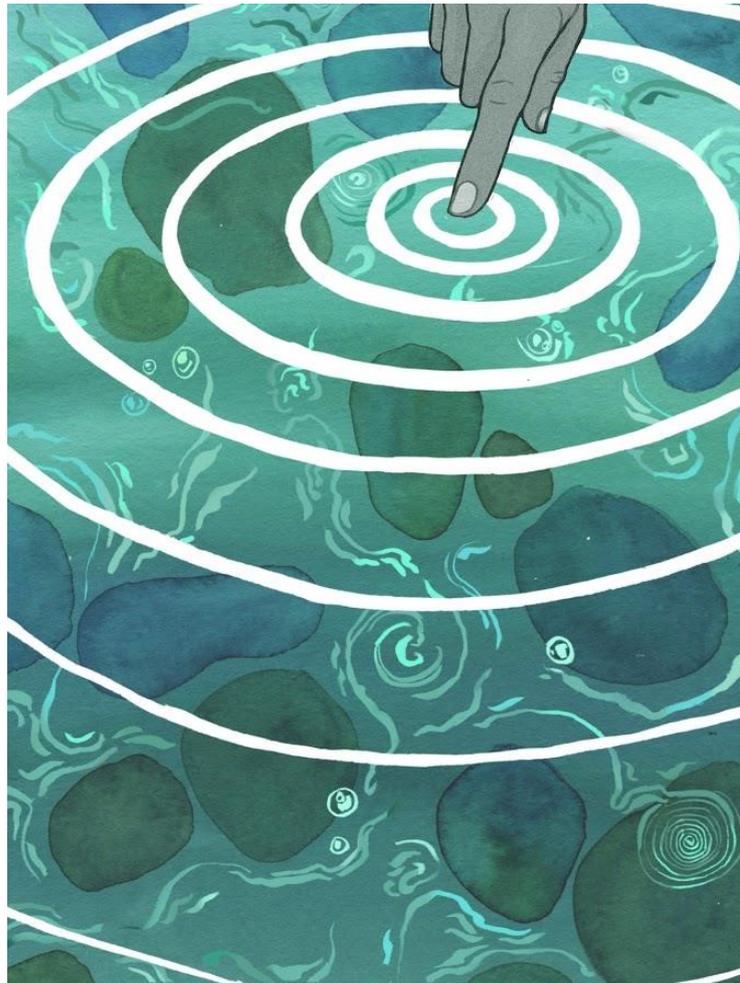


Shifting Interests, Changing Practice

Key insights into the perceptions of Dutch Civil Society Organizations and their Southern partners about non-financial support.



Water ripple and beneath by Tessa Kocken

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Preface

First of all we would like to thank Floris Blankenberg, Piet de Lange and Elise Landowski of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), for their confidence in us and the methods of our research, which were partly new to IOB. We enjoyed the cooperation and the immense knowledge and experience we could tap into during this research.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all people who participated in this perception study; for their willingness, time and openness to reflect on their work and to share their experiences, views and even meals with us. What stood out for us as researchers in this study was the dedication of almost everyone we spoke to 'to do it right' in this highly complex and changing context of strengthening civil society. Whether it was about strengthening organizations on the ground, learning from each other's interventions, or strengthening certain skills, the desire to contribute to a stronger civil society was noticeable all the way from the rural communities to field offices and Dutch CSOs.

Civil society is widely recognized as a resilient and independent sector, that plays an influential role in shaping a stronger sense of society and improving people's lives. Strengthening civil society is a priority for Dutch foreign policy. At present policies, procedures and practices in strengthening civil society seem however incoherent. In practice, the role of Dutch CSOs in strengthening civil society is relatively limited and Southern CSOs express that the focus on Trade and Aid does not necessarily contribute to a stronger civil society. In many countries the space for civil society is under severe pressure and we feel there is a need to clarify what civil society entails and what the role of Dutch CSOs should be.

The context in which Dutch and Southern CSOs operate is characterized by major changes. Increasing complex global problems go hand in hand with decreasing funding for CSOs, creating concern with some, and cynicism or even disengagement with others. The context is also characterized by inequalities in North-South relations that – despite all good intentions from all involved - seems intrinsic to the aid-chains on all levels, as they are driven by requirements that are strongly linked to governmental funding conditions.

We feel that there is a clear need to enable Southern CSOs to take more leadership at strategic level and for Dutch CSOs to defend civil society space rather than occupying it. The creation of space to co-develop donor conditions jointly could be one thing to bring into practice a demand driven approach and equity in the relations. It requires all those involved -including governments and multi-lateral institutions- to let go of old patterns of what once worked and to learn how to acknowledge and work with changing practices. It also requires being autonomous and brave on the one hand and willing to really listen to each other on the other hand. We feel there is an opportunity for that, since eventually we believe that the impact of strengthening civil society depends on the people themselves rather than on the institutions they form part of.

Rita Dieleman and Helga van Kampen, June 2016

Highlights of this study

This section summarizes the main findings of the importance and appreciation of the non-financial support provided by Dutch CSOs to their Southern partners and the relation between them. In chapter 5 a more extensive summary is available.

Southern CSOs appreciate Dutch package support and specialized knowledge

MFS II Dutch support for capacity development includes a package of formal forms of support such as trainings and workshops, and more informal forms of support such as field visits and knowledge sharing, emphasizing organizational development. This package is appreciated by their Southern partners. Capacity development is enabled by good interpersonal relations between Dutch and Southern CSOs characterized by trust, respect, open communication and flexibility. It is often the long-term relation that enforced the informal support. Southern CSOs express a clear need for institutional funding and an integrated approach is preferred, combining core funding and capacity development. The whole package is under pressure because of shifting interests and changing practices. The importance of thematic support is highlighted by the Southern CSOs'. Specialized Dutch CSOs have a clearer added value than organizations with a broad scope.

Role of Dutch CSOs in strengthening civil society mainly financial or through providing organisational support

All parties involved acknowledge the importance of civil society. There is a widespread concern about the space for civil society and CSOs becoming more restricted. There are high expectations about the role of civil society and CSOs, especially on local level. However, there is no common understanding about what civil society actually is and what is needed in order to strengthen civil society. CSOs consider themselves important actors in helping civil society to understand and demand their rights and to help them getting organised to have a voice. Southern CSOs strengthen civil society mainly through mobilizing and training citizens. Involvement of Dutch CSOs in policy influencing and non-financial support in civil society strengthening has been limited and somewhat fragmented under MFS II. Appreciation is expressed for evidence based L&A support. Southern CSOs express the need for a more integrated context specific, joint (lobby and advocacy) approach towards civil society strengthening, combining the potential of Dutch CSOs, Southern CSOs and embassies.

Appreciation for openness, flexibility and equity in relation with Dutch CSOs on operational level, concern about donor-recipient patterns on strategic and policy level

There is strong appreciation for relations in the period 2011-2015. However, appreciated elements come under pressure and there is a tendency to blame the back donor for these limitations. Equity is an important principle in partnerships. In practice equity is realized in daily operations on project level. It however proves more difficult to realize on (international) strategic and policy level, because it is limited by set (policy) frameworks defined by (back) donors. This may be an explaining factor for the gap between local needs and the global development agenda. All parties struggle with their donor-recipient positions throughout the aid chain (back donor/Dutch CSOs, Dutch CSOs/Southern CSOs, Southern CSOs/communities). In view of decreasing funding opportunities and changing Dutch policies, Dutch CSOs and their Southern partners struggle to find a new mode for their relation that includes less or no financial support and that includes more Southern CSOs leadership on strategic level.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and context

In 2016 the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (MoFA) is conducting a policy review *‘Support through Dutch NGOs for the sustainable development of civil society in developing countries’ (policy objective 3.3)*.

Main purpose of the policy review is to account for budget expenditure under policy objective 3.3 and to test the assumptions that underpin the Ministry’s policy. Policy objective 3.3 ‘to support the development of civil society in developing countries’ expresses the importance the Government of the Netherlands attaches to the role of Dutch CSOs as a channel for supporting civil society in developing countries.¹ Part of this policy review is a perception study in order to gain insight into the nature and appreciation of non-financial support provided by Dutch CSOs to their Southern partners. In March 2016 the Partnership Learning Loop (PLL) was commissioned to carry out the perception study in cooperation with the IOB between March and June 2016.

1.2 The aim and scope of the perception study

The perception study aims to shed more light on how assumptions regarding Dutch CSOs reach, relations, expertise and policy influencing play a role in practice and apply today. Furthermore, the study will assess to what extent the relations with and expertise of Dutch CSOs are appreciated by the Southern partners and may identify factors explaining levels of effectiveness of the support provided. The specific objectives of the study are to gain deeper insights in the following research questions:

1. What are the Dutch CSOs **expertise and experiences** regarding themes, and regarding capacity development of Southern CSOs and civil society.
2. What is the Southern partners’ **appreciation** of:
 - the ability of Dutch CSOs to provide support under difficult or politically sensitive situations
 - the Dutch CSOs expertise and experiences regarding themes, capacity development and civil society
 - the capacity of Dutch CSOs to influence policy and to contribute to the development of Southern partners’ lobby and advocacy capacity
3. What is the nature and practice of **cooperation** between the Dutch CSOs and Southern partners.

The study includes Dutch MFS II organizations, CNV International (CNVI), Mondiaal FNV (MFNV) and Southern partner organizations during the course of the MFS II and TUCP programmes between 2011-2015. The focus is on the following countries: Bangladesh, DR Congo, Ghana, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Pakistan and Uganda.

