



# Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel

## Quarterly Hearing

### Witness: The Minister for International Development

Friday, 16th July 2021

**Panel:**

Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Chair)

Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin (Vice-Chair)

**Witnesses:**

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

Mr. S. Boas, Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid

[11:01]

**Deputy D. Johnson of St. Mary (Chair):**

Good morning, everyone and welcome to this public hearing of the Economic and International Affairs Scrutiny Panel where we have the Minister for International Development before us. I will start by introducing the panel, which today consists of myself, Deputy David Johnson of St. Mary in the chair and my vice-chair, Deputy Steve Luce of St. Martin and, unfortunately, Senator Pallett cannot be with us and he does apologise for that. Minister, would you like to introduce yourself and all your team?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes, thank you, David. I am Carolyn Labey, Deputy of Grouville, Minister for International Development and chair of Jersey Overseas Aid. I am joined at the other end of the office by Simon Boas, who I am sure can speak for himself and introduce himself.

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Yes, good morning, everyone. I am Simon Boas, I am the executive director of Jersey Overseas Aid. I hope you can hear me properly. We are using one microphone to avoid interference, so I am sort of bellowing into Carolyn's from the other end of the room.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

No, I can certainly hear you well, a slight technicality but we can live with that certainly, okay. Right, to begin with you mentioned Jersey Overseas Aid, so a few questions on that topic, if I may. Have your officers been able to go out and identify any new projects for J.O.A. (Jersey Overseas Aid) in recent months?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes, indeed. We had 3 officers, all double-vaccinated, who went out and did a little curb down but, nonetheless, extremely thorough research into the projects that we were minded to fund and also looked at some that we were already funding. They went out in April and then some decisions were made by the Commission after they had produced a weighty document, along with some recommendations of which projects they felt were viable.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay. Is that the full update or are there timelines about other projects which perhaps have been delayed?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Only 2 projects were delayed last year but we used the funding for emergencies, for humanitarian aid as well. We have chosen 8 projects for this year, which is what we choose almost every year. We are on course; there are none being delayed, yes.

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Could I give a few more details about that process, what we were doing in Africa and the selection process and how that worked and how we also avoided COVID in the 3 countries that we went to?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Fire away then, yes, okay.

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

As Carolyn said, the selection process for new projects has come a long way and it is no longer just looking at proposals but is going to the field and visiting the agencies that are asking for grants from us. We selected 8 projects, as Carolyn said. Originally almost 50 had applied and we have

narrowed those down to 16 in a first sift and those 16 had to submit extremely detailed sort of 100-page proposals, which the J.O.A. team went out and tested in the field, speaking to the people preparing to implement them. Not just looking at the project but following a receipt or looking at the minutes of the procurement committees and that sort of thing in each organisation. We then brought back a set of recommendations for commissioners who voted on them in June and those projects are just beginning now. But if I may just say for the record as well, it was a great opportunity also just to kind of fly a flag for Jersey again in these target countries and by meeting officials and partners and members of the U.N. (United Nations) system and even the ministerial people in Rwanda. We have reasserted our footprints in these countries and also helped us really stay on top of what is needed in terms of aid. It was a highly successful visit, even if it took us, I think, 10 P.C.R. (polymerase chain reaction) tests each in the space of 28 days.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay, thank you for that. At the last public hearing you mentioned you were hoping to start to launch phase 2 of the dairy project in Malawi later this year, is there any special information regarding that as to how you are progressing?

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Yes, so that was one of the projects we went to visit and that is underway. Phase 2 is underway in Malawi. We are targeting almost all of the 12,000 members of the Shire Highlands Milk Producers Association and most of them are women. Between them they produce 93 per cent of Malawi's milk, so we are really reaching pretty much everyone who produces milk in Malawi. We have got a similar programme to the one we have in Rwanda, which is a combination of genetic improvement but also training in quite simple animal husbandry techniques and improving nutrition and supplementation and animal health. Again, it is having a dramatic impact on milk yields and then a dramatic impact on levels of poverty and food security among the target small-holder farmers and their families. That is being implemented by the Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society in partnership with the Shire Highlands Milk Producers Association. I was very pleased to go and spend a couple of days with them, which is always quite good to do early in a project as well, just to ensure everything is on track and that everyone has got the same objectives and that channels of communication are open and that kind of thing.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay, thank you. Again, in relation to the project in Malawi, you touched on that in Rwanda and the last one in Ethiopia, are they progressing much as you had planned previously?

