

T: 0300 244 4000
E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Clare Adamson, MSP,
Convenor
Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture
Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh EH99 1SP

By email: ceeac.committee@parliament.scot

1 March 2022

Dear Clare,

Scottish Government International Development Programme and Humanitarian Funds

In the CEEAC Committee evidence session on 3 February 2022, as part of its inquiry into the Scottish Government's international work, Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, Angus Robertson MSP attended to give evidence on behalf of the Scottish Government.

SG International Development Programme: Small Grants

During the evidence session Mark Ruskell, MSP, raised that the Committee had taken evidence a few weeks prior to that from the Scotland Malawi Partnership, who had noted their considerable concern about the closure of the Scottish Government's international development Small Grants Programme. Mr Ruskell had suggested that the Scottish Government might write to the Committee on how it will continue to support the growth of small grass-roots initiatives in Scotland.

During her March 2021 statement to Parliament, my predecessor Jenny Gilruth announced that, following an independent Review of the Small Grants pilot programme (commissioned by the Scottish Government, and published October 2020), that the Programme would not continue. This was because one of the key intents of the project, to grow civil society organisations so they can compete for larger elements of Scottish financing, was not achieved in all but 1 case over the 5 year project. While there were a range of very positive initiatives, I am sure the committee will agree 80 grants across 12 countries (including Scotland) with an average size of £30,000 is very challenging to monitor, evaluate and also assure the tax payer of appropriate risk management. The window was also underwhelmed in terms of demand from the sector, with the full £500,000 pa budget not fully spent in any year from its establishment. This decision to close therefore followed consideration by the Scottish Government of the Review Report's findings and future Options.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

We continue to place great value on the role of civil society in Scotland, and the appetite for global citizenship in our local communities, staff in our public bodies including NHS Scotland, and private sector companies too. This is all a key part in how Scotland contributes globally to the UN Sustainable Goals, with the recognition of all countries as these Goals were agreed in 2014 that the journey to achieve them would involve “Governments as well as Parliaments, the UN system and other international institutions, local authorities, indigenous peoples, civil society, business and the private sector, the scientific and academic community – and all people.”

Supporting global citizenship in Scotland has remained a key focus for our programme and we support Scotland’s civil society through a range of means. For example, we currently allocate 8% of our International Development Fund annually in core funding to a range of civil society networking bodies to support global citizenship in Scotland and Malawi – not only the Scotland Malawi Partnership and its sister organisation the Malawi Partnership, but also Scotland’s International Development Alliance, and the Scottish Fair Trade Forum.

The Alliance, who the Committee also took evidence from in its session, is the membership body for everyone in Scotland committed to creating a fairer world, free from poverty, injustice and environmental threats. The Alliance therefore has a broad membership base of people and organisations involved in international development and global citizenship, beyond the valued partnerships between Scotland and Malawi.

As I commence my work I will be meeting with the Alliance and the other 3 civil society networking bodies which the Scottish Government core funds to support global citizenship in Scotland. I am keen to hear from them their thoughts on how we can support and engage with civil society following closure of Small Grants programme with a view to future more impactful programming.

More broadly I should emphasise the Scottish Government policy that we are looking to localise ever more of our assistance within the Global south. As the International Development sets out we will have a new focus on tackling gender equality, and implement against our new principles, developed with our partner countries and civil society, which emphasize country led development, inclusion and diversity, equality, and amplify Global South voices. As Head of Oxfam Scotland Jamie Livingstone said approving the outcomes of review *“The Scottish Government governments around the world and organisations like Oxfam need to stand together with communities driving their own change while challenging the gender and racial injustices trapping people in poverty.”*

We will be looking to make this shift together with the civil society sector of Scotland, alongside an ever-increasing role for local civil society actors in our partner countries in direct financing, and I look forward to sharing details of this programming with you as it develops.

I hope that this reassures the Committee as to the Scottish Government’s commitment to supporting civil society in Scotland, even as our international development continues to evolve in supporting a shift in power and funding to partner countries, towards increased localisation of development.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew’s House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



Accredited
Until 2020



Update on SG Humanitarian Funding

I also wanted to take this opportunity to update the Committee on two very recent humanitarian emergencies to which the Scottish Government has responded with funding.

Firstly, an update in relation to our response to Tropical Storm Ana which has caused devastation and loss of life in Malawi's southern province:

Committee members may be aware that this region, and in particular Madagascar, Mozambique and Malawi, has been repeatedly struck by severe storms and cyclones in recent years, taking lives, and destroying homes, infrastructure and crops. We conveyed to the Government of Malawi the sincere condolences of the people of Scotland, and the Scottish Government, following the tragic deaths of Malawians from that flooding.

In line with our Principles, as above, we worked closely with Government of Malawi officials in the Department of Disaster Management, taking advice from them, to ensure that support from Scotland was both effective and aligns with their Government's disaster plan.

Following from those discussions, we have committed to provide £400,000 through the British Red Cross, who are one of the iNGOs appointed as a member of the Scottish Government's Humanitarian Emergency Panel. This Scottish Government humanitarian funding to the British Red Cross will go towards the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) [Emergency Appeal](#), the aim of which is to enable 161,000 people affected to meet their essential needs in a safe and dignified manner, recover from the crisis and strengthen their resilience to future shocks.

Secondly, in relation to the severe humanitarian crisis rapidly unfolding in Ukraine:

I would like to draw the Committee's attention to First Minister's announcement on Monday 28 February, through which she announced that the Scottish Government would be contributing humanitarian aid to support the devastating crisis in Ukraine.

Firstly, an initial £4m in humanitarian aid will be provided as part of the global humanitarian efforts; and in addition to financial aid, the Scottish Government will provide medical supplies to Ukraine. [Humanitarian aid to Ukraine - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#).

My officials are currently in discussions with humanitarian aid agencies, including the Scottish iNGOs who are members of our Humanitarian Emergency Panel, to identify the best route to get this aid most quickly to those affected by the Ukraine crisis, including to those displaced by the invasion.

More details will follow on this, which I will be pleased to share with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



NEIL GRAY

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



Accredited
Until 2020

