

CONSTITUTION, EUROPE, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

1st Meeting 2022, Session 6

13 January 2022

The Scottish Government's International Work

1. As part of its inquiry into the Scottish Government's international work, the Committee is looking at how the Scottish Government engages internationally and what it wants to achieve from this work. This includes both its EU and wider international engagement, its support for international development and how its external affairs policies interact with UK government policies in these areas.
2. This is the fourth evidence session on this topic and the Committee will take evidence from—
 - Mark Anderson, Director of Research and Innovation, Glasgow Caledonian University
 - David Hope-Jones OBE, Chief Executive, Scotland Malawi Partnership
 - Lewis Ryder-Jones, Deputy Chief Executive, Scotland's International Development Alliance
3. Members can find the written submissions from the witnesses in **Annexe A**.

Committee Clerks
January 2022

Written submission from Mark Anderson, Director of Research and Innovation,
Glasgow Caledonian University

Glasgow Caledonian University has become one of the largest universities in Scotland with nearly 20,000 students. The campus is self-contained and situated right in the heart of the city of Glasgow. It also boasts a professional postgraduate university campus in the heart of London. It has also working overseas, establishing a campus in New York, Oman and Bangladesh and helping to establish the African Leadership University in Mauritius. The University's commitment to social innovation is reflected in and inspired by its motto, For the Common Good, and is shared by its students and staff at all levels and not least by the University's former Chancellor and Nobel Laureate, Professor Muhammad Yunus, who set up the University's leading research centre for the social sciences, the Yunus Centre for Social Business and Health. The Centre specialises in social innovation and participates in a number of H2020 research projects in SI such as SIRIUS, EFEIISIS, FAB-MOVE and TRANSIT.

In recognition of its achievements in social innovation education, the University has been designated Changemaker Campus by Ashoka U, a global network of universities and colleges, and is one of only 29 in the world and the first in Scotland. It reflects the University's global leadership in promoting social innovation in its teaching and research as it can only be gained by institutions that "share the vision for higher education to become the next global driver of social change by transforming the educational experience into a worldchanging experience." GCU London hosted the first Social Frontiers Research Conference, bringing together 120 individuals from across the world with the aim of strengthening the community of social innovation researchers. The conference itself was organised in collaboration with Nesta, TEPSIE (FP7 project coordinated by The Young Foundation), and the Rockefeller Foundation. The conference also had support from the Social Innovation Exchange (SIX), DESIS Network and the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship at Oxford.

GCU is 43rd in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings.

The University is ranked in the Top 20 in the world in three SDGs:

- SDG 5 Gender Equality 12th in the world
- SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth =13th in the world
- SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities 20th in the world

and ranked in the Top 40 in the world in two SDGs:

- SDG12 Responsible Consumption and Production =32nd in the world
- SDG3 Good Health and Wellbeing =40th in the world

As the University for the Common Good, the focus of GCU's Strategy 2020 is upon transforming lives, enriching cities and communities, creating societal benefit through social innovation and engaging globally. Our approach involves working closely with the communities we serve, both within Scotland and beyond, to support and develop local solutions to problems they are facing, and utilising our capacity as a University to bring specialised knowledge and, investment. In particular, the University focusses on the area of social innovation - collaborative approaches to

tackling social problems, built on principles of democratisation and coproduction, which occur in and around civil society.

How should the Scottish Government engage with the EU and what should it seek to achieve from its engagement?

The Scottish Government should make every efforts to continue its engagement with Europe, not just within the limitations of the TCA but also through unilateral actions to ensure that Scottish organisations and citizens can continue to benefit from programmes as much as possible. This should involve not just negotiating special terms for the programmes in question, which may often be challenging or impossible, but also by supporting the establishment of new EU-based institutions (foundations etc.) that can serve as conduits for EU funding opportunities, not just within the EU but in other parts of the world (a large proportion of EU funding supports initiatives outside the region, especially in low and middle-income countries).

How might the EU-UK TCA affect how the Scottish Government engages with the EU and how will that engagement interact with UK government policy in this area?

The EU-UK TCA defines what programmes are available to us but it shouldn't prevent the Scottish government making unilateral arrangements in some instances and as described above, SG could also support Scottish organisations engaging with EU through different channel that would not affect UK government policy.