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Yes, they are. Yes, they are doing extremely well and considering as well that COVID in the last year has slowed down some activities, for example, training of farmers has been harder to get people together at the right time and there have been movement restrictions in all of those countries, everything is on track. In Rwanda we have started an additional project. One of the ones which commissioners selected is a standalone project by Send a Cow, targeting a further 11,000 or 12,000 small-holder farmers in different districts to the ones we have reached so far. The project in Ethiopia has started last year in parallel with 2 other dairy projects in Ethiopia, one run by Send a Cow and one run by the Scottish Catholic International Aid Agency. We are building synergies between these projects too. What we really hope is that we could do a repeat of the events that we held, which the Minister opened with the Rwandan Agriculture Minister in Kigali in 2019. We would like to do something similar in Ethiopia but we are waiting to see when that can physically happen.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay, thank you. I am sorry, Deputy Luce has been trying to get in to ask a question. Deputy, please fire away.

**Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin (Vice-Chair):**

Thank you, Chair. I think my question has probably been answered ... Rwanda, Malawi and Ethiopia ... is there anywhere else in April?

**The Minister for International Development:**

I did not catch the whole of that, you kept on breaking up.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, you did here too as well. It is not just ours, Steve, it might be yours.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Would you mind repeating the question, please?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Can you hear us, Steve Luce? We cannot hear you at the moment. Perhaps give him another minute, if you may.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes. Maybe there are other things you want to ask.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, moving on, there is something called the Start Network, is there not?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

I was wondering, could you give us a brief update on that?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes. If I can set the scene, as it were, about these pooled funds because, as you know, we divide our budget up into emergencies and humanitarian aid, grant aid, which is what we were talking just before, our financial inclusion, dairy and conservation, local charities and outreach. Within our emergencies budget we feel that giving a certain amount to pooled funds assists with efficiencies and sort of helps emergencies because there is funding there at the front line and the funds can be activated extremely quickly, which is the essence in most emergencies. Currently we divide our emergencies budget up into pooled funds and then direct funds direct for emergencies as they occur. But the pooled funds, we give £500,000 to the Start Network, which is a network of ... I forget how many N.G.O.s (non-governmental organisations) in total.

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Over 50.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Over 50, so there are over 50 N.G.O.s that pool their funding and service more the lesser-known emergencies because the huge emergencies that receive a lot of media coverage get funded and they get funded through the tried and tested, the huge N.G.O.s. But Start Network focuses on the smaller emergencies and the smaller N.G.O.s and then they can sort of get to the emergencies quicker, as I say. Yes, so that is ...

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Could you provide some practical examples of that, Carolyn?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes.

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Would that be all right if I jumped in with some details on that? Just that the Start Network and the other pooled funds are making grants literally every week.

[11:15]

The way they both work, the Start Network, which, as the Minister says, is run by a group of N.G.O.s themselves and the country-based pooled funds, which are run by the U.N., the model is the same. Donors like us, Germany, Ireland and the U.K. (United Kingdom), instead of funding each individual emergency, put money into the pot and we then devolve decision-making about where that money goes to the people on the ground who are able to respond to it immediately. Where we lose control over exactly which charities and which emergency gets funded, we have control because we then sit on the boards of these funds and we decide direction and process and that kind of thing. For example, there is a gas attack in Syria and a local charity needs gas masks for its doctors, they put in an application to the pooled fund, the people on the ground able to decide whether this is a good use of money can make a decision within 72 hours and money can reach the people where it is needed within a week, which is a level of responsiveness we could never have if the appeal came to us sitting in St. Helier. Also, we could not have the level of accountability and oversight because we are not there. The funds also take responsibility for the reporting and verification and monitoring. Essentially, it is a different model, from about half of our emergency budget we spend in a kind of classic way, which is people appeal to us for money, commissioners, J.O.A. kind of analyses and makes recommendations and commissioners decide where the money goes. Here we have put money in a pot where we know that there are going to be needs for it, we just do not know which needs. With the Start Network, every year the cyclone in Bangladesh causes a flood or a landslide or something like that. We do not know precisely where but we know that money will need to be disbursed. As Carolyn said, the Start funds concentrates on smaller underfunded often orphan emergencies and makes grants of sort of £100,000 to £300,000. The country-based pooled funds, we support those in Syria, Yemen and the Central African Republic, which are chronic humanitarian emergencies where we know there is going to be a need. Does that answer the question?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

