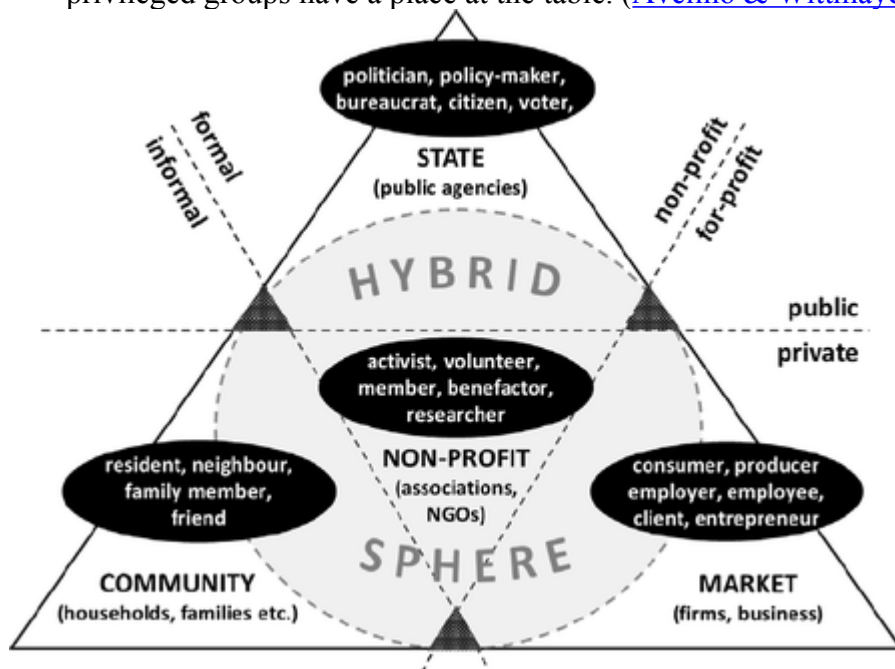


Internet consultation questions on Dutch development policies

Question 1: How can the Netherlands (the government, the private sector, social enterprises, civil society and knowledge institutions) achieve more results on the following themes: conflicts and instability, reception in the region and emergency aid?

- **Pay due attention to the role of local governments, NGOs, FBOs and CBOs in building their capacity as first line responders** in many situations, making good use of the Dutch Relief Alliance in terms of accessing this network. These local actors will not be able to absorb, if at all, large amounts of funding and meet accountability standards, but are essential to strengthen service delivery to local communities.
- **The Dutch government could become member of PaRD** (with the Germans currently leading and others, including UN organizations, having joined the initiative), acknowledging the role of faith in giving hope to people rebuilding their own societies as well as contributing to the well-being of the people they live amongst.
- **Ensure independent review and learning capacity by encouraging partnerships with academic and research partners** in the implementation of programs and projects, bringing funding streams that support academic education (as dispersed through WOTRO and Nuffic) stronger in connection to ongoing programming by Dutch actors abroad. The financial engineering of private sector funding with funding available for NGOs and academic research capacity, replicating the Dutch diamond from the Netherlands to source countries where there may be a lack of civil society space.
- **Capitalize on the Dutch diamond ‘poldermodel’** in which we are used to negotiate interests in a round-table setting, while acknowledging that this table in many countries is not round and only privileged groups have a place at the table. ([Avelino & Wittmayer, 2014](#))



Question 2: How can the Netherlands (the government, the private sector, social enterprises, civil society and knowledge institutions) best address population growth in Africa and stimulate youth employment in Africa and the Middle East?

- **Faith Based Organizations could leverage their shared identity with their partners for facilitating exchanges around responsible family planning, responsible citizenship** and the like. As Jim Woodhill already stated in 2008, behavioural change is about institutional change and vice versa. <http://previous.thebrokeronline.eu/Articles/Shaping-behaviour>

Lessons around institutional change show that change cannot be orchestrated by state interventions but is to happen in the interplay between government and people groups with their culture and tradition and primarily takes place within civil society space.

- Faith Based Organizations could **work together with knowledge institutions** to capture evidence on existing practices and implement KAPB (knowledge, attitudes, Practices, Behavior) surveys implemented by their partners themselves, who are considered trusted networks.
- **Deep democracy**, which ensures the smallest countervailing voice is listened to will avoid the dictatorship of the majority (which generally would serve shorter-term purposes).
- **Develop understanding of how global human rights frameworks** (often departing from an individual rights viewpoint) **can speak to peoples value systems** that may feature collectivist approaches, acknowledging faith leaders often being modulators in cultural change processes while often also being the obstructers to change grounded in deep convictions.
- **Prioritise Dutch business interests that have visible social impact for the most vulnerable** in private sector funding decisions or decisions affecting the enabling environment for private sector development.
- **Support investment in higher education and private sector investment in high-risk areas in North-Africa and the Middle-East** and pay attention to democratic deficit in these countries by following an inclusive approach (in partnership with NGOs) which also helps women and their priorities to be taken into account.