What role should the Scottish Parliament have in scrutinising the operation of the TCA and how the TCA influences the Scottish government's engagement with the EU?

It should interrogate the detail and see where loopholes allow it to continue to engage.

What should the priorities of the Scottish Government be in developing its external affairs work and overseas presence, including its international development policy?

Universities and other organisations have suffered a massive loss of funding for international development projects both through EU funding but now additionally through the loss of other funding such as Global Challenges Research funding and British Council programme which helped us establish enormously successful initiatives with organisations overseas. SG should offer alternative funding for such initiatives.

Does the Scottish Government's budget for external affairs deliver value for money?

It does but it needs to do more in light of the loss of funding described above.

What principles should inform the Scottish Government's international engagement (e.g. economic, democratic, human rights, climate change or cultural / 'soft power' priorities)? And should that engagement be based on geographical or policy focus? Please elaborate.

They should be based on the SDGs, and sustainability in its broadest sense.
Innovation (including social innovation) should also play an enormous role.

How do the Scottish Government's EU and international policies interact with UK foreign and diplomatic policy in these areas?

Unsure.

Written submission from Lewis Ryder-Jones, Deputy Chief Executive, Scotland's International Development Alliance

Scotland's International Development Alliance (the Alliance) is the membership body in Scotland for everyone committed to creating a fairer world, free from poverty, injustice and environmental threats. Our membership brings together a diverse range of over 200 international NGOs, faith-based organisations, companies, universities, charitable trusts, public sector bodies and individuals that operate in over 100 countries.

How should the Scottish Government engage with the EU and what should it seek to achieve from its engagement?

The principles and universality of creating a fairer world through sustainable development should underpin the Scottish Government's external affairs policy with regard to the EU. The EU is the largest donor to overseas development assistance programmes in the world, and the largest donor to climate change mitigation and adaptation action.

The development trajectory of developing countries is affected by a range of policies including migration (facilitating remittances), international tax and trade policies and rules. It is therefore vital that the EU and its member states seek coherence of policies to ensure that the efficacy of their development assistance is not undermined by contradictory policies.

The Scottish Government should therefore aim to engage the EU on policy coherence through a number of routes:

- Engage in the areas of international development that the EU focuses on and make the case why the EU should seek Scotland's participation, as a pro-EU, pro-development, internationalist small country with expertise and unique experiences to offer to the EU and to international development.
- Support civil society to maintain strong links with European organisations. By doing this Scotland can influence specific sectors through EU forums.
- Make Scotland a policy coherence case study and through that seek to influence the EU to implement policy coherence – continuing to develop or sustain a strong Scotland-EU relationship even in the face of Brexit.
- Consider how other Scottish Government directorates outwith External Affairs can link with EU networks. For example, the Education Directorate should join GENE – Global Education Network Europe – the network of Ministries and Agencies with national responsibility for Global Education in European countries. This network involves both EU and non-EU countries.

What should the priorities of the Scottish Government be in developing its external affairs work and overseas presence, including its international development policy?

Scotland's economic development has, for centuries, benefited from, and exploited, global inequalities, from the slave trade era to the vastly unequal burden of emissions on Global South countries. However, historically, Scotland has also been highly supportive of global development and funding for it, and the Scottish people continue to do so via the UK Government's Official Development Assistance as well as their own philanthropy. Today's challenges in an interconnected world, though, require more than just traditional aid from nation states. Achieving global sustainable development requires leadership from all corners of global society to reduce emissions, to consume ethically, to welcome migrants, to challenge injustice, to reject inequality and to build a society that does not harm others, internationally or intergenerationally.

As such, the Scottish Government's external affairs work and overseas presence must prioritise this leadership role on sustainable development. This includes but is not limited to:

- measuring and reporting on Scotland's global environmental and human impact footprint holistically. As indicators are developed and honed that aim to measure progress towards National Performance Framework outcomes, particularly our 'positive contribution internationally', we must ensure they contribute to measuring coherence in relation to our global footprint (including human impact elsewhere) across a full range of sectors, such as trade & investment, supply chains in procurement, travel & tourism and waste management
- adopting a headline measure of progress beyond GDP growth that represents the broader concerns of human and ecological wellbeing, including the impact on future generations elsewhere, and championing this approach internationally
- Using public procurement, public policy and leadership on business practice in Scotland to support sustainable development.
- Through its own purchasing, its requirements of other public bodies and agencies, and its public policy levers on the actions of private businesses, the Scottish Government should focus on human rights due diligence in supply chains, with explicit consideration of living wages, living incomes and fair purchasing practices
- Supporting calls for cancellation of all external debt payments due to be made in the next two years for those countries in need, and most urgently, for 77 of the world's lowest-income countries as identified by the World Bank
- Championing loss and damage in climate finance, while boosting the quantity of grant-based support in climate finance and ensure more of it is focused on the least developed and most vulnerable countries

Does the Scottish Government's budget for external affairs deliver value for money?