I will pick up if Steve is having difficulty with communication.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I am here but that is fine.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay. If I may then, Steve. To start on, you mentioned you have control through your board representation, how big is the board, how cumbersome is it and are the numbers such that you are obviously able to make a quick decision? I presume they are usually fairly not unanimous but am I wrong in that?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Shall I give you an example of some of the people that sit on the board? It is like the IKEA Foundation, the Avaaz, the German Federal Foreign Office and they all sit on this council, which meets every 6 months. Simon is the Jersey Overseas Aid attendee at those council meetings, so he will be able to describe the nuts and bolts of those meetings.

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Yes. We would like to host one in Jersey at one point. That board is not making decisions on each individual funding request, that board is setting the oversight, the direction and challenging, making sure that the funding has been disbursed in accordance with the rules that the board is helping to set. The individual decisions - does this landslide in Bangladesh warrant funding? Does this appeal by a group of doctors in Syria need money? - is devoted to a smaller group of technical experts within each fund who are representatives of the U.N., the local N.G.O.s, that kind of thing. They make the individual decisions about each funding and we do the sort of higher-level strategy and direction. As Carolyn says, when J.O.A. sits on these boards it is great because it is representing Jersey. We sit alongside Germany and Belgium and the U.K. with an equal voice to these other much bigger donors. There are often the moments in the meetings where they are held in Damascus, which at some stage the Minister will be visiting but, in her absence, we dial in and there is a moment in these meetings where they say, right, and we are on the line from Beirut, we have got these people and in Georgia. Then in St. Helier we have got Jersey Overseas Aid and there is this sort of moment of like where? But it is in a good way, as well as having control of flying a flag for the Island in several really important forums.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, thank you for that; that is interesting. I have very fond memories of Damascus but that was 50 years ago. Right, Steve Luce perhaps can move on to the next section, if you are happy to do so.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I am but if I could just go back, David, to the dairy projects before we move on and just ask: it is absolutely fantastic work that we are doing and to hear that we are reaching such a large percentage of some of these milking herds is phenomenal and I know the R.J.A. and H.S. (Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society) are involved. I can remember back to my youth when retired farmers or farmers who were still working went to Africa to physically themselves help and can I ask if there has been any work done on retired dairy farmers or dairy farmers who are still working from Jersey to take them to Africa with the vast knowledge that they have? I am not casting aspersions on the officers in any way, shape or form but we have some people in Jersey with a lifetime of experience in dairying.

**The Minister for International Development:**

I am not sure if you are aware, Steve, but in 2019 Jersey hosted the first Jersey Africa Forum in Rwanda, in Kigali and that attracted dairy farmers, current and past, from Kenya, from America, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, many African countries and Jersey. Jersey were very, very well represented there. They spoke at the conference, we flew the flag, I spoke at the conference, Simon spoke at the conference. I think they are mainly current dairy farmers that spoke at the conference, Jersey ones, so it was a wonderful opportunity to share knowledge. I learned huge amounts about genetics and dairy farming from these dairy farmers from all the over the world; that gets hosted in various locations every so many years. I do not know at this point in time when the next one is going to be hosted but it is certainly something that Jersey participates in and Jersey Overseas Aid were very, very proud to host and be at the first Jersey Africa Forum.

**Executive Director, Jersey Overseas Aid:**

Can I add that there is a WhatsApp group, a really active group set up by the R.J.A. with Rob Perchard, David Hamburg and Derrick Frigot and lots of good figures from Jersey agriculture and dairy on it connected directly, not just to Rwandan officials and project officers but to Rwandan farmers too and it is wonderful? We see it every week, someone in rural Rwanda is sending a picture of their new Jersey calf and someone in Jersey is responding how wonderful, that they know the sire because it came from a farm in Jersey.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I was not aware of the 2019 meeting but of course in my naivety we do not, in these days of connectivity, need to have people on the coalface. I was thinking more so dairy farmers going to the farms, not going to conferences but going to see all the individual farmers. But with connectivity and the ability to use our mobile phones we are in a better position than that even, yes.

