do you collect data in terms of publishing, even on a no names basis, in terms of those?

The Minister for International Development:

We publish our annual accounts and we have just published our 2022 accounts.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So there is, yes, that is financial information. Jersey Overseas Aid's focal countries are Ethiopia, Malawi, Nepal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Zambia. Will you be looking to expand these focal countries in the future?

The Minister for International Development:

Commissioners look at our countries and consider them usually on an annual basis. We have a formula for choosing those particular countries, which we take the Corruption Perception Index

divided by the Humanitarian Development Index squared. Then out of those countries ... so that gives us a number of countries. The Humanitarian Development Index has got to be below 50, so the poorest 50. Out of those we tend to choose the Anglophile countries so that we can basically read the reports that we are given. From time to time, some of the countries will come up the Humanitarian Development Index scale. For example, Ghana did a few years ago; Ghana was one of our focus countries. So commissioners decided that it would not be one of our particular countries, but we do revisit our choice of countries.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

You have talked a bit about the methodology. The question actually was asking whether in terms of the countries that have been identified as focal countries so far, whether you are adding any to that list that you are aware of; any specific?

The Minister for International Development:

Like I say, we revisit it on a regular basis. What we do not want, as we did many years ago, was have this sort of scattergun approach to many countries and many themed projects. We prefer to build a relationship with the country and develop from there because there is a lot of learning. We have got to take into account different cultures.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So you are not looking to expand these in the short term?

The Minister for International Development:

We might. As I say, we look at them on an annual basis as a commission and, as countries go up and down the Humanitarian Development Index, we could consider them.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

When is the date you review them next in terms of your annual review?

The Minister for International Development:

Probably at the beginning of the year.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So around 1st January, okay. So you have a specific meeting for those purposes?

The Minister for International Development:

No, it is probably one of our commissioners' meetings. It will be an agenda item.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Just when you mentioned Anglophile countries, my understanding of Anglophile is countries that are ...

The Minister for International Development:

Speak English.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Anglophone, right. Sorry. Anglophile I understand more about liking, you know ... Anglophone, right. We are going to move on to Jersey Overseas Aid volunteering projects. We are aware that you hosted an event launching the J.O.A.'s volunteering opportunities last year and had a fair amount of interest in there. We discussed about the opportunities in Kenya, Rwanda and Nepal there. The panel understands there were a record number of applications to take part in the J.O.A. volunteering programme. Are you anticipating increasing the capacity of the programme in the future?

The Minister for International Development:

We are talking specifically about the C.W.P. (community work projects) here because we offer a number of volunteering opportunities. But for the community work projects we normally do not take more than 30 people. We find that a manageable amount of people. We could consider offering a false C.W.P. but it does require an awful lot of administration work for the very small, efficient team in J.O.A.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

You say you could consider, I mean what would be the motivation then? Because in terms of you are saying that 30 is the manageable amount, is it not more the case that you are not inclined to consider it because you have got enough on your plate, as it were?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, we probably have enough on our plate. However, we like to offer Islanders opportunities like this to increase their skills and whatever. This year the visit to Rwanda is slightly different because that is geared up for teachers. We have not done a project like that before specifically for a certain cohort of professionals. So we might consider other projects, for example, medical staff, if we could get a project going that used their skills.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

To what extent do you liaise with Ministers in, say, education and with health in that respect? Bearing in mind that there is also that concern about staff shortages and things locally.

The Minister for International Development:

This is specifically why we are running the Rwanda community work project in the holidays because it would be a no-brainer to run it during term time. So they are going out in August.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

What actions do you undertake to increase participation from a varied range of backgrounds in terms of your volunteers?

The Minister for International Development:

We deliberately get a ... not necessarily the Rwanda, the teaching course, but we go out of our way to get a range of age, profession, skills for our projects.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

When you say "out of your way", how specifically do you do that in terms of is that interviews? Is that almost like you have got quotas? I mean, how does that work?

The Minister for International Development:

We do not have quotas. We interview the applicants.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So you interview them and then in order to ensure that you have got a varied range of backgrounds, how do you achieve that?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, if we have got 60 people applying for 30 places some will be suitable, some will not. Out of those that are, we will choose a mixed group of people to go and ones who we feel are suitable.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Do you have any sort of policy there or any sort of guidance or protocol there that you might share with the panel?

The Minister for International Development:

We could offer the sort of general criteria.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Great, okay. Yes, that would be useful, thank you. What elements of self-funding is incorporated within the volunteering programme?