The world is at a critical juncture, with multiple intersecting crises. No longer can we separate the nature crisis and the climate emergency from our consumption habits and fossil-fuel dependency, nor can we decouple our own economic prosperity from the poverty experienced elsewhere.

Scotland prides itself on making a positive contribution to the world, but this only holds weight if we measure that contribution holistically.

As such, the external affairs budget can only deliver value for money if there is full transparency over how that budget is spent.

In the most recent Scottish Budget, figures state that only £26.6m is spent on external affairs. Of this, a significant portion goes towards International development funding.

The Scottish Government's international development programming, although small, has a significant impact across its four partner countries in tackling global issues, and the Alliance strongly believes this delivers value for money.

The Alliance and its members welcomed the commitment to increase the International Development Fund to £15m per annum in the most recent Programme for Government.

To deliver further value for money, a normative approach to international development budgeting would be welcome. This would inflation-proof the budget and drive towards political consensus, over time.

That said, more scrutiny over this spend is essential.

This scrutiny should be led by parliament using a Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) approach, perhaps using a screening tool like the OECD Screening tool.

Such scrutiny might be effectively carried out by a standalone Committee like CEEAC, and this would be a step forward, especially if scrutiny of this kind was built into its remit, and there was a duty to report regularly.

However, we emphasise that a PCSD approach to parliamentary scrutiny should be embedded across all committees to ensure a coherent approach to everything Scottish Government does, as per the PCSD definition below.

This could involve building more time into the current Parliamentary processes to allow existing Committees to scrutinise legislation for policy coherence and reform of parliamentary processes.

Furthermore, all new external affairs policy should be systematically 'proofed'

against thematic priorities, such as climate justice, gender equality, and fair-trade principles, and publicly reported on and debated in Parliament. This could be done using the NPF and SDG frameworks, and incorporate the use of established SDG interaction typologies, such as Nilsson et al.'s 2016 7-point typology .

Another way to ensure value for money is for Government to publish its Contribution to International Development Report (CIDR) less frequently (biennially) and widen its remit, reporting on coherence across all external affairs activities rather than simply on Scottish Government international development funding and activities.

The CIDR should challenge the government to do better in other areas. Ideally, it could have a focus on incoherencies, policy trade-offs and gaps in how best to achieve sustainable development universality.

This could be done thematically, and have a new focus every two years. However, at a minimum producing a biennial report as opposed to annual one would allow more time to analyse policies, programme and impact across the external affairs directorate, and better report on policy coherence across a range of priority areas.

As the world emerges from the COVID-19 crisis, principled, coherent, transparent and accountable international development funding is more important than ever.

What principles should inform the Scottish Government's international engagement (e.g. economic, democratic, human rights, climate change or cultural / 'soft power' priorities)? And should that engagement be based on geographical or policy focus? Please elaborate.

The Scottish Government must put solidarity with marginalised people and communities in low income countries at the heart of all its external relations, and take a sustainable development approach at all times. Human rights and equality are integral to sustainable development.

As one of the first nations to sign up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is right that a commitment to SDGs underpins the Scottish Government's international engagement. The SDGs include 17 interlinked goals that are both universal and indivisible from one another. In other words, progress towards one goal cannot be separated from progress on any other across space and time.

We see all aspects of external affairs policy as inextricably linked in this same way, particularly in terms of how they affect our ability to contribute to tackling global challenges such as poverty, inequality, injustice and climate change.

Achieving policy coherence means considering all our actions holistically through a sustainable development universality lens.

The economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development must be considered holistically by all parts of Scottish society, including government and the private sector when deciding our approach to any external affairs decision.

For example, trade and investment strategies should not be decided upon based solely on the economic benefit for Scotland or Scottish business alone, and must consider environmental, economic and social outcomes elsewhere, particularly in developing countries, even in those that are not priority countries in the International Development Strategy.

