



Dutch Gender Parity Governance and Its Impact on Feminist
Development Policy and Trade.

Recommendations Beleidsnota Foreign Trade &
Development Assistance

<https://www.internetconsultatie.nl/bhosnota/b1>

Question 1: How can we increase the involvement of Dutch companies in the twin transitions in low- and middle-income countries?

Better and improved interaction with local counter parts, community, and people in authorities.

Question 2: How can government, the private sector and knowledge institutions work together better to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals?

As per the above-mentioned triangle, the indispensable/imperative inclusion of CSOs reach and insightful capital of their first-hand knowledge and interaction with local communities and leadership

Question 3: How can the Netherlands' efforts to achieve policy coherence for development be further strengthened or enhanced?

By placing focus on development cooperation first and the trade later. Fragile democratic structures, mounting debt burden, food shortages and energy monopoly at local level poses serious challenges to the development strategists and the practitioners. Administration of development cooperation can instrumentalize the trade tool in offering solutions by a wider interaction with local stakeholders. Through Dutch women and civil, society organisations local CSOs and other stakeholders can be trained, supported, and prepared to influence local policy and decision-making process. This is a sustainable development investment

Question 4: How can the government strengthen Dutch companies' sustainable earning capacity abroad?

By equipping them with better understanding of local socio-cultural and political intricacy.

Question 5: In which themes or sectors do you see opportunities for international enterprise?

Encouragement of environmental practices for local businesses.

Question 6: How can the government better support companies (and SMEs specifically), that are doing or wish to do business abroad?

By including the expertise of women's organisation to better assess the local potential support, and cooperation.

Question 7: In your opinion, what are the Netherlands' strengths when it comes to development cooperation? In which policy themes could the Netherlands play a leading role?

The Netherlands has played a crucial role in advancing equality, human rights, and women's rights. It has an essential focus on enhancing women's safety and economic self-reliance, promoting their active participation in civil society organizations and in decision-making processes. The advancement of women's rights is crucial for a [functional democracy](#).

According to the 2020 report “investing in global prospects” by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “, *The world cannot prosper if half of the population is disadvantaged*”.

The Netherlands must maintain its focus and the lead, on investing to promote and better the rights of the disadvantaged half. **Gender specific mainstreaming is crucial.** There are still policy areas where a distinct gender perspective is lacking. Gender mainstreaming needs to be present as a cornerstone of Dutch foreign policy, ensuring that **the Dutch current model of parity governance offers a global ambition (target) for the developing countries, winning the hearts and minds of billions of not only the disadvantaged half but also their supporters.**

Question 8: In what other ways and areas could Dutch development cooperation innovate more?

By promoting its feminist foreign policy and [gender balanced governance](#), which is inspiring, fascinating and sets a role model for all stakeholders who need stability, accountability, and lasting trade relations with Dutch investors. Especially where [democracy](#) is present with its all [fragility](#).

Question 9: In what ways or areas could the Netherlands, as a donor, be even bolder?

Europe faced with Ukraine war and pressure on revising Dutch development assistance to certain countries require that the issues related to policy reviews are based on Dutch principles of promoting human rights, democracy, and gender equality worldwide.

The Netherlands needs to be bolder in selecting the recipients' countries for development cooperation. Discussions in the Dutch Parliament regarding the role of some countries, such as Pakistan, during the Ukraine War are concerning. The actions taken by country's leadership in recent past have been declared unwise, irresponsible, and unpopular by the majority of parliamentarians in Pakistan. A Vote of No Confidence against the former Prime Minister has led to the formation of a new cabinet and the new PM has already been sworn in.

[The argument in the Dutch Parliament](#) about reconsidering Pakistan's current position in developmental assistance due to the decisions made by the now ousted Prime Minister, is worrisome. **People should not be punished for the actions of a Prime Minister who is also no longer in power.**

It is rather imperative for Dutch development cooperation to help the constitution, parliament, and democracy stabilize in times of political conflict and turmoil.

Human rights protection, gender equality support and strong monitoring of electoral processes should be delivered to the common people providing capacity-building and skills development through NGOs and local authorities. This approach will help rebuild a more just political system that is representative and inclusive of various segments in society.

There is a need for a strong countermovement in times of increased misogyny, nationalism, populism, and militarism. **This countermovement should be based on a feminist foreign affairs approach.** This approach has already been adopted by other countries like Canada, Sweden, France, and Germany. Such a methodology focuses on strengthening the rights and wellbeing of people in vulnerable positions and marginalized groups as a prerequisite of a functioning and just democracy. Such an approach will only be successful if the underlying structures are challenged. **With this, the Netherlands does not only improve its impact but also ensures its influence.**

Question 10: Are there any other points that you believe should be included in the new policy document?

- Women`s human rights are practiced best if they are made equal partners in governance and decision-making processes. Gender Parity in the Dutch governance is historic. The parity in decision-making will be the new milestone as it is necessary to access resources allocation negotiations. **Such emerging trends in Dutch Feminist Policy must be reflected through the new and revised deals with the development assistance recipient countries.**
- Electoral system must be supported. Free and fair [electoral monitoring](#) must include free electability access and fair representation of all minorities. [Gender Based Electoral Violence](#) must be considered as the most severe form of gender discrimination as this form of hidden violence impedes women`s right to equal electoral, governance and decision-making participation.
- Lack of women`s participation in **environmental decision-making** has gone unnoticed and unspoken which increases the need for it to be highlighted. This is the only way to ensure that the change we demand is made.
- Female leadership and women`s political participation must take a leading position at the WPS agenda worldwide being crucially significant for women and girls in conflict and post-conflict countries and emerging democracies.
- The Dutch WPS commitments favor the Netherlands to allocate a certain percentage of funds to women's organizations. We recommend reserving the UN standards, of 15% of the ODA budget for women and their organizations. This will be a moving, inspiring, innovative approach well in line with a national feminist vision under a gender parity governance.