1.3 Methodological approach

The evaluation methods focus on recurring patterns of practice, using different perspectives to understand changes and to acknowledge that the evaluation means to draw conclusions about complex adaptive systems. The study represents the TUCP and MFS II programs. The representation of TUCP in the whole study is very small (3%) compared to MFS II. No specific comparisons are made between the two programs based on the survey data as survey results show no significant differences. Where interviews and the webinar suggested a difference in perception between TUCP and MFS II, this is specified in the text.

¹ IOB (2016). *Terms of Reference for the policy review ‘Support through Dutch NGOs for the sustainable development of civil society in developing countries’ (policy objective 3.3)*.

The ethos of this review is inclusive, facilitating a broad consultation process. The main components are desk research, an online survey among Dutch CSOs and their Southern partners in nine countries, in-depth interviews with a selection of partners² and a feedback webinar with representatives of several countries. More information about the research methodology is included in annex 3.

1.4 Challenges of the study

A commonly known limitation of perception research is the reliability of data and social desirability bias.³ Several measures were taken to reduce this risk, for example triangulation of data and involving a test panel with representatives of Southern CSOs. Dutch CSOs are in general more critical than Southern CSOs; this is in line with other perception studies where scores tend to be more positive on operational level and more critical on strategic level. Another explanation given for this difference is the generally critical attitude of Dutch people and the dependency relation of Southern CSOs. The difference in scoring has been taken into account in the analysis.

The sampled countries and organizations are based on the MFS II evaluation.⁴ In hindsight, a sample with better representation of especially smaller CSOs would have been more appropriate to include a better coverage of partners of all alliances, as some of them mainly worked with smaller organizations. Although SNV was supposed to be included in the perception study, SNV and IOB could not agree on the conditions under which SNV would participate. Therefore, SNV was excluded from the perception study.

Finally, it is important to mention that the evaluators were dependent on the Dutch CSOs to collect contact details of their Southern partners. Despite the short time span, most Dutch CSOs were willing and cooperative in sharing contact details, in consultation with their partners. ICCO shared contact details of all partners instead of MFS II partners only. This means that the answers of some ICCO partners in the online survey are not necessarily MFS II findings. This has been taken into consideration during the analysis and triangulation of the data.

1.5 Outline of the report

This report begins with a brief overview of Dutch policies and continues with the implementation of MFS II and TUCP in chapter two. Chapter three discusses the expertise, experiences and appreciation of non-financial support of Dutch CSOs and chapter four presents the findings on the relation between Dutch CSOs and their Southern partners. In the last chapter, a summary of insights into the research questions is presented based on all findings. The annexes provide more specified research and background information. Survey results are explained more in detail in annex 5.

² Skype interviews in Indonesia and face to face interviews in Ethiopia, India and Uganda.

³ Herbert, S. (2013). *Perception surveys in fragile and conflict-affected states*. The key limitations of using perception surveys in FCAS include: the reliability of the data; representativeness (especially in relation to accessibility, gender inequality and representation); interpreting the complexity of findings; different types of biases; understanding that perception surveys measure perceptions only; and accountability.

⁴ Note that Ghana has been added to the list of sampled countries to allow for a better representation of TUCP partners. Partners with a minimal MFS II budget of 50.000 euro are involved (except for two alliances with relatively small partner organisations). No budget criteria for Southern partners participating in the TUCP programme.

2. Dutch policies and the non-financial support provided to partners

This chapter provides a brief overview of the policy frameworks of MFS II and TUCP, the implementation of both programs and the Southern partners that have been working in these programs.

2.1 The Policy Framework MFS II and TUCP

Until recently, policy objective 3.3 served as a broad framework for funding Dutch CSOs. The table below highlights key elements of the Co-financing System MFS II and TUCP.⁵

	MFS II	TUCP
Subsidy framework: overall aim/ objective	To contribute to the establishment and strengthening of civil society in the South as a building block for structural poverty reduction. MFS II encompassed a broad range of objectives and strategies including direct poverty reduction, strengthening the organizational capacity of Southern NGOs, strengthening civil society and influencing policy.	The capacity development of trade unions in developing countries at company, sector, national and international level and the capacity development of umbrella federations in developing countries at international level. ⁶
Planned results	Strengthened civil society, strengthened NGOs, contribution to achievement of the MDGs.	Adherence of labor rights, stronger trade unions, improved social dialogue and improved labor conditions.
Share of expenditure⁷	83%	3%

Table 1: MFS II and TUCP framework

The policy memorandum (2009) on which the MFS II subsidy framework is based, stresses the importance of strengthening the capacity of local CSOs. According to the policy memorandum, *'there is a long way to go to a more equitable and dignified existence'*.⁸

Reducing inequality in society is a key aim of the new policy agenda and CSOs are prominent players in this field. The policy framework 'Dialogue and Dissent' (2014) states that CSOs have an indispensable lobbying and advocacy role to play in society. To enable CSOs to effectively voice alternative or dissenting views in a dynamic and increasingly global context, this policy framework focuses stronger on strengthening CSOs' capacity for 'lobbying and advocacy' as compared to the broader MFS II agenda.⁹ The Dialogue and Dissent strategic partnerships are not part of this study but the shift in policy has had far reaching implications for the Dutch and Southern CSOs involved in the MFS II program as Dutch CSOs already anticipated on the changes up hand in the period 2011 – 2015.¹⁰

⁵ IOB (2016). *Terms of Reference for the policy review 'Support through Dutch NGOs for the sustainable development of civil society in developing countries' (policy objective 3.3)*.

⁶ TUCP subsidy framework 2013-2016.

⁷ Expenditure under policy objective 3.3 add up to EUR 2371 million in the 2011-2015 period. (Note: expenditure from 2011 to 2014, estimated expenditure in 2015) The remaining went to SNV (13%), PSO (1%) and the Suriname Twinning Facility (less than 1%)

⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (2009). *Cooperation, Customization and Added Value ('Samenwerken, Maatwerk, Meerwaarde')*.

⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (2014). *"Dialogue and Dissent" - Strategic Partnerships for Lobbying and Advocacy*.

¹⁰ IOB (2016). *Terms of Reference for the policy review 'Support through Dutch NGOs for the sustainable development of civil society in developing countries' (policy objective 3.3)*.

2.2 Implementation of MFS II and TUCP

MFS II

The following themes were central to the MFS II framework: sustainable economic development; HIV/AIDS; education; health care; human rights, including socio-economic rights; democratisation; good governance; water and sanitation; sport and culture. The consortia supported Southern NGOs in over 70 countries, covering a large number of sectors and themes.¹¹

TUCP

The TUCP 2013-2016 programme implemented by CNVI focuses on the promotion of Decent Work to reduce poverty and promote sustainable economic development. The programme consists of three interlinked sub-programmes: 1) Changes in the lives of people; 2) Stronger civil society; 3) International lobby, advocacy and campaigns.¹² CNVI intends to move its support gradually from sub-programme 1 to sub-programmes 2 and 3, under which the advocacy capacities of partners are strengthened.¹³

MFNV's activities consist of 3 programmes: 1) Stronger Unions - Better Work - Better Life; 2) Global Decent Work Programme: Towards Decent Work and more secure jobs; 3) Union2Union (i.e. Linking Agendas of MFNV and International Partners).¹⁴

2.3 The Southern partner organizations

Dutch CSOs worked together with a large number of Southern CSOs under MFS II and TUCP. Background information of these Southern partners is compiled based on the survey data. Most survey respondents work for a local NGO¹⁵, followed by national NGO, other local CSO¹⁶, other national CSO or international NGO. The remaining 5% works for a national umbrella body for NGOs involved in development or a company.¹⁷ The average annual grant they received between 2011 and 2015 mainly varied between 25.000-50.000 Euro and 50.000-100.000 Euro (respectively 27% and 31%).¹⁸

In terms of working area in the specific countries, rural areas are more common than urban areas and several organizations are active in both rural and urban areas.¹⁹ The approaches include L&A (68%), mobilising and facilitating (68%) and to a lesser extent training and consultancy (58%), service delivery (53%) and research (34%).²⁰

¹¹ IOB (2016). *Terms of Reference for the policy review 'Support through Dutch NGOs for the sustainable development of civil society in developing countries' (policy objective 3.3)*.

¹² CNV Internationaal (2014). *Terms of Reference Evaluation Trade Union Co-financing Programme 2013-2016, A world that works*.

¹³ ACE Europe, HIVA - KULeuven (2015). *Mid-Term Evaluation of the TUCP Programme 2013-2016 implemented by CNV Internationaal. Final Synthesis Report*.

¹⁴ FNV Mondiaal. *Summary of FNV Trade Union Cooperation Programme 2013-2016*.

¹⁵ In some countries there are different classifications and definitions for NGOs.

¹⁶ Including farmers associations, not-for-profit media, faith-based organisations, research institutes.

¹⁷ Online survey, topic 3 (SCSOs): N = 295. Percentages are respectively 44% for local NGOs, 26% for national NGOs, 11% for other local CSO, 7% for other national CSO and 7% for international NGO.

¹⁸ Online survey, topic 10 (SCSOs): N = 282.

¹⁹ Online survey, topic 4 (SCSOs); multiple answers possible: N = 285. 86% rural compared to 60% urban, including capital city

²⁰ Online survey, topic 6 (SCSOs); multiple answers possible; N = 273. Answer options: Lobby and advocacy: advocating the interests of constituents towards governments and companies; Connecting, inspiring and collaboration: mobilising and facilitating groups of people in a common activity; Training, consultancy; Service delivery: providing services and products to citizens; Research; Other (please specify).