The trade and investment that we promote, the subsidies our government provides to specific industries and the strategic objectives we focus on should be systemically assessed against a variety of sustainable development indicators.

Promoting the concept of 'Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development' (PCSD) (SDG 17.14) should therefore underpin and inform all external affairs decisions on the basis that by enhancing policy coherence the Scottish Government can add significant value to its global citizenship goals.

PCSD is defined as:

“An approach and policy tool to integrate the economic, social, environmental and governance dimensions of sustainable development at all stages of domestic and international policy making.” (OECD 2016, 2018)

Importantly, the National Performance Framework (NPF) includes an outcome stating that Scotland should 'make a positive contribution internationally'. The term 'positive contribution' should be defined using a holistic PCSD approach, and all of the Scottish Government's international engagement should stem from that definition.

On geographical or policy focus:

The Scottish Government should prioritise its international engagement through both a thematic and geographic focus.

This should include maintaining a partnership approach to its international development work given the limited funding that it receives, and the positive outcomes of the partnership approach, which was highlighted in the Scottish Governments inaugural Contribution to International Development Report in 2018.

However, the addition of thematic priorities as well, such as gender equality and climate justice, would help to make sure all elements of our international engagement support one another and do not undermine other areas.

Most countries have bilateral development cooperation and partnership with a limited number of countries (Ireland 9, and soon to be increased; Sweden 35, etc), but the addition of thematic areas of focus, if approached holistically through a PCSD lens, can help drive forward real progress on cross-cutting issues in partner countries.

The additional funding on specific thematic areas could also help to maximise coherence with other sectors or domestic policy priorities, as well as opportunities for collaboration between Scotland's public and private sectors on aid projects in

specialist areas.

This would build on the experience of, for example, Police Scotland's support of justice initiatives in Zambia and Malawi, Scottish Water and WaterAid's collaboration on WASH in Rwanda and Malawi, and the many projects over the past 15 years working with NHS boards, other SG departments and the private sector.

Crucially, this would support improvement and learning for what works best in different parts of the world, help harness Scottish expertise, and maximise Scotland's contribution to creating a fairer, kinder world.

Furthermore, the inclusion of thematic priorities, and thereby a systemic PCSD assessment of all external affairs policy against specific thematic areas, could help to ensure that we are not only driving forward on that priority with our partner countries more coherently (in our international development strategy for example), but that spill-over effects of our international engagement are not negatively affecting ANY developing country, partner or otherwise.

How do the Scottish Government's EU and international policies interact with UK foreign and diplomatic policy in these areas?

The Scottish Government can explicitly support UK commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals especially as implementation ratchets up over the next 5 years and demonstrate that it is an ally in supporting the UK meet the goals domestically (including on gender equality) as well as helping partner countries attain these shared international targets. Emphasising the importance of policy coherence and leading by example also arguably supports the expressed intentions of the integrated review of Foreign Policy, noting the importance of ensuring that all interactions with international partners sustain and support each other and that trade, for example, does not undermine human rights based commitments in international development.

Written submission from David Hope-Jones OBE, Chief Executive, Scotland Malawi Partnership

The Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP) is the national civil society network coordinating, representing and supporting the many people-to-people links between our two nations. We represent a community of 109,000 people in Scotland with active links to Malawi. This is part of a shared history that dates back 160 years to the travels of Dr David Livingstone.

We believe the hundreds of partnerships which unite Scotland and Malawi represent an innovative new approach to international development. This is an approach based not on 'donors' and 'recipients' but on long-standing, mutually-beneficial community-to-community, family-to-family and people-to-people links, each on its own quite modest in scale but, together, a formidable force for progressive change.

We exist to inspire the people and organisations of Scotland to be involved with Malawi in an informed, coordinated and effective way for the benefit of both nations. We do this by providing a forum where ideas, activities and information can be shared on our website, through our online mapping tool, publications and through regular forums, training events and stakeholder meetings. In this way, we harness experience, expertise and enthusiasm from across Scotland and help inspire each new generation of Scots and Malawians to become involved together, in a variety of innovative new ways.

The SMP is core funded by, but independent of the Scottish Government, as part of its own outstanding Malawi Development Programme. We are extremely grateful for this far-sighted investment by successive governments.