The Minister for International Development:

We ask the volunteers to contribute £500 then Jersey Overseas Aid pays for the rest: the accommodation, the airfares, the inoculations.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Is any support given to those who may not be able to fund that contribution?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, the Rotary Club offer sponsorship and so do we.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you. How do community work projects aid communities in addition to the physical benefits, such as when you have got sand dams? For example, do the projects help build long-lasting skills within the local communities?

The Minister for International Development:

No, I would almost say it is the other way round. Obviously there are some skilled people that go with our projects but they will mainly be going to assist the skilled workers in the country. We do not go along there to put a whole load of people out of work to sit on the sidelines while watching our volunteers do the work. Our volunteers go out almost as junior workers for the skilled people in the country.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So if I am right, in terms of your response, you are saying that volunteers basically are like additional labour that are managed by ... and these are local skilled people?

The Minister for International Development:

Who are you talking about?

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Let me repeat the question. How do community work projects aid communities in addition to the physical benefit? So how do they help other than, say, produce a sand dam?

The Minister for International Development:

They develop friendships with one another. But I would say that our volunteers gain an awful lot of skill and friendship and camaraderie, as well as the local community who are benefiting, for example, from the sand dams or the Rwanda project of English teachers.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

The question relates to not the volunteers but the communities.

The Minister for International Development:

The community, for example, in Nepal will gain a community centre and friendships with our volunteers. The Rwandans will obviously gain hopefully enhanced English from our teachers that are going out there to teach the local community and form relationships in the schools.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Basically your answer is saying when it comes to the benefit given to the local communities from the community work projects, in addition to the physical benefit or the actual specific project producing, say, like a sand dam or improving English in the case of Rwanda, that the additional benefit is friendships? And that is what you have identified.

The Minister for International Development:

Friendships and they can share different skills.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

In terms of contribution to the local community.

The Minister for International Development:

For example, if we had a carpenter go out in one of our projects building the community centre in Nepal, if we have got a carpenter they might demonstrate how they tackle a particular task whereas ...

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So you have got cases of that happening?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right, okay. You have got incidences of that sharing of skills happening with the local community but in terms of ... that seems to be not so much as organised but something that may well happen as a result.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay. I am going to move on to sustainable finance, philanthropy and diaspora. But, before I do, I am just going to check on Constable Honeycombe. So anything ...?

[13:00]

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I am still here.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Great, you are still here. Anything you want to add at this point or shall I go on?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

No, I am absolutely fine with everything.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, thank you. Sorry, I am just getting the question. We have briefly discussed the Sustainable Finance Ambassadors Group at our last hearing. Can you please confirm if you have had further interaction with that group since then?

The Minister for International Development:

I have not.

Senior Programme Officer:

I am happy to jump in on this. My role within Jersey Overseas Aid is looking after our financial inclusion portfolio primarily. I have been engaging with the Sustainable Finance Ambassadors Group, as well as Jersey Finance and Jersey Financial Services Commission. We are currently developing our strategy in terms of financial inclusion and seeking input from groups such as the Sustainable Finance Ambassadors Group and industry experts on the Island. In September we have 2 of our project partners, one from the Toronto Centre and one from C.G.A.P. (Consultative Group to Assist the Poor), which is an arm of the World Bank. The C.E.O. (chief executive officer) of C.G.A.P. is visiting towards the end of September. We are arranging an itinerary in collaboration with the Sustainable Finance Ambassadors Group and others on the Island to discuss particularly how Jersey Overseas Aid can work with our finance industry on issues around sustainable finance and where that sort of intersection works and how we can support the finance industry in developing that strategy.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

What date do you think you will be sorting out this itinerary?

Senior Programme Officer:

The itinerary is in draft at the moment. We know that our visitors are arriving on 20th September to the 22nd, and we have a number of events that are currently being prepared at the moment.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

What's the definition of success here?

Senior Programme Officer:

It is twofold. Firstly, we are talking about E.S.G. (environmental, social and governance) and impact investment in the Island and opening discussions with fund managers and also those who are involved in sustainable finance in Jersey, bringing our expertise from these 2 senior people who we are partnering with so that they can offer their input into those conversations. But also the second aspect I think is to strengthen our links, as Jersey Overseas Aid, with the finance industry in Jersey.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So how many organisations will be involved in this?

Senior Programme Officer:

With Jersey Finance, they have gone out to their C.E.O. Connect membership, and I believe there are about 30 organisations there. There is also a group, which is Jersey Funds Association, which again has about 30 organisations, and then the Sustainable Finance Ambassadors Group, which is around 30 people.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Is this a solicitation of interest exercise rather than you have identified interested parties and are taking it to the next stage?