3. Expertise, experiences and the appreciation of non-financial support

This chapter presents the findings on the Dutch CSOs expertise and experience as well as the Southern CSOs appreciation of Dutch non-financial support. Four types of non-financial support are considered. In paragraph 3.1 lessons and insights on capacity development from other studies are shared. The focus of paragraph 3.2 is on capacity development including both organizational support (3.2.1) and thematic support (3.2.2). Paragraphs 3.3 deals with civil society strengthening support (3.3.1) and lobby and advocacy support (3.3.2). The last paragraph (3.4) presents some insights on the approach of Dutch capacity development. Each of these paragraphs will provide the main research findings. Some additional outcomes of the feedback meeting (webinar) are presented in the dark red blocks.

3.1 Lessons and insights on capacity development, civil society strengthening and lobby and advocacy from other studies

Capacity Development

Documented experience and analysis of capacity development indicate that certain issues must be emphasized in the policy priorities of aid provided by NGOs. These issues include capacity development's endogenous character²¹, Southern ownership and the equality²² of the relationship between Dutch CSOs and their Southern partners. However, the report *Facilitating Resourcefulness* argues that rules and procedures such as those associated with MFS II, limit the chances of these priorities being applied.²³

The MFS II evaluation about the support provided to capacity development found that changes in the five core capabilities (5 CC) were modest and concludes that the findings for CD activities are rather mixed. In many cases, improvements in capabilities had been triggered by MFS II activities.²⁴

The report '*Facilitating Resourcefulness*' concluded that Dutch support in the area of capacity development contributed to positive changes in core capabilities of the Southern organizations. However, contextual factors and circumstances specific to the internal operation of the organizations were frequently more responsible for changes in capacity than was the provision of Dutch support. Furthermore, the extent to which positive changes in the core capabilities helped Southern organizations achieve their goals remained largely unclear.

The lessons learned in the *Facilitating Resourcefulness* evaluation included amongst others that there is a need to organize and provide Dutch support in ways that allow Southern organizations to follow endogenous capacity development paths, to be more downward responsive and become learning organizations. Time and effort are needed to make expertise available in such a way that the Southern organizations apply it effectively. Furthermore, it is necessary to make clear exactly what would be required in terms of innovative capacity development approaches.²⁵

²¹ Endogenously driven capacity development refers to taking an 'internal' view of capacity (the way organizations take responsibility for themselves), rather than merely looking at what outsiders can do to promote it.

²² Although 'equality' is mentioned here and in other research as a pre-condition for good relationships, we suggest to use 'equity' instead because this is more appropriate in this context. Equality implies that everyone should be and get the same, while equity is about making sure people get access to the same opportunities. This is especially important when differences and/or history create barriers to participation.

²³ IOB (2011). *Facilitating Resourcefulness. Synthesis report of the evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development*. Report no. 336.

²⁴ Gaag, J. van der, Gunning, J. W., Rongen, G. (2015). *Civil Society contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. MFS II Evaluations. Joint evaluations of the Dutch Co-Financing System 2011-2015. Synthesis Report.

²⁵ IOB (2011). *Facilitating Resourcefulness. Synthesis report of the evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development*. Report no. 336.

Civil Society

Most MFS II alliances supported a large number of organizations in strengthening civil society in many countries between 2011 and 2015. In the IOB report *Facilitating Resourcefulness* it is mentioned that it is generally difficult to get a clear picture of the types of organization based on the proposals, and it is even harder to get a true read of their ability to contribute to the development of civil society. The proposals do not give information about feedback mechanisms between Southern partners and their communities – they state only that the partners are rooted in the community.²⁶

The question of whether the MFS II interventions have led to a stronger civil society was difficult to answer in the MFS II evaluation. The resulting picture of the MFS II evaluation is however generally positive, especially in countries where the civil society climate is conducive to the work of the Southern organizations that are partners of Dutch NGOs. An important lesson to be learned from the MFS II evaluation is that the success of projects focusing on strengthening civil society depends to a large extent on the context in which the Southern partner organization operate.²⁷

According to CIVICUS the scale of the threats to civic space should not be underestimated. In 2014, there were serious threats to civic freedoms in at least 96 countries around the world. An international culture of imitation sees repressive states borrowing laws and regulations from each other to control CSOs space to operate.²⁸ This was also noted in this study with regard to the NGO bills.

Lobbying and Advocacy

The IOB evaluation on Policy Influencing, Lobbying and Advocacy (PILA report) concludes that CSOs succeed to varying degrees in placing issues higher on the agenda and in influencing policy. However, policy implementation and impact on the ground is far more difficult to realize. Restrictive environments and limited capacity of Southern CSOs explain lower levels of effectiveness. Although Dutch support is appreciated, the support is not strategic, as it does not address issues such as Southern CSOs' questionable political and social legitimacy. Furthermore, the report draws attention to the discrepancy between high-level policy discussions in international forums and the local challenges for CSOs at community level. The question arises who will bridge the gap between global policy discussions and local realities by seeking ground level translations.²⁹

The MFS II evaluation on International Lobbying & Advocacy (ILA report) states that outcomes have been mostly achieved in the priority result area of 'agenda setting'. The degree to which 'policy influencing' has been achieved varies considerably amongst the programmes. Fewer outcomes have been achieved in the priority result area of 'practice change'. In some programmes, Southern partners were highly involved while in other programmes, there was little involvement of Southern partners. The evaluation found that capacity development, including funding and organizational and technical support contributed to outcomes.³⁰

²⁶ IOB (2011). *Facilitating Resourcefulness. Synthesis report of the evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development*. Report no. 336.

²⁷ Gaag, J. van der, Gunning, J. W., Rongen, G. (2015). *Civil Society contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. MFS II Evaluations. Joint evaluations of the Dutch Co-Financing System 2011-2015. Synthesis Report.

²⁸ CIVICUS, the State of Civil Society report 2015

²⁹ IOB (2015). *"Opening doors and unlocking potential." Key lessons from an evaluation of support for Policy Influencing, Lobbying and Advocacy (PILA)*. Report no. 407.

³⁰ SGE, NWO-WOTRO (2015). *Civil Society contribution to policy change*. MFS II Evaluations. Joint evaluations of the Dutch Co-Financing System 2011-2015. International Lobbying & Advocacy report.

3.2 Capacity development: Organizational and thematic support

This section further explores the perceptions about the different types of capacity development support and approaches. In the following paragraphs we look at two types of capacity development which are often mentioned in civil society strengthening: organizational support and thematic support. Sometimes these types of support are provided separately, sometimes also in an integrated way.

3.2.1. Organizational support: Dutch CSOs strengthened Southern CSOs strategy, planning and reporting

In the study we found that Dutch CSOs support their Southern partners in many different areas. Dutch CSOs themselves mention monitoring and evaluation most as support area, followed by financial management and lobbying & advocacy support.³¹ A lot has been done on organizational capacity development and Southern CSOs acknowledge and appreciate the support provided in this respect. The figure below illustrates the importance of organizational support from the perspective of both Dutch and Southern CSOs and the appreciation of this type of support.

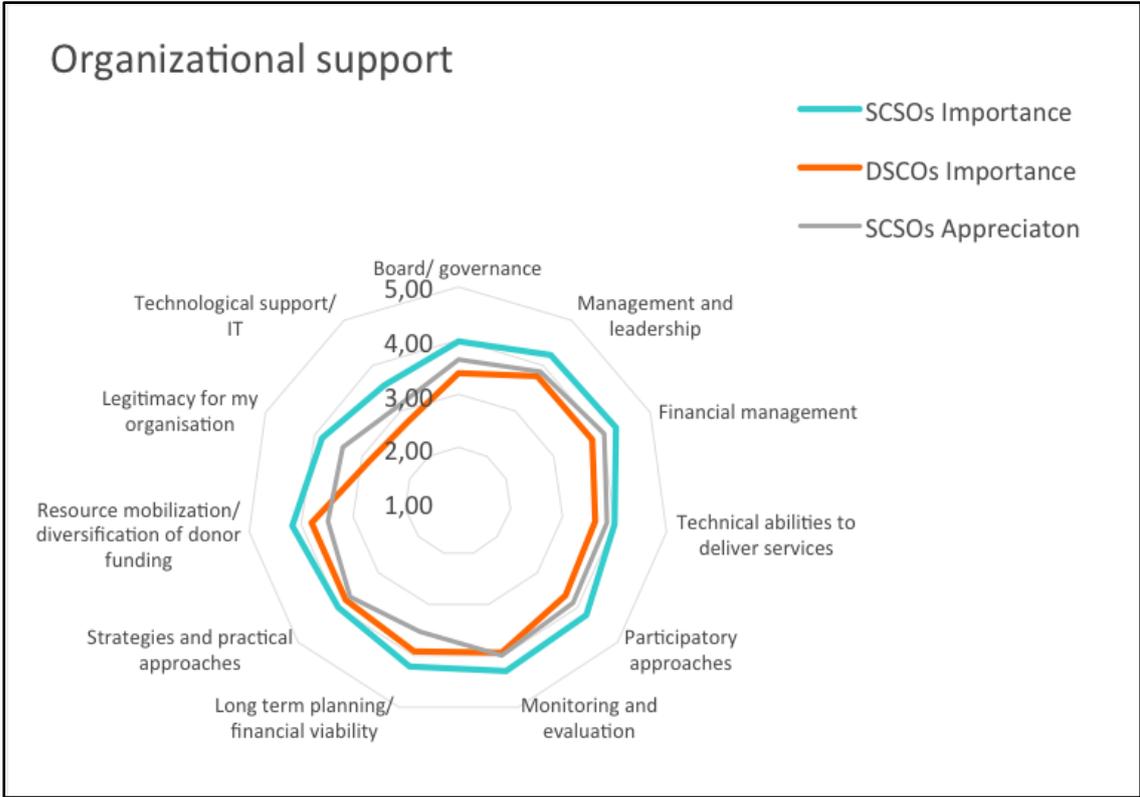


Figure 1: The importance and appreciation of organizational support (1 = lowest, 5 = highest)

Figure 1 shows that Southern CSOs find most aspects of organizational support (very) important (average score > 4) with the highest scores on the importance of financial management and monitoring & evaluation. Their appreciation for the support received however is lower on all types of organizational support. Scores of Dutch CSOs are lower than those of Southern CSOs on all areas. This is in line with most other scores and the general impression that the Dutch CSOs are overall more critical than Southern CSOs in the survey.