We are a membership organisation representing more than 1,220 Scottish organisations and key individuals, including half Scotland's local authorities, every Scottish university and most of its colleges, 230 primary and secondary schools, dozens of different churches and faith-based groups, hospitals and health boards, businesses, charities and NGOs, and a wide range of grass-root community-based organisations. Our work permeates almost all aspects of Scottish civil society. Any Scottish organisation or individual with a link to, or interest in, Malawi is welcome to join the Scotland Malawi Partnership.

By creating a single space for all organisations and individuals in Scotland currently engaged with Malawi to come together, we help reduce duplication of effort, add value to Scotland's historic civil society relationship with Malawi, and contribute towards poverty alleviation in Malawi.

A 2018 University of Edinburgh study estimated that the SMP membership contributes over £49 million in time, resources and money to their links with Malawi each year. This activity directly benefits 2.9 million Malawians and 260,000 Scots annually. In total, more than 208,000 Malawians and 109,000 Scots are actively

involved in links between the two countries, making the SMP one of the UK's largest cross-community networks engaged in international development.

A separate 2018 paper, by a University of Glasgow researcher, working from a randomly selected sample of 449 Scots, found that roughly 45% of Scots could name a friend or family member with a connection to Malawi, and more than 75% of Scots were supportive of these links, with less than 1.5% opposed. There is arguably no comparable north-south, people-to-people bilateral relationship with this degree of public engagement and support.

The Partnership continues to be buoyed by the growth in both the quantity and quality of civil society connections between Scotland and Malawi. The difference these links make in terms of combating poverty in Malawi and inspiring greater awareness in Scotland has been widely recognised from the outset as something immensely worthwhile.

Our work is not confined by a conventional understanding of charity and international development, with donors on one side and recipients on the other. It is about partnership, joint-working and friendship. In keeping with this model, we have a sister network in Malawi (the 'Malawi Scotland Partnership') that manages all coordination in Malawi and is 100% Malawi-owned and Malawi-led.

The SMP is itself non-governmental and politically neutral. We are, however, active in representing our members' work in Holyrood (where we provide the secretariat for the Malawi Cross Party Group) and in Westminster (where we provide the secretariat for the Malawi All Party Parliamentary Group). All 59 Scottish MPs have SMP members in their constituency and all 129 MSPs have SMP members in their region or constituency. There is unshakeable all-party political support for Scotland's historic friendship with Malawi amongst Scotland's elected leaders.

We are led by our members and exist to support them to inspire the people and organisations of Scotland to be involved with Malawi in a way which benefits both nations. We are active in coordinating, representing and supporting two-way dignified partnerships across a diverse range of areas including: cultural links; diaspora leadership; environment and renewable energy; faith links; further and higher education; gender; governance; health links; local authorities; primary and secondary education; sport; sustainable economic development; tourism; trade and agriculture; water; and youth.

Every month, we deliver an ambitious series of diverse, high impact events and activities, attended by members, partners, civic leaders, policy makers and other key stakeholders. Events such as our Youth Congress are co-designed by the SMP's Youth Committee. We share information and updates with our members and partners through the regularly updated news pages of our website, through a dedicated weekly electronic bulletin, and through social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube).

More information on the Scotland Malawi Partnership and our work can be found on our website (www.scotland-malawipartnership.org). We also recommend Rev Prof Kenneth Ross' excellent book 'Friendship with a Purpose: Malawi and Scotland for Sustainable Development' (2018) which sets out the historical and contemporary context of the SMP, and the Official Report from the September 2018 High Level Conference in Malawi, which articulates Malawi's vision for the next chapter in the bilateral friendship, and updates the 2005 'Malawi After Gleneagles' conference in the Scottish Parliament.

What should the priorities of the Scottish Government be in developing its external affairs work and overseas presence, including its international development policy?

A key, longstanding feature of Scotland's approach to international development has been the extent to which it has mobilised a broad section of Scottish civic society, leveraging considerable wider inputs for maximum impact. We believe Scottish Government should look to prioritise constructive civic engagement through its international development work, for maximum impact.

A strong focus on the unique relationship with Malawi, a commitment to working through dignified partnership, and an active engagement of wider civic society have been foundational to the international development approach taken by successive Scottish governments since 2005. These elements are less visible in the Scottish Government's 2021 international development policy refresh and we encourage the Scottish Government not to move away from this, distinctively Scottish, approach to international development which allows a relatively modest governmental budget to be multiplied many times over thanks to input from all corners of Scottish and Malawian civic and associational life.