**The Minister for International Development:**

We did visit farms, it was one day in a conference, which was, as I say, hugely informative and very good with experts from all around the world talking about genetics. Also, there were specific farm visits, small-holder farming, which was where we focused on but also the larger farmers with a lot of cows and their work with the crossbreeding and the genetics, it was a very, very good trip.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay, thank you. I am full of praise for the work we are doing with dairy animals in Africa; that is a real practical way of helping people. Okay, if I could move on then to COVAX and at the last hearing, Minister, you told the panel ... sent to the U.N.H.C.R. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) to provide essential support for refugees in Rohingya and as emergency with COVID.



Can I just ask if anything else has been undertaken then and can you give us an update on that, please?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes. COVAX is a specific programme which is geared up to vaccinate 1.3 billion doses to vulnerable populations and we have contributed to that scheme. It is known as the Vaccine Alliance and it is run by the World Health Organization and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations because they work on the ethos that no one is safe until everyone is safe; that is the COVAX programme that is being rolled out. We have specifically given in emergency grants, COVID-specific emergency grants. We gave £1.5 million last year and we have so far this year given £300,000 towards COVID emergencies.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay. The last time you told us it was £250,000 but you have added another £1.25 million to that. Do you expect to allocate any further funds to COVAX this year though?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Out of our emergencies budget this year we set aside £2.94 million for humanitarian aid. We have so far spent this year £2.32 million, of which £1.35 million has gone to the pooled funding, the Start Network £500,000, as we spoke of before and the U.N. O.C.H.A. (Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs), so we have got funding going to Yemen, Syria and the Central African Republic. Out of the £974,300 we have made direct emergency responses and they have been through British Red Cross, U.N.H.C.R.; that is Rohingya refugees mainly. Many of the emergency responses had COVID, like, for example, the International Health Partners and that was in the occupied Palestinian territories; we gave £130,000 for a COVID response. We have done more than just what I have said just before.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I understand the complexities of it and how many of these other schemes are going to be COVID-related but not specifically through COVAX, so that is fine.

[11:30]

You have mentioned humanitarian aid, the pool, the Start and all that sort of thing, can I just go back to essentials and ask how those various funds are allocated? Who makes the decision in those allocations?

**The Minister for International Development:**

The commissioners.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

The commissioners, okay, so all decisions are made by the commissioners.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Absolutely. I am sure you know this, the Commission is made up of 3 States Members and 3 non-States Members.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Yes. Did you request or did you get given any additional funding this year to cope with COVID-related COVAX and other essential work?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Not specifically for that but we have increased our budget by 0.01 per cent. What we have done with our budget, we have ... sorry?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Sorry, Steve, you are cutting out a bit.

**The Minister for International Development:**

I do not know what you asked me, Steve, we could not hear.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Sorry, I was just ... but what I was after was how much money, you should really be telling us how much physical money, not the percentage increase in G.V.A. (gross value added), which is a different thing. Anyway, let us move on. My connectivity is not ...

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

No, sorry, Steve, you are off for the moment. Perhaps before we move on I am going slightly off-piste here, the U.K. reduced their overseas budget and there are obviously domestic quarrels over there as to whether they should or should not. Does that impact on our reputation in any way?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Not ours but I would suggest it might theirs. We were a bit alarmed at the brutality of it, to be perfectly honest, because it happened very, very quickly. They had to abort many projects that they were involved with when they reduced their budget from 0.7 per cent to 0.5 per cent. But as far as Jersey is concerned, no, because as I was trying to say to Steve, we increased our budget to 0.26 per cent

against G.V.A. and we have fixed our budget to G.V.A. for the first time, which means as our economy grows our budget grows in percentage terms, so it is affordable, it is always affordable. In actual fact in 2020 our G.V.A. went down, so our budget went down by £60,000. It is set and we feel it is affordable but in the same token because it is 0.26 per cent and, as you probably know, the aim of developed countries is to have 0.7 per cent, so we are quite a way off that. However, we do projects that we feel that we can add value to and we have picked our themes; dairy, financial inclusion and conservation, of things that we feel Jersey can bring so much more to the table than just the finance. But we have aimed to go up by 0.01 per cent each year until 2024 at the moment until the Government Plan is agreed.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, thanks for going over that. I was aware of our commitment. Our real concern was whether almost by association we were not held in high regard, although you could adopt the other attitude saying good on Jersey for having stuck to their guns, as it were but ...