³¹ Respectively 71% provides M&E support, 60% Financial Management and 58% L&A. Strategies and practical approaches, participatory approaches and technical abilities to deliver services each account for 57%. Online survey, topic 24 (DCSOs); multiple answers possible: N=118.

According to both Southern and Dutch CSOs the importance of technological support and support to increase legitimacy for their own organisation is quite low compared to the other types of support. The appreciation of financial management is very high (average score > 4).³²

The interviews confirm the importance and appreciation of organizational strengthening and that Dutch CSOs emphasize M&E, reporting and financial management. Other topics mentioned are programming and strategic planning. The Southern partners explain that the Dutch organizational support contributed to their strategic planning, programme proposals, networking and funding, as well as their exposure, credibility and accountability.

“Support received from Dutch organization has enabled us to scale up and do more focused value chain work with rural communities which is a big programmatic change.” - Survey respondent Southern CSO.

3.2.2 Thematic support: specialized thematic organizations have most added value

The figure below show the different types of thematic support provided by Dutch CSOs.

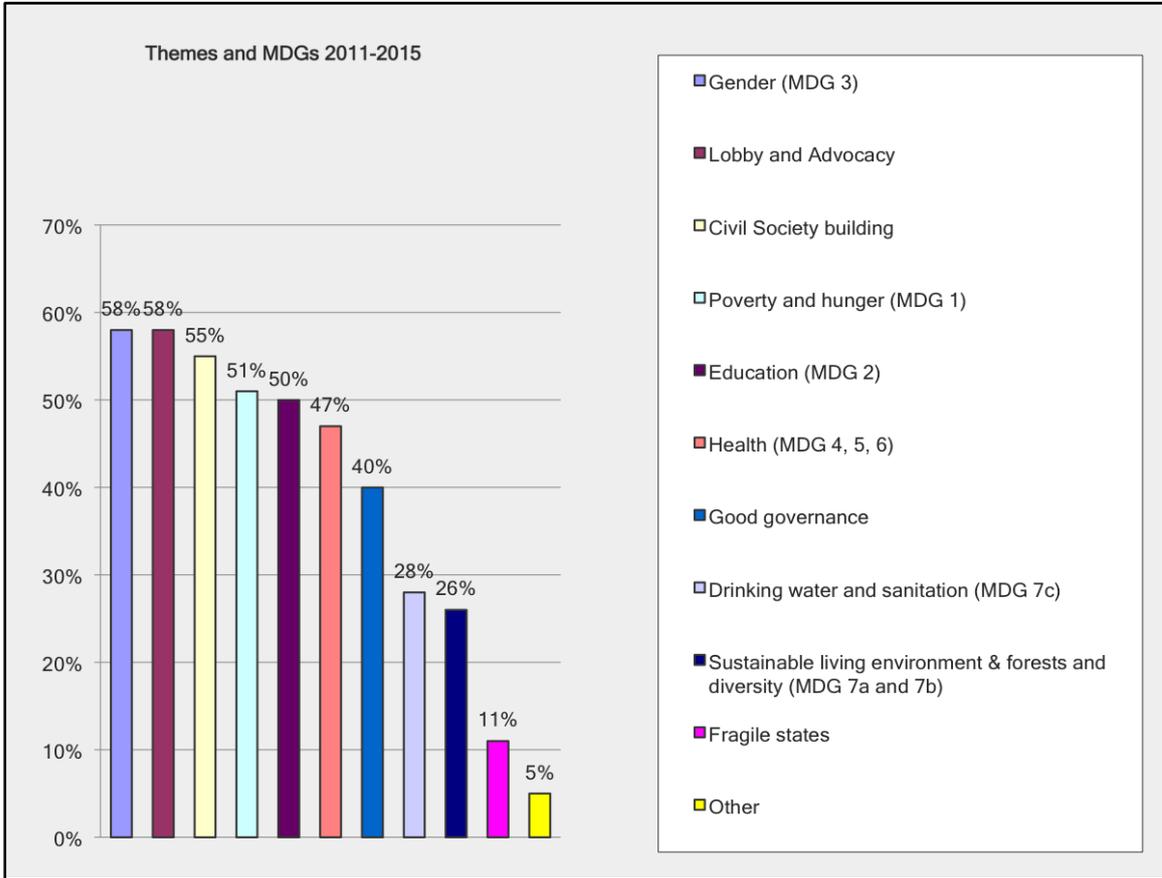


Figure 2: Thematic and Millennium Development Goals (MDG) where Dutch and Southern CSOs worked on between 2011-2015³³

³² Online survey, topic 16: SCSOs Importance categories (excl. ‘other’) average N = 179, SCSOs Appreciation* categories (excl. ‘other’) average N = 148, DCSOs Importance categories (excl. ‘other’) average N = 127. * Note that the respondents answering ‘no support received’ are not included in the average N.

³³ The summary of themes is in line with the themes as defined in the MFSII evaluation

On the basis of the survey data, it may be concluded that besides gender, L&A and civil society as cross-cutting themes, the specific themes most respondents worked on during the course of the programme were poverty & hunger, education and health.³⁴ However, the differences between the extent to which Southern and Dutch CSOs worked on Civil Society strengthening are remarkable (average of respondents indicated to work on Civil Society strengthening is 55%. DCSOs: 76% and SCSOs: 45%). This might be related to the different views the Dutch and Southern CSOs have on (the development of) civil society, which will be further discussed in section 3.3.

Figure 3 below illustrates the importance of thematic support from the perspective of both Dutch and Southern CSOs and the appreciation of this type of support.

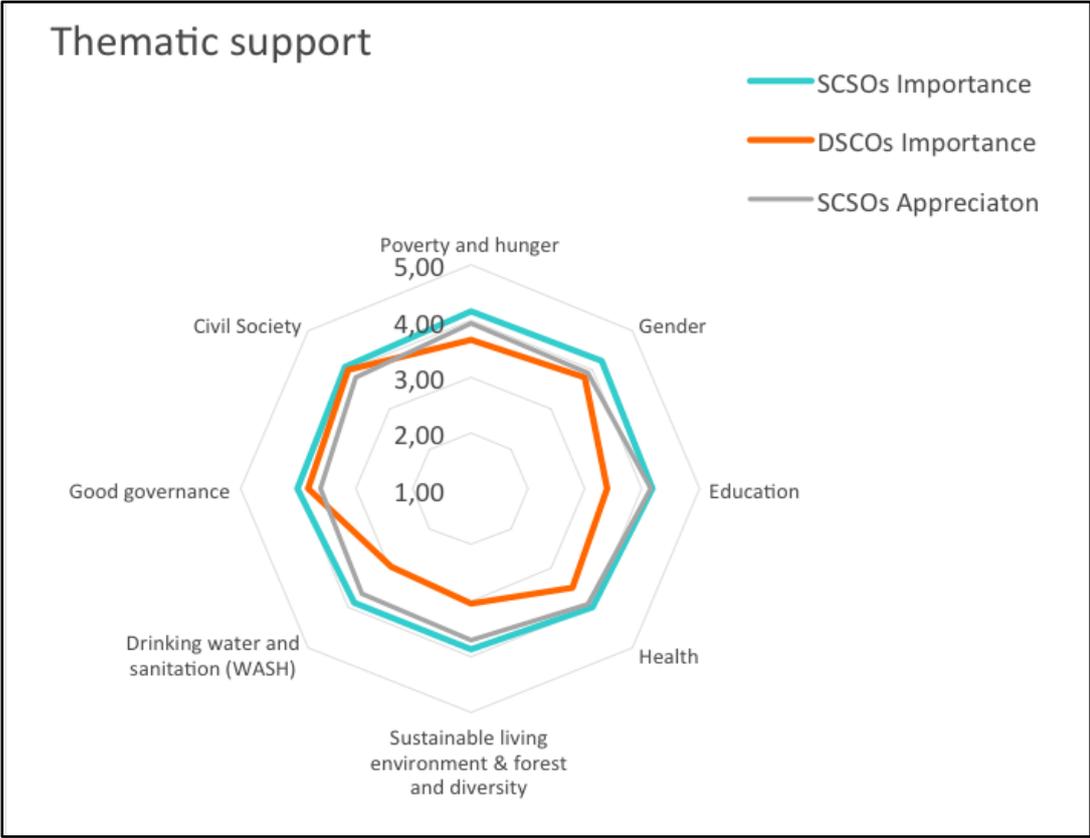


Figure 3: The importance and appreciation of thematic support (1 = lowest, 5 = highest)

As shown in figure 3, according to the Southern CSOs, thematic support on poverty and hunger, gender, education, health, good governance and civil society is very important and the support on education very much appreciated (average score > 4).³⁵ From the field visits we have learned that education is considered a pre-condition for strengthening civil society. Appreciation is mostly expressed for specialized expertise and experiences. Specific thematic expertise Southern CSOs appreciate Dutch CSOs for are for example SRHR and education. From the perspective of Dutch CSOs, the importance of education ranks relatively low.

