

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

24. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(f) Impairment of financial assets

The organisation assesses at each balance sheet date whether there is objective evidence that a financial asset or group of financial assets is impaired. A financial asset or a group of financial assets is impaired and impairment losses are incurred if, and only if, there is objective evidence of impairment as a result of one or more events that occurred after the initial recognition of the asset (a 'loss event') and that loss event (or events) has an impact on the estimated future cash flows of the financial asset or group of financial assets that can be reliably estimated. Objective evidence that a financial asset or group of assets is impaired includes observable data that comes to the attention of the organisation about the following loss events:

- (i) Significant financial difficulty of the issuer or obligor;
- (ii) a breach of contract, such as a default or delinquency in interest or principal payments.

The organisation first assesses whether objective evidence of impairment exists individually and collectively. If the organisation determines that no objective evidence of impairment exists for an individually assessed financial asset, whether significant or not, it includes the asset in a group of financial assets with similar credit risk characteristics and collectively assesses them for impairment.

When a loan is uncollectable, it is written off against the related provision for loan impairment. Such loans are written off after all the necessary procedures have been completed and the amount of the loss has been determined. Subsequent recoveries of amounts previously written off are treated as debt recoveries in the income statement.

If, in a subsequent period, the amount of the impairment loss decreases and the decrease can be related objectively to an event occurring after the impairment was recognised (such as an improvement in the debtor's credit rating), the previously recognised impairment loss is reversed by adjusting the allowance account. The amount of the reversal is recognised in the income statement.

(g) Provisions

Provisions for legal claims are recognised when the organisation has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events; and it is more likely than not that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation; and the amount has been reliably estimated. Provisions are not recognised for future operating losses.

Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole. A provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the same class of obligations may be small.