**The Minister for International Development:**

That is what we think, yes, it does show us in a good way. But, as I answered a question in the States Assembly, the U.K., the brutality and the speed that they reduced their budget was not good but, in fairness to the U.K., they have put billions of pounds into the Oxford vaccine, which it is available globally.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, okay. Right, I think Steve is still with us, he has been typing, so I will move on with a very different topic. Island identity project, that was launched in early May, can you give us a progress report as to where we are as to feedback and next steps, please?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes, sure. The policy development board produced a document with various findings and recommendations really for States departments, various organisations and indeed individuals to take on. Since then we have produced a consultation document, which is this, which is probably an easier read. What does Jersey mean to you? It is a brief summary of the policy development board's initial 200-page document and we are consulting on that with various bodies, all the A.L.O.s (arm's length organisations) that are connected, like Visit Jersey, Art House, various States departments, Ports of Jersey, Comité des Connétables. I did offer the Comité des Connétables when I visited them and spoke about this project to them to come and speak to parishioners as a bit of a bolt on to the Parish Assemblies. I am slowly responding to the requests that I have to go and speak at them.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Interesting, and are you getting responses from various Connétables to do that? Do they have to up their performance to parishioners attending these Assemblies, it is good to have too much worth, I think? But are many Constables taking you up on this?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes, the Constable of Trinity kindly invited me to his Rates Assembly because he felt that that is probably the most populated Assembly of the year. I spoke at that one last week. I have been invited to St. Martin, Grouville, St. John, we are liaising with St. Brelade. But in the interim I am dropping off these brochures to the Parish Halls and obviously we have said in the *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* and various other media outlets that the document is available and we have got a website. There are various ways that people can react with us and give us their feedback.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Good. Sorry, before I lose him again, Steve Luce would like to raise a question.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Thank you, Chair. I hope I have resolved my issues. I have been kicking the connect officers under my desk. I am interested to hear the Minister is coming over to St. Martin, can I ask is that for the rates meeting that she is coming?

**The Minister for International Development:**

No. No, I have been invited to one afterwards, I think you are electing a Procureur.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay. Because the only reason I asked that question is that our rates meetings tend to be quite lively and go on for a long period of time. By the time we get to the end everybody ...

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes, do not worry, I will not take any more of your time on that particular evening.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, thanks. I will mention it to my own Constable. I think, again, it would be - I use that expression - a poison chalice to invite you to our rates meetings, so I will perhaps bear it in mind for the future, thank you. Yes, the consultation period, how much longer is that to go on for?

**The Minister for International Development:**

We have set a very broad timescale of 12th October. Like I say, we launched it in May and it has been to the Comité des Connétables, it has been to the Council of Ministers and we are visiting lots of other bodies. I think it gives people a reasonable amount of time.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay. Following the conclusion of the consultation, is the intention to bring it back to States in some form as a proposition or what happens then?