³⁴ Online survey, topic 7 (all); multiple answers possible: N = 455. Note that the category 'poverty and hunger' includes private sector + economic development, food security, agriculture and 'health' includes reducing child mortality, improving the health of women and mothers, SRHR and HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

³⁵ Online survey, topic 15: SCSOs Importance categories (excl. 'other') average N = 142, SCSOs Appreciation* categories (excl. 'other') average N = 114, DCSOs Importance categories (excl. 'other') average N = 102. * Note that the respondents answering 'no support received' are not included in the average N.

One of the reasons as indicated by the Dutch CSOs is that education is no longer one of the main pillars in Dutch Policies on International Cooperation.³⁶ Dutch CSOs seem to be more focused on the importance of broader themes as civil society, good governance and gender which are in their top 3 (see figure 3).³⁷

Remarkable during the interviews was a distinction between thematic support provided by CSOs with a broad scope and approach and the more specialized CSOs. In particular, the tools, content and approaches of specialized organizations are valued. Most of the Southern CSOs received some support although it varies per country to what extent thematic support is provided by Dutch CSOs and requested by Southern CSOs. Support was either provided by the Dutch CSOs themselves or by external experts.

The feedback webinar confirmed the main findings on organizational and thematic capacity development. There was an interesting debate about the changing funding landscape and the shift from more long-term institutional funding towards more short-term project oriented funding. Some argue that institutional support along with capacity development should be integrated in project funding to sustain the organizations' existence and impact. Overall, the participants stressed the importance of long-term continuity to achieve their goals, irrespective of project duration, and to maintain the valued aspects of the relation such as long-term support, trust and flexibility.

3.3 Civil society strengthening and lobby and advocacy support

This paragraph looks at two distinct types of support provided to Southern CSOs in order to strengthen civil society and influence policy: civil society strengthening (3.3.1) and Lobby and Advocacy support (3.3.2).

3.3.1 Civil Society strengthening: the importance of civil society is acknowledged but civil society space is shrinking and role of Dutch CSOs limited.

As presented in figure 2 (page 13), on average 55% of the respondents indicated that they contributed to civil society strengthening in the period 2011-2015. If we look at the scores of Southern and Dutch CSOs we see a remarkable difference here. 76% of the Dutch respondents indicate they contributed to civil society compared to 45% of the Southern CSOs. Apparently, views diverge about civil society strengthening. It appears that the Dutch CSOs might consider Civil Society (CS) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as more or less the same when it comes to strengthening CSOs as a channel to support the development of civil society. Field visits however illustrate that interviewees make a clear distinction between civil society and civil society *organizations*, who only represent a relatively small and organized part of civil society. Interviewees also indicated that the governments in their respective countries might recognize the importance of civil society but somehow they might also feel that their influencing power is more threatened by CSOs, especially if those receive funding from abroad.

³⁶ Meeting between Dutch CSOs and the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Dutch MFA, 29 February 2016 and consultations with Dutch CSOs.

³⁷ Online survey, topic 15: SCSOs Importance categories (excl. 'other') average N = 142, SCSOs Appreciation* categories (excl. 'other') average N = 114, DCSOs Importance categories (excl. 'other') average N = 102. * Note that the respondents answering 'no support received' are not included in the average N.

The field visits of this perception study show that governments of the countries concerned gradually restrict the operating space for CSOs, which complicates the situation. Furthermore, it must be noted that policies favouring civil society might be in place on country level, but the enforcement and implementation of these policies is often limited. There is a widespread concern about the space for civil society and CSOs becoming more restricted.

*“When government fails its duty towards its citizens, supporting civil society becomes imperative.”
- Survey respondent Bangladesh*

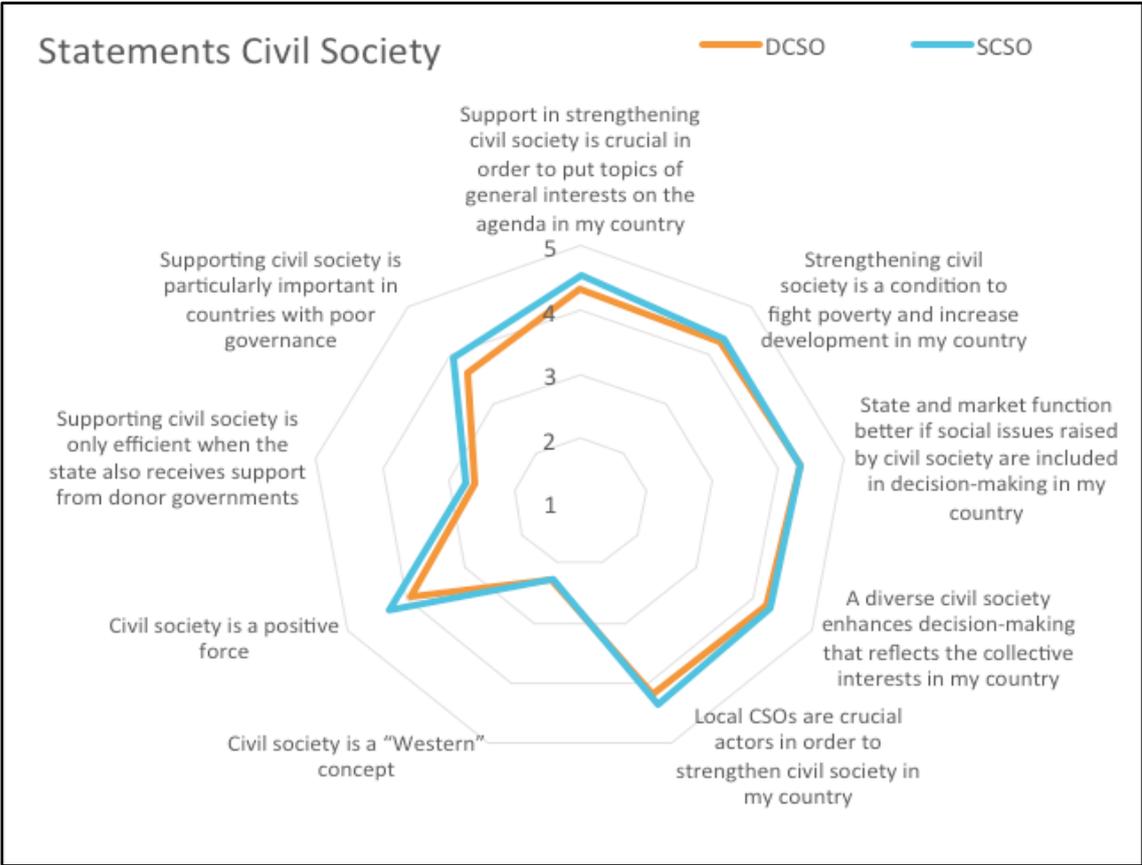


Figure 4. Statements about Civil Society (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Figure 4 shows that Dutch and Southern CSOs are aligned about their general view on civil society and civil society strengthening. As becomes clear in the figure, the respondents agree on most statements but do not agree that civil society is a Western concept and that supporting civil society is only effective when the state also receives support from donor governments. Survey respondents strongly agree that support in strengthening civil society is crucial in order to put topics of general interests on the agenda in their country. Dutch and Southern partners also agree that strengthening civil society is a condition to fight poverty and that local CSOs are crucial actors in order to strengthen civil society.³⁸

The interviews provided deeper insights in the role of Southern and Dutch partners in carrying out activities to strengthen civil society. It became clear that Southern CSOs focus their activities strongly on all sorts of civil society strengthening activities. They mobilize and organize groups of people, carry out trainings and provide information on for instance relevant legislation and policies.

³⁸ Online survey, topic 22 (all, with adjusted description for Dutch and Southern CSOs); SCSOs average N = 262, DCSOs average N = 124.

Dutch CSOs mainly provide funding and organizational support towards Southern CSOs but they are not directly involved in non-financial support towards civil society themselves. Appreciation and good examples of Dutch expertise and experiences on civil society were mainly related to contributions of the Dutch CSOs with a clear profile on a specific issue such as the trade unions.

In the interviews the Southern CSOs frequently emphasize that certain preconditions for civil society strengthening, such as literacy and basic needs, have to be met first before communities can be actively involved in civil society strengthening. Southern CSOs argue for a more holistic approach, balancing basic needs and civil society strengthening. While Southern CSOs are focusing on providing training, support and services to communities, the Dutch approach is shifting from service delivery towards systemic change (e.g. by focussing on policy influencing and L&A) in line with Dutch and international policies. In general, there seems to be a disconnect between specific needs of Southern CSOs regarding service delivery and specific themes on the one hand and the Dutch CSOs’ approach emphasizing a more generic, global issue focus on the other hand. A commonly shared vision between Southern CSOs, Dutch CSOs and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is lacking on what is really needed to contribute to an active civil society to put issues of general interest on the agenda.

3.3.2 Lobbying and Advocacy support: Appreciation for Dutch L&A support is confined: efficient networks and coalitions, context specific L&A strategy and approach and evidence based L&A needed.

This study assesses the capacity of Dutch CSOs to contribute to the development of Southern CSOs lobbying and advocacy capacity. In the online survey questions were asked with regard to the importance and appreciation of L&A support. The figure below shows the results from the perspective of both Dutch and Southern CSOs.

