



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2



Ms. Eimear Lavelle,
Committee Secretariat,
Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House
Dublin 2

2 February 2012.

Dear Ms Lavelle,

I refer to your letter dated 24th January regarding the Department's satisfaction on whether the monies being granted to GOAL are being spent in the requisite manner.

I am writing to advise you that this Department's audit team was satisfied that the State funds being provided to GOAL are being spent in an appropriate manner. The audit found that the funding provided by Irish Aid was used to support the programme objectives as agreed in partnership with GOAL, the expenditure was incurred in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreements between Irish Aid and GOAL and income and expenditure was accounted for in the proper manner. I am aware of no evidence which would cause me to challenge the conclusions of the audit team.

I met with GOAL's new Board Chairman, Mr. Pat O'Mahony and Mr. Tim Dalton, another new member of the Goal Board on Friday 27th January 2012. They informed me at this meeting that the Board has accepted all the recommendations made in the Department's audit report and they are currently overseeing a programme of work to address the issues raised many of which relate to corporate governance.

This assurance from the Board is a positive development and is reaffirmed in the attached letter received from Mr. O'Mahony on behalf of the Board. I also pleased to note from Mr. O'Mahony's letter that should any additional information related to the audit work become available, it will be shared with my Department without delay. My Department is liaising with GOAL in relation to their implementation of the audit report recommendations. Progress with regards to the implementation will be monitored in the context of the funding partnership arrangement between this Department and GOAL.

I trust that this response addresses your queries, however please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further clarification on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

David Cooney
Secretary General

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**Mr David Cooney
Secretary General,
Department of Foreign Affairs,
80 St Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2**

30th January 2012

Dear Mr. Cooney,

I would like to thank you and your colleagues, on behalf of GOAL, for the very constructive meeting Tim Dalton and I had at your office last Friday.

We were concerned about reports that information was withheld from the auditors and, while the audit report itself makes no reference to information being withheld, we are looking into the matter in detail and wish to assure you that any information that is available will be shared with your department and the auditors without delay. The Board is resolved that any future documents that will be required will all be made available as a matter of course.

The Board, together with John O'Shea our CEO, as well as the senior management welcomes the audit report and are pleased to note the positive comments made in relation to financial control and management in GOAL and the findings that all expenditures are properly in accordance with your department's requirements and those of government.

This fact, taken together with the recognition of the outstanding work of GOAL on the ground on behalf of the most disadvantaged of peoples, is a matter for satisfaction but not complacency. We do recognise, however, the need for continuous enhancement in the area of procedures and practices relating to documentation. The recommendations, arising from the audit report, are actively being implemented.

We look forward to continued fruitful partnership with government on behalf of the Irish people for the benefit of the poor of developing countries.

Regards,

**Pat O'Mahony
Chairman
GOAL**

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