**The Minister for International Development:**

What we have done here, we are suggesting to various departments how the policy development board felt that they could enhance things to take on our Island identity to sort of shout a bit more about what Jersey is good at. We have so many strings to our bow, especially on the international front. We want to be known surely in a post-Brexit, hopefully post-COVID era for something more than just international finance. We are trying to do our bit on Jersey Overseas Aid with dairy, conservation, promoting what we do here and financial inclusion to take on our financial infrastructure. But we feel there is a lot more that could be done to promote the Island in a post-Brexit era. Likewise on Island what we are trying to do is sort of enhance the inclusion of our community and various communities within it, asking them, as the document says, what does Jersey mean to you? It is for various departments to do their bit, for example, Ports. We have suggested to them that they look at the various ports of the Island, the harbour, the airport and surely we could be offering so much more. We have a fantastic promotion video in the foyer at the museum of the Island; would that not be great if it was playing at the airport? Would it not be great if we had a better offering, other than books on Bergerac and the Beast of Jersey? Really, you walk in the arrivals halls and it is sort of posters of various finance houses and that is it. We feel that there are different things that we can suggest to departments that could enhance Jersey and make it better all round and promote our own identity. Likewise, as I was saying on Island, we feel there is quite a bit of work that can be done to make others feel included and a part of this community and to celebrate Jersey.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Yes, I do not for one moment challenge your aspirations and I wish you well on that. I am just wondering, is the ultimate objective then to influence departments to do more, rather than come out with a statement or a proposition? That is not the idea, is it, from what you say?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Not really, it is to influence departments because I do not have a budget to speak of for this particular project. I have enough money to create a website and some material, like this brochure and other bits and pieces, but nothing much really. It is down to the departments and the A.L.O.s to take this

on board and take our suggestions on board and promote as best we can through their own budget. We have had meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, the Institute of Directors and it is for businesses to think perhaps how they can better improve the Jersey offering to Jersey-fy themselves to promote the Island in different ways. We are having meetings with Caritas, the Dean, how different people can enhance. It is down to individuals, as much as it is to Government.

[11:45]

We have all got a part to play, so it is just raising this, promoting it and putting it on everyone's agenda.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Thank you, I do understand that. I have made a note that on future public hearings with the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture I should be asking questions as to what is he and his A.L.O.s under his wing doing about it. Okay, thank you for that.

**The Minister for International Development:**

I very much hope you do because I had a meeting with him and his Assistant Ministers this week and we put all these things to them about how our sports teams can promote the Island better, maybe if it is to have an emblem of the Island, uniform throughout the sports teams that go off Island and represent us, even those on Island who represent the Island.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay, thanks for that. As I say, we will take note of that for future hearings. One final point on this is that I know it has not been set up with this in mind, but are you expecting this sort of ... I would not say "campaign" but this consultation to have a beneficial effect in electoral terms? Would it kindle interest in the population as a whole in participating in elections more?

**The Minister for International Development:**

That could have that effect and I sincerely hope it does. One of the recommendations was to sort of roll out better the school children's understanding of their Island and certainly their understanding of how our political system works, not only school children. Another idea we had was when people arrive in the Island, when they go down to Social Security, pick up their social security card, they are given a welcome pack, which gives people some information about the Island, what it is about, the history. If that has the effect of making people feel more included or understanding our political system, then I think that is a good thing.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay, thanks. Steve, I think, would like to pose a question.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I will try again if I can. Minister, Island identity and I agree with your views but do you have a view on a national anthem for the Island?

**The Minister for International Development:**

This is something that we spoke to Economic Development and Culture yesterday or earlier this week because this is something that we feel needs resolving. There was a competition, in fact I was involved with it many years ago. The outcome of that had a mixed feeling and what happened was the actual anthem that had been chosen by a panel of judges, it was never later, by the Minister of the day, brought to the States for debate. I think it is very much something that needs resolving. Obviously our national anthem is God Save the Queen, however, we feel that we have got to have an anthem for Jersey so that when our athletes, if nothing else, go away and travel and stand on the podium getting their gold medals, we know what is going to play. They know what is going to play because at the minute nobody does, so that is something that very much needs resolving.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay, thank you. Will you be bringing a proposition then?

**The Minister for International Development:**

No, I will not, that is down to the Culture Department because, as I said before, I do not have a huge budget for this initiative. The policy development board have done their work, they have made their recommendations, we are now consulting on it, promoting it and it is up to the various departments and it would be down to the Culture Department to organise that, whether it is a public vote or however they want to organise it to bring it forward.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Thank you. Before I hand over to Steve, funding and other things, yes, again, as the Culture Department comes within our remit we will, again, make a note to ask a relevant question at a future hearing. Thank you. Okay, would you like to come on to the final chapter, Steve?

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Yes, thank you, Chair. It is a question on funding to start with, the Minister says she does not have funds to come forward with a national anthem proposition but can I ask her what fund she has applied for in the next 3 years?

**The Minister for International Development:**

For the Island identity or Jersey Overseas Aid?