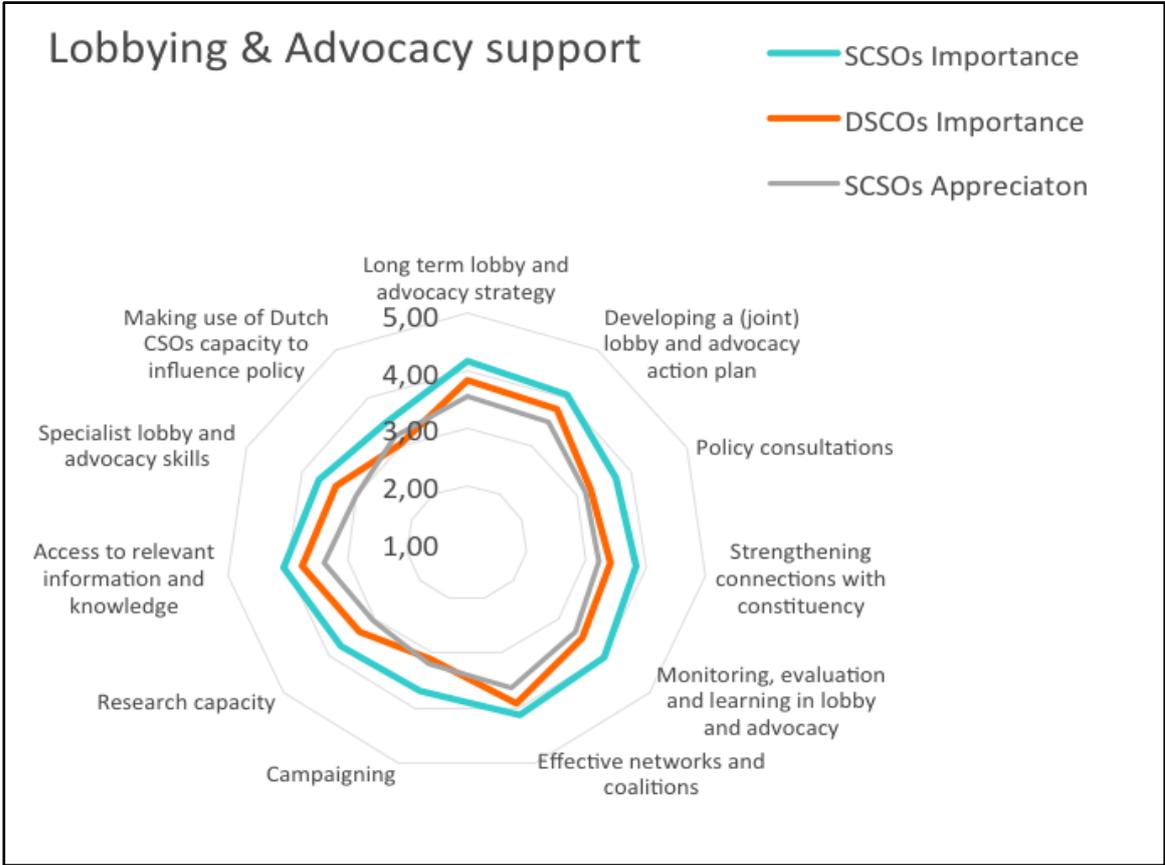


Figure 5: The importance and appreciation of L&A support (1 = lowest, 5 = highest)

What stands out in figure 5 is the relative low score on the Southern CSOs appreciation of the L&A support received from their Dutch partners. The tendency of Southern CSOs in this survey is to be quite positive so a more critical score should be seen in this light. In comparison with the higher appreciation of organizational and thematic support, it is even more remarkable that the Southern CSOs' appreciation of L&A support scores low across all dimensions.³⁹

As illustrated by figure 5, support to develop effective networks and coalitions is perceived very important (average score > 4) by the Southern CSOs, as well as support on a long term L&A strategy, developing (joint) L&A action plans, access to relevant information and knowledge, and monitoring, evaluation and learning in L&A. However, none of these or other types of L&A support have a very high score (average score > 4) on Southern CSOs' appreciation. The Dutch CSOs value the importance of effective networks and coalitions the highest, but remarkably making use of Dutch CSOs capacity to influence policy the lowest.

The survey indicates furthermore that Southern CSOs are neutral to positive about the extent to which Dutch CSOs are well able to help Southern CSOs to influence policy in their country.⁴⁰ From the interviews we have learned that Southern CSOs' appreciation of Dutch CSOs ability to provide L&A support varies per partner and country. For some organizations, L&A is inherent to their work and as such the (inter)national networks, coalitions and the support from Dutch CSOs more obvious. Others are more recently exploring the possibilities in this domain in line with shifting Dutch policy priorities focusing on L&A.

“There is more awareness now within our organization of the importance of knowing the power of the market and how to influence it. Hence it also create needs for capacity development for our staffs to gain better knowledge and skill to campaign/lobby to market actors.”
- Survey respondent Southern CSO.

Southern CSOs are concerned about the high expectations on the influence they have, especially on local level, while expectations about what their respective roles should be, are unclear. Given the complexity and an (increasingly) restricted environment in several countries, the operating space for Southern CSOs is shrinking, especially in the field of rights based and/or lobby and advocacy activities. In several countries such as Ethiopia and Uganda recently Civil Society laws and/or NGO bills have been put in place and are strongly controlled by the government. This has far reaching consequences for the operating space of (Southern) CSOs. In some cases, rights based activities and Lobby and Advocacy are even prohibited. Southern CSOs argue that a long-term commitment is required as well as a vision on for example L&A strategies and approaches, the roles to be fulfilled by the different stakeholders involved and what skills are needed. Also learning and exchanging experiences on different L&A approaches and strategies seem key to enrich L&A practise. A lot can be learned from the more L&A specialised CSOs.

With regard to the capacity of Dutch CSOs to influence policy, the Dutch CSOs have not taken a clear role in direct policy influencing at national level. Although there are some examples in this study where Dutch CSOs have been involved in policy influencing, usually as a member of a consortium, the added value of Dutch CSOs has not been clear. It is interesting that even though the Southern CSOs do not notice a lot of added value of Dutch CSOs in influencing policy at present, they do recognize the potential and importance of mutually reinforcing policy influencing.

³⁹ Online survey, topic 17: SCSOs Importance categories (excl. 'other') average N = 161, SCSOs Appreciation* categories (excl. 'other') average N = 127, DCSOs Importance categories (excl. 'other') average N = 112. * Note that the respondents answering 'no support received' are not included in the average N.

⁴⁰ See annex 5. Online survey, topic 23 (all, with adjusted description for Dutch and Southern CSOs); SCSOs average N = 259, DCSOs average N = 123.

In the interviews they argued that the activities of Dutch CSOs could be concentrated on several levels (local, national, international) and actors (their back donor, governments, companies, consumers), and their own activities towards their local and national government. In this respect, it is often emphasized that a context-specific approach and tone of voice is crucial and Dutch CSOs do not always have sufficient knowledge of the local political context. Depending on the local political context, being too confrontational and direct can have a reverse effect, leading to further restrictions, while in another situation a more confrontational approach may be needed. The relation between Dutch CSOs and Dutch embassies with regard to L&A is limited and varies per country.

Both Dutch and Southern CSOs were asked to respond to statements on the L&A approach. The results are shown in figure 6 below.

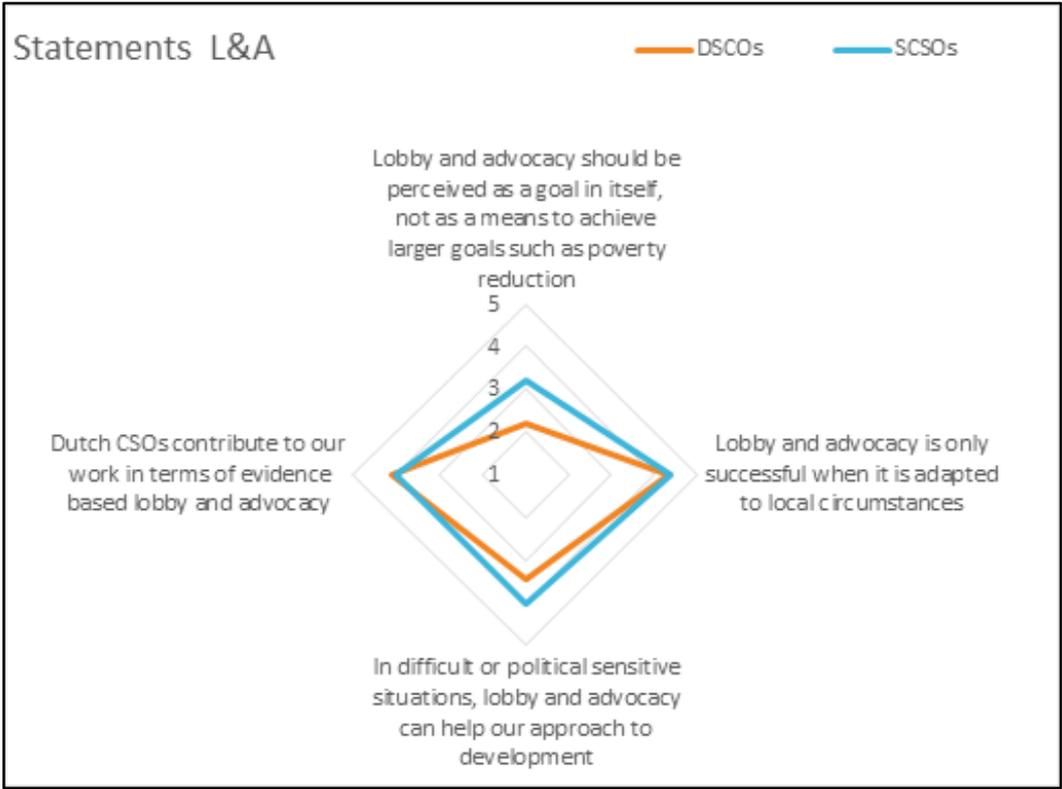


Figure 6: Statements on Lobbying and Advocacy approach (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Dutch and Southern CSOs align and agree on the two statements that L&A is only successful when it is adapted to local circumstances and that Dutch CSOs contribute to the work in terms of evidence-based L&A.⁴¹ The field visits show examples of appreciation for evidence-based L&A support, as research data and reports were perceived useful for Southern CSOs’ L&A activities. Again the (thematic/ L&A) specialized organizations seem to have added value over more generic organizations, as they bring in specific skills, expertise, approaches, networks and relations. Other non-specialized organizations merely provide funding to strengthen and mobilize community groups.

