

Disaster and Emergency Relief Awards Policy

This policy document should be read together with the Commission's Guidance Notes for charities applying for disaster or emergency relief awards.

1. Introduction

The Overseas Aid & Development Commission (the Commission) is a committee of the States of Guernsey with a mandate to:

Distribute funds voted by the States for aid and development overseas by making contributions to ongoing programmes and to emergency and disaster relief;

Develop programmes relating to the collection and distribution of funds involving the private sector;

Carry out the duties and powers above in accordance with the policies set out by the Policy and Resources Committee; and

Fulfil the responsibilities set out in Annex 1 to the mandates of the Committees of the States.

The objectives of the Commission are to manage and administer the budget approved by the States of Guernsey for Overseas Aid. The Commission's President is a member of the States of Deliberation and the six Commissioners are lay people appointed by the States of Deliberation.

This policy relates to **disaster and emergency relief** and should be read together with the Commission's **Guidance Notes** for charities applying for disaster or emergency relief awards. Policies in respect of **grant funding** and **community partnerships** (programmes involving the private sector) are available separately on www.gov.gg/overseasaid.

2. Background

Guernsey has been contributing to overseas aid and development projects since 1980, through the award of grant aid to approved charities and agencies. The approach adopted by the Commission, on behalf of the States of Guernsey, is:

To support projects which will help to provide the basic needs of the world's least developed countries or to help the indigenous population to meet those needs.

Basic needs include medical and health facilities, educational programs and facilities, housing, water and sanitation provision and the means of sustaining a living, e.g. through agriculture, horticulture or training in sustainable employment skills.

The Commission also supports projects which will generate a lasting and sustainable improvement in the living conditions of the community receiving the aid. This ethos underpins the Commission's overriding objective to offer a 'hand up' to some of the world's least developed communities, rather than a 'hand-out'.

The Commission is cognisant that in supporting a charity or NGO's project or programme, it is effectively entering into a formal relationship with that charity or NGO which goes much wider than a simple financial relationship. It is important that neither party undermines the reputation or public trust in the other. Where a charity or NGO has publicly espoused negative views about Guernsey, it may be in neither the charity's or NGO's nor in Guernsey's interest to enter into a formal (including financial) relationship.

3. Budget

The majority of the Commission's annual budget (£2.9m in 2018) is used for a routine program of **grant funding** (see separate policy) for sustainable development projects with a long-term impact in the communities they serve.

From 2005 to 2017, the Commission had a ring-fenced annual budget of £200,000 which it could use to support charities in their immediate response to natural disasters and emergencies. In 2018, the ring-fence was removed and the Commission has agreed that it will set aside up to 10% of its budget for disaster and emergency relief each year.

Sustainable development projects can help to build resilience to climate change and natural disasters, and can help to create the conditions for peace and avoidance of civil conflict, as well as enabling communities to build back better after disasters, violence and displacement. The way the Commission weights its budget reflects the importance that it gives to this kind of long-term work, while still recognising the importance of an immediate response to disasters and emergencies, in order to protect health and save lives.

Acknowledging that disasters and emergencies occur frequently and unpredictably, especially in the world's least developed countries, the Commission aims to set aside an equal share of its disaster and emergency relief budget for each quarter of the year, although it may need to spend more or less as circumstances arise. In addition, the Commission aims to limit awards to a maximum of £50,000 per emergency where possible.

Any budget unspent at year end will be carried forward to use as emergency relief or **community partnership** funding (see separate policy) at the Commission's discretion.

4. Applicant Charities

The immediate response to a disaster or emergency is a critical time. Organisations must be established in the area well enough to be able to respond quickly and appropriately to the needs of the affected community. As revelations about abuse in the aid sector during 2018 have shown, organisations must also have strong safeguards in place to prevent malicious actors taking advantage of the inevitable chaos that follows a disaster, to further harm vulnerable people.

Applicant charities will be required to demonstrate to the Commission that it has in place appropriate policies and procedures for its good governance, financial management and the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse of children and vulnerable adults. These requirements will be applied equally to the applicant charity and any in-country partner engaged by the charity.