Senior Programme Officer:

My executive director has been having conversations and has been joining the Sustainable Finance Ambassadors Group in the past. We know that there is an interest on both sides to explore this further.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

The Sustainable Finance Ambassador Group seems to be primarily focused on green and sustainable commitments. What advice are you, as Minister, receiving and giving in this regard?

The Minister for International Development:

I do not give advice to this group.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right. So the J.O.A.C., would you like to ...?

Senior Programme Officer:

Well, one of the topics that we have been discussing with the group is about keeping the "S" in E.S.G. and discussing more about inclusive finance and the role of microfinance in poverty reduction. It is more of the social side and how that intersects with the environmental sustainability goals.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Coming on to this element of the green bit. The impacts of climate change could be more likely - at least the World Bank suggested - to impact upon poorer nations and indeed entrenched poverty. What policies or aid initiatives are you enacting to counter this?

The Minister for International Development:

One of our themes is conservation livelihoods. We support that and support the conservation of the environment that sustains livelihoods so that people's livelihoods are not destroyed.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

In the context of climate change, what opportunities does that present poorer nations and is there any way in which you might enable positive actions there?

The Minister for International Development:

I think with some of our environmental projects, if people, especially poverty-stricken people, have livelihoods then it is not necessarily going to impact them as those that are reliant on doing certain things, then they cannot do that anymore because we are saying that they cannot do it. We have to give people the opportunity to be able to work.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

The World Bank is more or less saying that climate change could very much severely impact on people's ability to work. It also is suggesting that maybe in third world countries there could be opportunities in the form of renewable energy projects; solar, whatever. Given that there is a

suggestion that the impacts of climate change could actually aggravate poverty in nations, are you going to consider any incentives or any kind of programmes, which might help nations either counter the risk or perhaps use this as an opportunity in terms of their own development?

The Minister for International Development:

That is what our conservation livelihoods programmes do.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

What is an example of this?

The Minister for International Development:

They offer alternative work for people to sustain themselves?

Senior Programme Officer:

I would also add to that, that the financial inclusion portfolio is very much geared around climate change adaptation and resilience. For example, when we are talking about insurance products for people who are living in very insecure places or who rely on crops for their income, if there is a drought or a flood they could lose that annual income. The financial inclusion portfolio is there to help them build that resilience and access things like crop insurance products, but also help build their savings so that they have a buffer to be able to see through those difficult periods where they have lost income as a result of climate change.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

The mention of the conservation environment projects, you talked about the possibility that the way in which it identifies alternative work for people to sustain themselves. That seems to be very much a reactive policy in terms of climate change or at least in terms of just saying: "Okay, climate change is happening. We suggest you go and cultivate this rather than that perhaps." That could be an example.

Senior Programme Officer:

Yes, and I think it can be a bit of both mitigation and adaptation. So, for example, in Sierra Leone, the Gola Rainforest Project, which is about communities who are living on the edge of the Gola Rainforest, they have been encroaching in the past into the forest, chopping down the trees for firewood or whatever it is. This project is about teaching them alternative methods and agroforestry so that they can still grow cocoa and maintain their livelihoods but intersperse that with other plants that are more environmentally friendly, and potentially gives them other alternative sources of income and preserves the forest so that they do not have to encroach beyond the buffer zone and further deteriorate the forest area.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay. So is there any investment in renewable energy projects?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, in Nepal with the project Renewable World. They are working with water energy.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So like a hydro dam?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right, okay. Do you intend to do anything more along those lines?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, that is one of our themes. For example, in the last round of grant giving there were 5 grants given for conservation livelihoods in various of our countries.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you. What role does impact investment have in Jersey's finance sector?

Senior Programme Officer:

It is a growing area of interest, in my understanding. I am not an impact investment expert, unfortunately. But I do think that there is potential for this to be a growing area, and there is a lot of interest in E.S.G. impact investment. If you look at somewhere like Luxembourg where they have really developed their microfinance industry and are really helping support and partner with their development projects and development goals through impact investment into microfinance, that is a good example, and I think an area that Jersey seems to be going in that direction. I am not saying it is microfinance, but I think there is a lot of potential.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So you are looking at Luxembourg as a potential model in terms of impact investment?

The Minister for International Development:

We speak with people over here that are experts in impact investing and there is some interest in a dairy fund in impact investing.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Is there a particular country that you would say shows best practice in this area?