Figure 6 points out that Dutch CSOs and Southern CSOs have a different perspective on the extent to which L&A should be perceived as a means to achieve larger goals. What also stands out is the view of different countries about the extent to which L&A can help their development approach.

⁴¹ Online survey, topic 21 (all, with adjusted description for Dutch and Southern CSOs); SCSOs average N = 226, DCSOs average N = 109..

Ethiopia and Indonesia for example feel that L&A in difficult or politically sensitive situations distracts their approach on development. DRC feels the same but even stronger so.⁴² Overall, it appears that Southern CSOs are more critical than Dutch CSOs on the following statement: *'Dutch CSOs can support us in politically sensitive situations which otherwise could not be possible'*.⁴³ In general, the ability of Dutch CSOs to provide support under difficult or politically sensitive situations is not evident.

The field visits showed that Dutch CSOs have the tendency to conform and manoeuvre within the limited operating space for CSOs rather than trying to defend the operating space. At the same time, some partners indicated they received support from Dutch CSOs for certain innovative approaches and/or politically sensitive issues. In this respect, Dutch CSOs found ways to reach out to and partner with organizations advocating for the greater inclusion of and a more enabling environment for civil society.

3.4 Capacity development approach: joint and informal ways of learning highly valued.

In the survey Southern CSOs were asked about the capacity development approach by Dutch CSOs, such as the extent to which Dutch CSOs applied a participatory approach, whether joint learning was a priority and if the approach helped them to learn from their practice. The results are presented in figure 7 below.

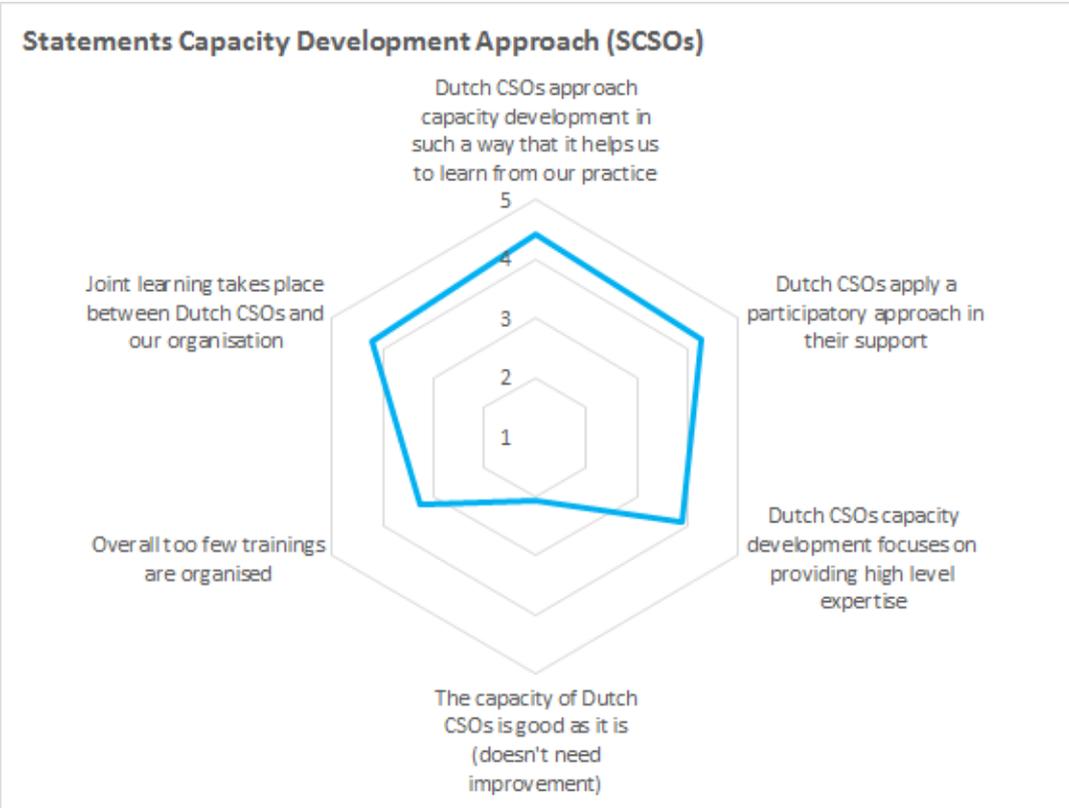


Figure 7: Statements on capacity development approach (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

⁴² Online survey, topic 21 (all, with adjusted description for Dutch and Southern CSOs); SCSOs average N = 226, DCSOs average N = 109.

⁴³ Online survey, topic 23 (all, with adjusted description for Dutch and Southern CSOs); SCSOs average N = 259, DCSOs average N = 123. Average score respectively 3,3 and 3,7

The Southern partners are positive about the participatory and learning elements of the capacity development approach.⁴⁴ Joint learning and informal ways of learning are highly valued. Southern CSOs do feel that the level of expertise that Dutch CSOs offer is sufficient but varies. Southern CSOs also state that Dutch CSOs can improve their own capacity.⁴⁵ This is mirrored by the interview findings too. Especially more consultation, timely communication and funds disbursement are mentioned as areas for improvement.⁴⁶

Furthermore, the respondents were asked how they would prefer to divide 100 euros for their organisation over three areas of non-financial support and one area of financial support: organisational support, strategic support, thematic support and financial support for projects and programs. Respondents would allocate on average 49 euro to direct funding for programs and projects and between 16-18 euro for each type of non-financial support.⁴⁷ In the interviews, the Southern CSOs emphasized the need for an integrated approach of both core funding and capacity development. Often partners are really concerned to lose funds of both Dutch and other donors. Dependency on Dutch funding varies per country, but most Southern CSOs do not have the capacity to become financially sustainable.

The participants of the webinar explained that the findings with respect to the Dutch non-financial support resonated with their own experience. They argue that Dutch CSOs should contribute to create (international) space and to take their role towards the Dutch government, companies and consumers. It appears to be a point of discussion which roles the Dutch CSOs could fulfil in the host countries. Nevertheless, it is considered important to connect and mutually reinforce local and (inter)national L&A efforts. In this respect, the importance of networking, context-specific knowledge and tone of voice is clearly expressed.

Southern participants indicate that their voice is insufficiently represented in the international debate. As an example, they argued that Northern CSOs get paid for coordinating and facilitating Southern networks. It is mentioned that South-South networking is still very limited and one could question how the funding should be distributed in this respect. It is felt that the lead should be in the South and that Dutch CSOs could play a role in stimulating South-South networking. Notwithstanding the good intentions, truly Southern ownership and joint approaches were identified as major challenges.

⁴⁴ Average scores of 4 out of 5 or higher.

⁴⁵ Statement about the capacity of Dutch CSOs was formulated as: *There is room to improve the capacity of Dutch CSOs*. To be consistent in the positive formulation with the other statements, this statement has been rephrased positively and the score adjusted accordingly.

⁴⁶ Online survey, topic 14 (SCSOs); N = 254.

⁴⁷ Online survey, topic 18 (SCSOs), based on average scores; N = 228. Answer options (full text): Direct funding for programs and projects (e.g. directly contributing to service delivery); Organisational support (e.g. training and support on management and leadership, financial management, long term planning, resource mobilization, etc.); Support regarding strategy (e.g. training and support on service delivery, lobby and advocacy, participatory approaches, etc.); Thematic support (e.g. training and support on health, gender, education, etc.).

4. Cooperation between Dutch CSOs and their Southern partners

This chapter gives insights in how Southern CSOs and Dutch CSOs perceive the nature and practice of their **cooperation**. Several elements that constitute a relation are taken into consideration, such as the *collaborative mindset and skills* (e.g. level of equity, openness and mutual benefit of the relation), the *set up and design* (e.g. the extent to which the design has been done jointly, the objectives and roles and responsibilities are clear to all and systems and structures are in place that help the individual partners as well as the relation as a whole to move along) and *daily operations* (e.g. communication, leadership and decision making).

The chapter starts with insights from research on collaboration (4.1). This is followed by the findings on characteristics of the relation (4.2) and the practice of collaboration (4.3) with specific focus on the set up and design and daily operations. The fourth paragraph sheds light on the perceived added value of the collaboration between Dutch and Southern CSOs (4.4). The last paragraph (4.5) looks at the development of the relations between Dutch CSOs since MFS II and factors influencing those relations.