While speaking live from State House in Lilongwe to address the Scotland Malawi Partnership's AGM earlier this month, His Excellency Dr Lazarus Chakwera, President of Malawi, said:

"without red-blooded Scots and red-blooded Malawians working side by side on things that matter to both countries, the relationship between our countries would only exist on paper and in meetings that have no bearing on the development of our peoples. It is you who work side by side in schools, churches, hospitals, projects, and businesses that are the beating heart of our partnership. I want you to know that whatever challenges you are facing in those efforts are worth it, because by suffering losses together and registering victories together in your joint quest to make Malawi and Scotland closer than brothers, you make the world a better place. Seeing some of you at COP26 will therefore be a great honour for me, because if this conference was happening in another country, it would be a mere conference. But since it is happening in Scotland, it will be a homecoming.

We feel that this focus on engaging and working through civic society is a bold, innovative and effective approach to international development. Conventional approaches to international development have not delivered all they have promised; they have not offered the transformational change needed on climate change and

the Sustainable Development Goals. In part this is because, too often, these have been imposed solutions, parachuted from the global north, and disengaged from the realities of life. A community-driven approach, which builds on the myriad civic links which exist, and which empowers the people of both nation, offers a genuinely noteworthy new approach, which is fast gaining global recognition.

Further, we think the Scottish Government should commit further to transparency and accountability in its international development work, with clear processes around decision-making and strong, constructive, positive stakeholder engagement.

We realise that in the 2021 International Development policy refresh the new “Sustainable Recovery” and “Reducing Inequalities” funding streams will have a mix of competitive and non-competitive funding opportunities and the “Institutional Resilience” will be entirely non-competitive basis. With the exceptions of long-term institutional and core funding, we feel competitive calls for applications are the most transparent and effective mode of grant-making, offering best value for money and leveraging maximum wider support and input. We encourage the Scottish Government to prioritise open calls wherever possible and include details within the annual development impact report on the proportion of funds which have been through a competitive process and the proportion that have not.

We recognize that the Scottish Government has limited administrative capacity and that fully transparent and accountable processes can have a greater administrative burden. We therefore encourage the Scottish Government to reflect on the learning from its Small Grants Programme which was most capably managed by the Corra Foundation. The Corra Foundation were unfailingly supportive, engaging and empathetic towards those involved in the programme, in Scotland and Malawi. This mindset and approach is crucial if a government programme is to reach a more diverse audience, both in terms of practitioners and beneficiaries, as it creates a supportive, constructive, welcoming space.

We feel the Corra Foundation has played a pivotal role in helping bridge government machinery with smaller, more diverse grant-holders. The Corra Foundation’s intermediary role is crucial if the SG is to succeed in its stated intention of its recent review, of broadening the range and diversity of grant partners in the partner countries. We encourage the SG to explore opportunities for the Corra Foundation continue and expand its management role within the wider programme, tapping into their expertise and proven experience to engage and support more diverse communities. If this role is to be provided in partner countries by Comic Relief, as has been suggested, we hope there is the same level of transparency, openness, accountability and constructive sector engagement as offered by the Corra Foundation

In its report to Parliament, the Scottish Government highlighted its intention to “consider how we might work through more international bodies in future”. While we support [the concept of] multilateralism, we do not subscribe to the view that spending increasing proportions of the limited Scottish Government international

development fund in multilateral funds such as the UN, represents the most effective and appropriate use of the limited budgets. With a total international development budget approximately the same size as that of the island of Jersey, and in the current constitutional context, we feel it is important to prioritise those areas where Scotland can make a unique contribution, adding distinct value and looking to leverage maximum wider involvement and positive influence.

Does the Scottish Government's budget for external affairs deliver value for money? Please elaborate.

We feel that the Scottish Government's international development work delivers strong value for money where it engages, and benefits from, the significant multiplier effect of working with and through civic society.