The Minister for International Development:

No, I think we have got quite a bit of expertise, local expertise, here.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you. What further actions are you undertaking to enable overseas philanthropy through Jersey's finance sector and in the Island more widely?

The Minister for International Development:

Sorry?

Deputy M.R. Scott:

What further actions are you undertaking to enable overseas philanthropy through Jersey's finance sector and in the Island more widely? Are you doing a thing beyond the Sustainable Finance Ambassadors Group and the impact investment initiatives?

The Minister for International Development:

Our C.E.O. is a judge on one of the boards that which, in effect, makes him an expert.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Which board, sorry?

Senior Programme Officer:

The Sustainable Finance Awards, which was a Jersey finance initiative.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right, thank you. Anything else? I will move on to the next question. We heard in our last hearing that a diaspora programme was being formed; can you provide any updates, please?

The Minister for International Development:

So this is Island identity as opposed to Jersey Overseas Aid. It was one of the recommendations that we enhance the Jersey diaspora because there are various ...

[13:15]

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Sorry, we have got some background noise coming there, Constable Honeycombe.

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

I will shut the door.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you. Sorry, do go on. You were just saying that you have identified, we got that far.

The Minister for International Development:

What we would like to do, for example, there is the Jersey London Society, maybe sort of enhance that, bring any resources to that, that we can, to enable that to grow and the demographic to be broadened, shall we say, so that we can keep in touch with people that leave the Island or spend some time here working, choose to leave or Jersey-born people that go around the world. We think it is a really good idea to keep in contact with them because they are, after all, or could be ambassadors for the Island to set up a global network of the Jersey diaspora.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

You talked about enhancing that. Do you mean doing something to increase the advertising or what?

The Minister for International Development:

That as well. I think at the moment there are various Facebook groups that operate, keeping in contact with people abroad.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

What you have described is a state of affairs that exists at the moment. I am just wondering what concrete actions you are contemplating - either you or Government - will be taking to ... and you have also mentioned just the Jersey London ... whether you have got some specific actions that you contemplate, either you or Government taking to change that in any particular way.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, we would like to pool all the strands together because, like I mentioned, there is the Jersey Society in London, there are these various Facebook groups and there are people living abroad that could be pooled together. We would like to set up a database and possibly provide a newsletter to Jersey people living overseas to enhance and keep in contact.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

You have mentioned Facebook pages that I think are set up by other people.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So is there thought being given, in terms of Government itself, having its own Facebook page on there?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, certainly we have the Island Identity website and we have a section there on Jersey diaspora and we would like to set up a database. They can still operate on their own, but if we are sending out newsletters, to be able to send them out to everyone who has still has an interest in Jersey.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So the main initiative you are contemplating at the moment is the newsletter.

The Minister for International Development:

Bringing the strands together to a database.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right, so collecting information data from the study of what you see in terms of social media sites.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, social media and the Jersey Society in London and there might be other societies that exist elsewhere.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, is there a start date for this project or is it something that is happening even now?

The Minister for International Development:

It is something happening now.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, thank you. Right, coming on to progress on J.O.A.C. performance measures, the panel notes that the J.O.A. annual report includes a number of case studies and key figures such as the number of projects.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Do you have any annual performance measures such as key performance indicators?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, we have our monitoring and evaluation strategy that reports the impact to ensure that all the projects that we fund reports their impact and submits a logical framework to map out the anticipated long-term impact outcomes and outputs. We do not have necessarily standardised indicators because, with our various themes, they are so different. It would be like measuring apples and pears. So the generalised theme is to look for food security, increased resilience, increased women empowerment, sustainability and capacity building, so if we are having impacts in those areas we see that as success.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

You clearly do have this monitoring and evaluation strategy for individual projects.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

When you are making decisions in terms of the impact that you are going to make in different areas - and bearing in mind you have said that you have different types of impact, as it were, and could be comparing apples and pears - is there not a capacity to say: "Right, well, we plan to deliver X number more projects in this area or to put more funding in this area that could be used as K.P.I.s (key performance indicators) for J.O.A.C. as a whole"? Or do they exist already and we just do not know about them?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, I think we did that originally when we chose our 3 themes because we had more themes originally when I took over. We used to do wash projects and sanitation projects but we feel that the 3 themes that we have chosen are ones whereby we have local knowledge here on those 3 things and they are, we consider, successful.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

We are talking about K.P.I.s in that context?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So in the context of each theme.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, so the dairy projects, I think we could be considered as leaders.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

In terms of showing how you have delivered in these areas and how you perhaps have improved delivering in these areas, would not key performance indicators be a way of demonstrating that to the public?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, but going back to what I said, so if we have more children that are nourished, then that is a key performance indicator, for example.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Yes.