Question 3: What new priority areas could the government identify? Resources are limited and we need to make choices. So we'd also like to ask: what priority areas could do with less attention?

- **Undoing the securitization of development aid**, not only in terms of where aid is provided (ring around Europe) but also in terms of what it pays for (peace keeping missions and the like). As political support for increasing defence budgets is abundantly available, it is high time to undo this unhealthy link between our own security and the human security of the poorest of the poor. Hence all expenses linked to security and safety should be removed from the development budget and accommodated at the Defence part of the HGIS budget. This will free up substantial ODA resources for development and social impact investment, staying focussed on development, leaving defence to the Ministry of Defence.
- **Plea for development considerations while employing military forces to restore peace or prevent escalation of conflict**

Question 4: What innovative solutions could the Dutch government, NGOs and the private sector promote with a view to 1) reducing CO2 emissions (climate mitigation) and 2) helping societies adapt to climate change (climate adaptation)?

- **Include clauses around environmental impact assessments in contracting arrangements** and building capacity of national governments to develop similar contract award procedures that pay due attention to environmental returns.
- **Establish a local adaptation and mitigation facility** that funds the upscaling of innovative solutions, embracing a social enterprise model to avoid power imbalances where the bigger companies take the credits and the profits from locally developed solutions. Aim for combinations of Private Sector actors and NGOs to develop such a social enterprise model together.

Question 5: In your opinion, what opportunities are there in the areas of manufacturing, trade and investment to achieve social progress (for example, better working conditions, higher wages, more opportunities for women and young people) or tackle ecological challenges (for example, in the areas of water, the climate and biodiversity)?

- Acknowledge that civil society space is required for both a level playing field in private sector development and for good governance. Help organize the interface by purposely including civil society groupings in investment decisions.

Question 6: Do you have any concrete suggestions on how the government could help ensure that international trade and investments contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals?

- Having companies comply with OECD guidelines is only a first step.
- Requiring social and environmental impact analyses to evaluate impacts of investment decisions on people and planet.
- Support governments in developing the regulatory frameworks for investment decisions.
- Make contributions of the Dutch government e.g. through the DGGF visible to the public in terms of outreach to the target groups through trade and investment (similarly as happens in the NGO sector). Translate ICSR areas to specific and measurable results to be reported globally by all Dutch government subsidized enterprises operating worldwide.

Question 7: What innovative and creative solutions could the government use to better support the private sector and knowledge institutions that wish to market their knowledge and expertise globally? And in what areas?

- **SMART combinations with NGOs helping with the uptake of new knowledge and technology** and negotiating access to decision-makers on developing supportive policies to accommodate these insights, basically taking up some of the social marketing as well as policy influencing around uptake of new technology and knowledge while ensuring participation of local knowledge institutions in the roll-out and evidence building locally.

Question 8: How could the government create a more comprehensive support package for companies, especially SMEs, interested in doing business internationally, and for which markets is an extra boost warranted?

- Continue to **organize business fairs in the Netherlands**, bringing entrepreneurs from abroad to various sectors in the Netherlands, who could offer partnerships while building bridges between expertise and capacity in the Netherlands and market abroad. Have NGOs included in the facilitation of this exchange in order to avoid power imbalances and promoting a level playing field in partner countries. NGOs could also help in negotiating with communities new entries of businesses and ensure they follow an inclusive approach while staying competitive in the global markets, marketing these partnerships to their benefits.

Question 9: In addition to the above, do you have any other recommendations in the area of foreign trade and development cooperation?

- **Disconnect the aid from the trade and development agenda (in funding and targeting terms)** as it will bring motives into question, which should remain prominently humanitarian and not inspired by self-interest. In the aid industry it still is possible to promote Dutch business interests and expertise. Aid is to be provided need based, and preferably in close collaboration with other humanitarian actors. Coordination by host countries will be crucial, while NGOs should always remain part of the equation to avoid politicization of aid and ensure that aid is provided where the need is greatest.
- **Use positive experience developed in the Dutch Relief Alliance** to capitalize on collaboration and arrive at improved efficiencies and minimize coordination costs locally. This example may be replicated in how root causes of inequality are being addressed. Avoid competition between NGOs and encourage collaboration by pooling resources and requiring agencies to demonstrate connectivity to local civil society, strengthening the civil society space in the process (replicating collaboration to the field level, having various parties decide together on where the needs are greatest). Combine this with a complaint mechanism (ombudsman) that may challenge decisions taken.