The Scottish international development budget of £10m (increasing, commendably, to £15m in this Parliament) can achieve only limited results on its own. Even the UK government's reduced aid spending (at 0.5% GNI, rather than the promised 0.7%) is around £10 billion: 1,000 times greater than the Scottish Government's. This is understandable given international development currently remains a reserved matter. Successive Scottish Governments are to be commended for making a supplementary contribution to the UK aid budget, reflecting the strength of progressive internationalism and civic engagement in Scotland. However, these budget realities mean there is all the more to be gained from the Scottish Government acting strategically, to ensure maximum 'bang for its buck'.

The Scottish Government achieves greatest value for money where it applies something different and innovates, where it challenges norms and assumptions, and where it looks to work in a collegiate, collective and collaborative manner with civic society. By working with and through civic society, the Scottish Government achieves far greater impact with the funds available. For every pound spent on the Scotland Malawi Partnership, for example, around £200 is levered from Scottish civic society.

Addressing the SMP's recent AGM, President Lazarus Chakwera, said:
"One example of that uniqueness is that this bilateral relationship goes beyond government to government links. The countless civic, people-to-people links between our nations are an integral part of our partnership. There are as many as 1,200 of such links, working together in various ways across churches, schools, hospitals, universities, businesses, tourism, diaspora, community groups, and many more. The more the peoples of our countries interact in these sectors, the stronger our partnership becomes, which is why all three of my challenges to you last year were aimed at increasing and intensifying such interactions at all levels of our mutual engagement.

"At our last interaction, I accepted the designation of Honorary Co-Patron of the Scotland Malawi Partnership, and so in that capacity, I wish to thank the Scottish Government for always honouring the fact that the bond between our two countries extends wider than the framework of partnership between our governments. I find

great encouragement in the Scottish Government's efforts to go beyond supporting direct projects operating in Malawi, by also continuing to support and fund the Scotland Malawi Partnership in Scotland and the Malawi Scotland Partnership in Malawi. This support ensures that the civic links between our countries goes from strength to strength. In turn, the SMP is able to continue its work of supporting all the different links between our countries, which includes ensuring that all efforts are coordinated and, crucially, that Scotland's efforts in Malawi are always led by Malawi's priorities, not its own."

We encourage the Scottish Government to continue to maximise its impact by resisting the temptation to create a 'mini-DFID' with 1,000th the budget. This is not viable. Rather, we encourage the Scottish Government to continue to think innovatively and progressively to maximise its impact by working with and through civic society in a transparent, constructive and positive manner.

We further feel that the decision to cancel the Scottish Government's popular, innovative and impactful Small Grants Programme was a policy misstep. This programme, costing under half a million pounds a year in total, funded some remarkable successes and offered, we feel, astonishing value for money. It looked to support smaller, often volunteer-led, organisations who we feel made a worthwhile contribution, representing strong value for money.

Key to its success was the way the programme was managed: every year the Corra Foundation, who managed the programme for the SG, shared a 'Lessons Learnt' report and the sector networks were invited in to be briefed and feed in their own learning. It was a really positive, collaborative effort, with constant learning and development: the sector could feed into the design of the programme based on what was working well and the networks could step-up to support the programme each year, based on the programme's learning from the previous year. Most crucially, the Small Grants Programme benefitted from the Corra Foundation's highly supportive, engaging, empathetic and constructive management of the fund: always willing to meet with applicants and support their development through the process.

The Terms of Reference of the 2020 Scottish Government Review of the Small Grants Programme did not require the reviewer to assess either the impact that projects funded by this programme had had or, necessarily, whether the programme's objectives had been met. This was an issue flagged by the SMP at the time. The review did not consider any of the project impact reports and did not consult all those organisations funded by the programme.

The review found that there was insufficient empirical evidence that the programme's objectives had been met, but that this was largely because the objectives had not been originally written in a manner that allowed success to be easily measured. We are unaware whether other aspects of the Scottish Government's international development work have easily measurable objectives that would meet this standard, or have been through this same process of assessment. The report concludes by assessing four possible routes forward. We note that the option to continue the fund

had the most 'strengths' identified (5). In contrast, the option which the Scottish Government has chosen to take had the least 'strengths' listed (2) and the most 'issues or challenges' (9) identified by the report. Continuing the Small Grants Programme had been a 2016 SNP Manifesto commitment and we are sorry that this was not met in the last Parliament.

What principles should inform the Scottish Government's international engagement (e.g. economic, democratic, human rights, climate change or cultural / 'soft power' priorities)? And should that engagement be based on geographical or policy focus? Please elaborate.

WHAT PRINCIPLES?