The Minister for International Development:

So as I said, generally, it is food security, increased resilience, increased women empowerment and sustainability and capacity building. Those, if you like, are how we measure.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Great, so we could have a copy of those.

Senior Programme Officer:

So what we have developed - and I would not necessarily class them as K.P.I.s because they are not targets for us - is a set of indicators that we have developed in partnership with all of our different project partners looking at what they are each measuring across their different projects and also looking at global best practice when it comes to measuring impact on development projects. It is quite a new thing that we have introduced where partners can then report against our set of indicators as well as providing us with their usual logical framework.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Have we come back to the impact measurement of allocated grants now? The question related to a more holistic way of looking at the impact towards that.

Senior Programme Officer:

Yes, so I think the idea is that across our portfolio, each project would be reporting against the same indicator so that we can then group them and give an idea of our impact of our development funding as a whole.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So that is something you are working on or some information that you have that you can share with the panel?

Senior Programme Officer:

Yes, we can share those indicators but the data is still being collected so we can share what the indicators are.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, no, that would be useful because then we will understand a bit more about the categories and what you perceive in terms of the key performance indicators. Okay, thank you. I am grateful for that. The panel obviously will follow up. The majority of actions identified in the Ministerial delivery plan identify items in the J.O.A. Strategic Plan 2022 to 2026 and often indicate that they will be met by the end of that timeframe. What actions are you undertaking to evidence progress in meeting the actions in your delivery plan?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, we have 15 specific objectives that are strategic objectives which are ongoing, and we have so far published a strategy for conservation livelihoods and the financial inclusive strategy is on its way. We have already published the dairy strategy. We like to play to Jersey's strengths and we have increased the size of the portfolio in each of our themes, so that is ongoing. We started the dairy programming in Zambia and that is reaching at least 2,000 smallholder farmers. We are supporting the Jersey financial services industry to develop its offering on the impact of investment, as you have heard before, and we are continuing to stand with Ukraine.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Do you do some sort of spreadsheet or tracker just to see where you are in terms of progress of the items on your delivery plan?

The Minister for International Development:

I have my sheet here.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

I will be asking for the clothes off your back next.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

I am just wondering if it is possible to provide a copy of that insofar as it is showing how you are getting on with your progress in terms of the delivery plan. If you could perhaps send us a copy.

The Minister for International Development:

Well, it would have to be adapted into an Excel spreadsheet. I think that is what you are after, is it?

Deputy M.R. Scott:

If that is possible, that would be useful. Thank you.

The Minister for International Development:

But it might take a while.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, well, we will not demand it tomorrow.

The Minister for International Development:

Okay.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

We are coming to the end of our scheduled time for this hearing and there are about 5 questions left. I am just wondering whether you and whether Constable Honeycombe will be willing to stay for an extra 10 to 15 minutes to address our questions now. If not, we can send these in writing but how are you placed?

The Minister for International Development:

I have another meeting at 2.00 p.m. in Broad Street.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

I do not think it will take that long.

The Minister for International Development:

So as long as I can get to that.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Constable Honeycombe, are you okay to hang on for another 10 or 15 minutes?

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Yes, I am fine. I can go on until 2.00 p.m.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, thank you. Right, great, thank you. So government departments publish service performance charts on a quarterly basis - at least some do - so we are just wondering whether the J.O.A. would consider doing something similar.

The Minister for International Development:

A service ...

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Performance charts. It looks like you are considering it already, Minister, or writing it down at least.

The Minister for International Development:

Well, I will have to see what you are referring to.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Perhaps you could refer it to us then.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you. Okay, so the last set of questions relates to support for those faced by war.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, indeed.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

We are referring back to the last hearing in which we discussed the need for quick response. The need to avoid what we call “war chests” in emergency response. What actions are being undertaken to enable charities to have offices in places facing war or natural disaster quickly?

[13:30]

The Minister for International Development:

Well, we probably explained this last time. We have a pot for emergencies and, from that pot, we allocate £1.2 million to pooled funding and that is with Start Network which targets smaller disasters and U.N.O.C.H.A. (United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs).

Deputy M.R. Scott:

That is disasters generally rather than specifically for war, is it?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, that can be varied. It can be environmental disasters such as earthquakes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So it is for natural disasters.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Yes, okay.