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

In the Government Plan generally for overseas, your department?

**The Minister for International Development:**

For overseas aid, the funding, as I have explained, it is now connected with a percentage of G.V.A. This year, as I have already said, while we went up to 0.26 per cent, my budget in financial terms went down because G.V.A. went down. My budget went down by £60,000 this year. Next year our aim is to go up to 0.27 per cent of G.V.A. At the moment that budget is £13.375 million, however, G.V.A. can move.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Can I ask, has that increase been agreed?

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay. I knew there had been an increase agreed, I did not realise there was going to be a further increase.

**The Minister for International Development:**

No, it is 0.01 per cent each year increase but it is connected to G.V.A., so it is ...

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Yes, I appreciate there is a G.V.A. issue but I thought the increase had been a single increase and not an ongoing one.

**The Minister for International Development:**

No, it is ongoing.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay. Are you concerned about the level of G.V.A. for this year, given the problems we have with COVID?

**The Minister for International Development:**



You have got to take the good with the bad really. We have fixed it to G.V.A. because we feel it is a responsible response to our overseas aid budget. The O.E.C.D. (Organisation for Economic Co-ordination and Development) average is 0.32 per cent, so we are quite a bit below that at the minute. For an international community such as ours, who does business on a global international level, we feel it is responsible as a global citizen to try and at least achieve the O.E.C.D. average.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Had you thought about pulling away from a percentage of G.V.A., given the potential economic problems we have coming down the line?

**The Minister for International Development:**

No, we have just secured it to G.V.A. because we feel that ...

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Yes. Would you not have been happier securing it to a number that would not drop, could not drop?

**The Minister for International Development:**

It can drop, can it not?

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I suppose you can if your Government decides it is ... yes.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Exactly.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Yes, okay, point taken. Obviously you are tying it into G.V.A., if G.V.A. drops significantly you are going to get a lot less budget, if you were tied into a specific number that would not drop.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

The Government could change that, yes.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Yes, they can change it. But we felt that this was the proportionately wise thing to do, to set it to G.V.A. whereby if our economic situation drops significantly, so my budget drops.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay, that is fine. If you are happy with that, that is fine, okay. Can I just ask about COVID restrictions and travel and we started the meeting right at the beginning with you saying how officers have been away in April and we found out eventually that they had gone to those 3 countries? Do you have a specific budget allocated for travel?

**The Minister for International Development:**

No. My budget is one budget and it is up to the commissioners to decide how it is carved up. Obviously we are extremely prudent, we do not travel business class like some departments. We have a running cost, which is currently at 3.8 per cent of our total budget, which we feel is quite reasonable, especially when, again, the O.E.C.D. average is 7 per cent for agencies such as ours.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Okay. Obviously the O.E.C.D. average will be based on some ... or people in their department. Anyway, that is fine. That is all the questions I have got, I hand back to you, Chair. Just about there.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Thank you for that. Before I wind up, one further question on it. Just to clarify, you talk about your budget, when you say that you are, I think, more often than not or maybe all the time referring to the budget for overseas aid, what else does a department get besides that? Is there anything on top of the overseas aid aspect which enables you to do other things?

**The Minister for International Development:**

No, that is my budget. Do you mean with regards to Island identity?

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

No, just generally speaking and general funding. Obviously you share overseas aid and you are a Minister, I am just wondering whether there is any distinction between the 2 and whether the department per se has anything extra which would enable it to push for things like national anthems, et cetera. It is all within the overseas aid budget, is it?

**The Minister for International Development:**

No. Overseas aid is used exclusively for overseas aid and the staff of that department. I have dipped into the Chief Minister's budget, his budget, just to produce the Island identity document, the brochure and the website for that because that was an initiative that he wanted set up. It was one of his policy development boards, so that funding comes from his budget.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay. I like the expression dipped into, I wish you well with further dips. In fact on that point I am due in a meeting with him in a moment. Unless there is anything else, Deputy Luce, I think we are finished and I thank you, Minister.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

That is fine, thank you, Chair.

**The Deputy of St. Mary:**

Okay. I thank you both for your presence and dealing with all our questions and we look forward to the next one.

**The Minister for International Development:**

Thank you.

[11:58]