The SMP is a principles-led network. In 2012 we consulted over 200 Malawian organisations, then 200 Scottish organisations, asking them what made a dignified, respectful and effective partnership. We combined these results with a thorough literature review, looking to listen to and learn from all that had been said and done in this space.

From this, 11 Scotland-Malawi Partnership Principles were developed which have underpinned the civic bilateral relationship ever since: Planning and implementing together; Appropriateness; Respect, trust and mutual understanding, Transparency and accountability; No-one left behind; Effectiveness; Reciprocity; Sustainability; do no Harm; Interconnectivity; Parity (equality). These 11 principles have been internationally praised and widely emulated.

Addressing the SMP's recent AGM, President Lazarus Chakwera, said:
"The SMP is able to continue its work of supporting all the different links between our countries, which includes ensuring that all efforts are coordinated and, crucially, that Scotland's efforts in Malawi are always led by Malawi's priorities, not its own. This is why the Scotland-Malawi Partnership Principles, which underpin all the work we do together, not only have my full endorsement, but are also worthy of emulation in bilateral relations between nations in the Global North and nations in the Global South. Those principles are the offspring of hours, days, weeks, and months of listening to each other respectfully, enabling us all to really understand what makes an effective and equitable partnership."

We therefore encourage the Scottish Government, and everyone involved in the bilateral relationship, to commit to these 11 powerful Partnership Principles. This is an area, we feel, in which Scotland, despite its size, has the potential to be a global leader.

WHAT GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS?:

As per above, successive Scottish Governments are to be commended for making a supplementary contribution to the UK international development effort. The current Scottish Government is specifically to be applauded for increasing this commitment by 50% in this Parliament.

However, it is also important to be realistic about what can be achieved with £10-15m (around 1,000th of the UK aid budget). Like many others, we urge the Scottish Government to resist the temptation to 'spread the jam too thinly'.

Where the Scottish Government has succeeded in international development work, it has been through its commitment to civic engagement and true partnership working. To deliver real impact, it is essential that the Scottish Government has a genuine relationship with the Government of Malawi, such that it can understand the priorities of Malawi's democratically elected government. Simply parachuting in stand-alone projects is unlikely to make a meaningful contribution to sustainable economic development unless there is a meaningful partnership with, and a depth of understanding of, the country involved.

With Malawi, Scotland has precisely this: longstanding bonds of friendship and mutual understanding. Officials are encouraged to get to know the country, to build relationships with their Malawian counterparts, and make better decisions as a result. With 6-9 officials in the international development team, it is unrealistic to think that this same commitment to partnership working and mutual understanding can be emulated across a greater number of countries.

We therefore encourage a continued commitment to Scotland's links with Malawi: arguably the world's strongest north-south people-to-people connection. It was the strength of this unique relationship that was the pretext for the constitutional provision for Scotland to develop its own international development work, originally on the basis of three-quarters of the international development budget being ringfenced in Malawi, to avoid 'mission creep'.

How do the Scottish Government's EU and international policies interact with UK foreign and diplomatic policy in these areas?

Given the reprehensible decision by the UK government to break its promises to Parliament, the UK electorate, Scotland, and the international community by reneging on its pledge to commit 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on official development assistance, we think it is more important than ever that the Scottish Government continues and expands its commitment to Malawi

It is clear that Malawi will suffer disproportionately from these cuts, as the UK government looks to save some face by maintaining its large multilateral commitments. This will mean the aid budgets for what are seen as small, politically and strategically unimportant countries to the UK Government, like Malawi, will have their budgets slashed. The UK's international development budget in Malawi has decreased from c£90m in recent years to £52.4m this year and we learnt recently (buried on page 152 of the FCDO Annual Report) that this will drop by a further 52% to £25.4m from this year to next.

This savage cut will not only take away food, clean water, basic education and healthcare from those who need it most, it will also do irreparable damage to the UK's international standing. Scotland's 160-year friendship with Malawi is built on

mutual respect, understanding and trust: all of this is weakened by the decision by the UK Government. The Scottish Government can help mitigate some of this damage by being outspoken in its criticism of this decision and by making clear Scotland does not believe we should try and recover from Covid by breaking our promises to the poorest and most vulnerable in the world.

We urge Scotland to increase its commitment to Malawi at this crucial moment, precisely because others are cutting theirs.