The Commission requires applicants for emergency and disaster relief to be:

EITHER

- Registered with a Charity Commission or Charity Registry in the British Isles, and not currently under investigation for any alleged wrong-doing;
- Already known to the Commission, with a track record of delivering effectively on grant-funded projects;
- Well-established in the affected area (preferably with a long-term local partner organisation) and experienced in similar work to that which it is proposing to carry out; and
- Able to demonstrate that it can scale up its resources and activities to meet the needs of the local community.

OR

- A member organisation of the UK Disasters Emergency Committee*¹; and
- Registered with a Charity Commission or Charity Registry in the British Isles, and not currently under investigation for any alleged wrong-doing.

The Commission has suspended, until further notice, its policy of making general grants to DEC-led appeals, on the basis that a small number of DEC member organisations are implicated in the ongoing concerns about abuse in the aid sector. However, the Commission will continue to support applications from individual DEC members, provided that they are not otherwise implicated.

All charities must also meet the Commission's standards in respect of financial governance, child protection and adult safeguarding.

¹ Charities that are members of the DEC have already demonstrated, to that Committee's satisfaction, that they are well-established, able to deliver projects effectively, and capable of scaling up to meet need as it arises

5. Disaster and Emergency Responses

The Commission will normally make awards for the following activities in the immediate aftermath of a disaster or emergency:

- Provision of clean water, sanitation, medical services and emergency feeding programs to disaster-affected communities;
- Provision of emergency shelter and clothing; and/or
- Distribution of emergency supplies within the areas affected by the disaster.

The Commission will normally only support responses to disasters and emergencies which occur in countries that fall within the lowest quartile of the UN Human Development Index. The Commission may exceptionally consider awards to very small communities (e.g. small island nations) outside the lowest quartile, where the disaster or emergency has wholly wiped out the community's infrastructure and ability to respond. The Commission recognises that small islands can be totally devastated by a disaster in a way that bigger places are not. Larger places have alternative infrastructure and people can be displaced to, and cared for in, different parts of the country. Small islands, even where nominally wealthier, do not necessarily have the ability or resilience to bounce back if their core infrastructure and public services are wiped out without support and aid from other jurisdictions.

The Commission's disaster and emergency relief budget was established with the intention of supporting responses to natural disasters, and this remains its focus. The Commission will also consider responses to civil conflict and displacement (without the catalyst of a natural disaster) by exception only, depending on the scale or nature of the humanitarian need in question.

The Commission **will not** support initiatives which include providing cash hand-outs to those affected by the disaster.

6. Assessment Criteria

In determining whether to support an application for disaster or emergency relief, the Commission will consider the following:

- Is the initiative an immediate response (within days or weeks) to a clearly-defined crisis (which may include a sudden escalation of an ongoing situation)?
- What is the nature of the crisis?
- What is the scale of the crisis (in terms of number of people killed, injured, displaced or otherwise put at risk of serious harm)?
- Will the proposed response meet the most pressing needs in terms of protecting health and/or saving lives?
- Is the proposed response at risk of inflaming tensions or aggravating divisions within the crisis-affected community?
- If this initiative does not go ahead, will other organisations in the area be able to meet the crisis-affected community's needs?

- What other steps is the organisation taking to raise awareness of and funding for its response to the crisis?
- Will the Commission's support help to answer a demand from the local community for Guernsey to assist in responding to this crisis?

The Commission may contact the DEC, or such other agencies as it believes may be able to assist it in assessing the application, for expert advice and guidance on the nature of the crisis itself and/or of appropriate and effective responses to it.

The Commission will always take the advice from the Policy & Resources Committee's External Relations and Constitutional Affairs Team and the Director of Financial Crime Policy. This is not just in relation to reputational risks, but also to see if there are priority areas of Guernsey policy in relation to developing a mature international identity which can be supported through grants for overseas aid. The final decision whether or not to accept an application will always rest with the Commission, however the advice from the above will be central to informing the Commission's decision.

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