The Minister for International Development:

So we have the pooled funding and then we have the direct funding. The direct funding is with the partners that we tend to use and they do tend to be the bigger N.G.O.s like Red Cross and the U.N. (United Nations).

The Connétable of St. Ouen:

Just one question. With regards to these group responses to a war situation, is there an audit carried out that this emergency money does hit the ground and it does benefit the people concerned because you hear all these horror stories in a war situation and chaos that a lot of the funding that is supplied does not get to the people that need it?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, which is why we do due diligence on the partners that we work with. For example, there are partners that will have a presence on the ground in any of these given situations and we maintain a very close working relationship with them, like Red Cross.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So how does or can the J.O.A. quickly identify those agencies or charities that are more prevalent in providing emergency aid effectively to allow for quick and directed support from the Island in these cases? So I think what the question is basically saying is, in terms of identifying those agencies or charities that are getting that money to the people as soon as possible, how do you measure that and identify that so that you can use them?

The Minister for International Development:

So some of the N.G.O.s are better placed to do different things. For example, U.N.H.C.R. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), if there is a refugee crisis, they would probably be the N.G.O. we would be looking to. For example, the refugees in Bangladesh, we would look to U.N.H.C.R. who specifically deal with refugees and with U.N.I.C.E.F. (United Nations Children's Fund) for children. So these N.G.O.s are known, better placed or better experts in different kinds of disasters so we would choose the relevant ones.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So the question is really saying how do you know that one is faster than the other? What is it that provides you with this information and this confidence, as it were?

The Minister for International Development:

Through working with them and obviously we do the due diligence initially.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

But what form does the due diligence take? Do you have somebody on the ground who is looking at people being delivered this stuff? What is this due diligence?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, we do the due diligence on the agency first so that we know ...

Deputy M.R. Scott:

In what way? What does that mean to people who are listening, or one of them perhaps?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, we ensure obviously that the agencies are solvent and they have an expertise in a given field and we work with them and, obviously, some of those agencies have a greater presence in different countries. For example, we use crown agents a lot and have used them a lot in Ukraine because we know that they are there on the ground, we have worked with them in the past and we were able to deliver incubators to children at a very fast speed because we know that they are there on the ground.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

I think this is a question that the panel may well follow up at some point because it is quite an interesting question which the Constable has identified, and it is that question about how do you know?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, staff will visit and maybe I will visit. Two staff members went out to the Ukraine last year after we had given monies out there to the various projects. I visited Poland, the border with Ukraine, to make sure that the warehouse had all the emergency kits that we had paid for.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Your 2 members of staff who went to the Ukraine last year, what did they see?

The Minister for International Development:

They saw the incubators that had arrived and they visited the warehouses and the people delivering the aid.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So did they see them being used?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay. How has aid to Ukraine changed over the last year, given the prolonged nature of the war?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, I am not sure it has changed that much because we supply these emergency kits, we are doing work, like I said, with crown agents with the incubators for babies.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

What about territorial reach meaning in Ukraine? The war has changed in certain ways with some territories being regained and some lost. How has that impacted?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes, well, we are also, with a Guernsey charity, training women - well, it is mainly women - in mine sweeping.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right, okay, the last question. How are you supporting others facing ongoing or new conflict such as Ethiopia, Somalia or Sudan?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, we recently sent out some monies to the Sudan. We are supporting the Horn of Africa. We supported Cyclone Freddy. We supported the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

This is all in terms of financial contribution?

The Minister for International Development:

Yes.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Yes, and when you talk about the support and the financial support, in what way was it supporting? Was it the provision of particular things?

The Minister for International Development:

Well, each project is very different depending on the disaster.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

So Ethiopia?

The Minister for International Development:

Ethiopia and the food famine, I will have to come back to you.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

That is okay, fine.

The Minister for International Development:

I can give you specifically on each of those exactly what we are supporting. Sometimes we are supporting the refugees.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Okay, well then, with the officer, we will follow up then.

Senior Programme Officer:

Yes.

The Minister for International Development:

Yes. Palestine is medical supplies.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Right, okay, thanks. We will follow that up. Okay, well, just thank you very much, Minister and Gillian, for attending our hearing today and for addressing the panel's questions. Thank you to all the other supporting panel officers and government officers who have contributed in some way, to the panel officers as well, and to anybody who is watching this hearing and which we will now finish. Thank you very much.

The Minister for International Development:

Thank you.

Senior Programme Officer:

Thank you.

Deputy M.R. Scott:

Thank you for your time.

[13:39]