4.1 Lessons and insights on collaboration from other studies

Literature and Dutch policy frameworks describe how ideally North-South partnerships reflect characteristics such as equity, reciprocity and foster the autonomy and organizational capacity of Southern CSOs. These principles are considered imperative to Northern CSOs as it touches upon their ability to achieve local ownership, their (perceived) unique ability to maintain genuine partnerships compared to governmental donors, and the alignment between their values and practices. Northern CSOs (NCSOs) have been consistently criticised for failing to live up to these principles.⁴⁸

In literature financial dependency has been identified as lying at the heart of the discrepancy between the principles and actual practice of partnerships. Although Elbers stresses in his study that Southern CSOs do however have strategic responses to the financial dependency, the fear of losing funds acts as a barrier for raising ideas, preferences or criticism.⁴⁹ Also from the MFS II evaluation the dependency of Southern partners on donor funding emerged.⁵⁰ As the design of the partnership is crucial for the rules that are applied⁵¹, in this chapter we will look at the set up and design phase. This chapter also looks at the daily operations of the collaboration as other research shows⁵² that living up to these rules throughout the lifetime of a partnership gives insight in how the collaboration is perceived.

Koch described in 2007 how NGO aid was behaving more as complement rather than substitute to bilateral aid. Apparently, NGOs tend to spend their resources in countries where bilateral donors are also active.⁵³ This might call into question assumptions on 'reach' and 'relations' and whether NGOs and bilateral aid (also) act as a substitute.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Elbers, W.J. (2012). *The Partnership Paradox. Principles and Practice in North-South NGO Relations*.

⁴⁹ Elbers, W.J. (2012). *The Partnership Paradox. Principles and Practice in North-South NGO Relations*.

⁵⁰ Gaag, J. van der, Gunning, J. W., Rongen, G. (2015). *Civil Society contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. MFS II Evaluations. Joint evaluations of the Dutch Co-Financing System 2011-2015. Synthesis Report.

⁵¹ Elbers, W.J. *The Partnership Paradox. Principles and Practice in North-South NGO Relations*.

⁵² Harvard Business review (Onpoint, fall 2012). Multi stakeholder partnerships

⁵³ Koch, D. J. (2007). *Blind Spots on the Map of Aid Allocations. Concentration and Complementarity of International NGO Aid*. Research Paper No. 2007/45.

⁵⁴ Koch, D. J. (2007). *Blind Spots on the Map of Aid Allocations. Concentration and Complementarity of International NGO Aid*. Research Paper No. 2007/45.

4.2 Relations characterized: Dutch CSOs are perceived as open, respectful and flexible partners.

Figure 8 below shows how Dutch and Southern CSOs characterize the relation between them.⁵⁵

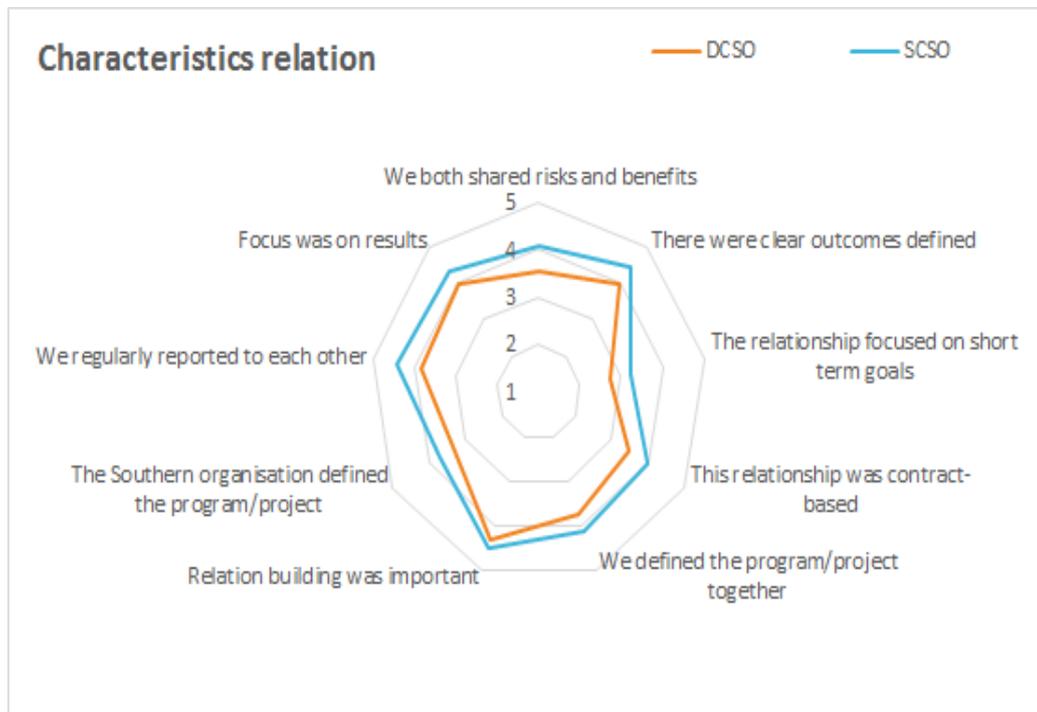


Figure 8: Characteristics of the relation (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Some characteristics as described by Dutch and Southern CSOs in the survey and the interviews point to transformative elements of relations in terms of the importance of relations and relation building, co-creation, creating a joint vision and satisfaction on personal level. Other characteristics show the more transactional side of the relation in terms of defined outcomes, short term goals, time pressure and procedures/results focus. Dutch CSOs are especially not confident that risks and benefits are shared between Dutch CSOs and Southern CSOs.

Both Dutch and Southern CSOs are not confident that Southern CSOs have enough space to define their own program. In the interviews mention was made to heavy donor requirements that make it in some cases hard to incorporate needs based program plans. Southern CSOs also feel that the relation is mostly contract based.⁵⁶ Accountability takes place mainly from the Southern CSO towards the Dutch CSO. Southern CSOs have for example no knowledge about the capacity development budget available for their organizations as these budgets are incorporated in the program costs of Dutch CSOs.

Local ownership and demand oriented support on program level of Southern CSOs is in most cases evident. In cases where Dutch CSOs have initiated or developed programs, Southern CSOs consider them less fit for purpose. The thematic focus by Dutch CSOs tends to be driven more by Dutch and global policy than by demands on the ground. Dutch CSOs set the (thematic) framework, within which Southern CSOs have space to formulate their projects. On strategic level Dutch CSOs seem to adapt to changing political and economic circumstances. Shifts in strategies can be a result of new approaches to address developmental issues as well as a response to changing (back donor) policies or restrictions for CSOs in the host countries.

⁵⁵ See annex 4, online survey topic 27 (all), total N=387, Dutch CSOs N= 119, Southern CSOs N= 264.

⁵⁶ See annex 4, online survey topic 25 (all). N=383

Southern CSOs hardly feel ownership or involvement in co-creating the broader development agenda; often International CSOs represent them on international fora or speak on their behalf. Southern CSOs would like to be involved but have insufficient possibilities to voice their concerns and ideas in (international) platforms to influence agenda setting moments. This may be an explaining factor for the disconnect between the global agenda and local needs.

Figure 9 below shows the perception of Dutch and Southern about how the Dutch CSOs relate to their Southern partners.⁵⁷

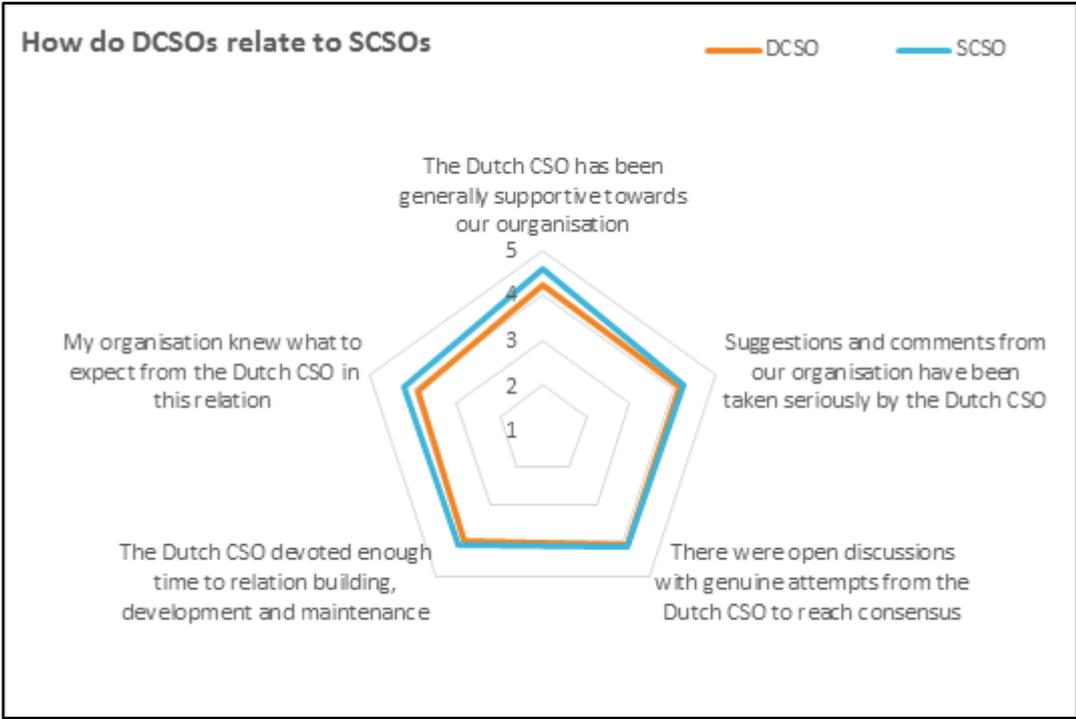


Figure 9: How do Dutch CSOs relate to Southern CSOs (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Overall Southern CSOs are (very) positive about the way Dutch CSOs relate to them. Southern CSOs feel that Dutch CSOs are generally supportive, open to welcome suggestions and comments and allow discussions to reach consensus on areas where there is no alignment. Dutch CSOs are also very positive themselves on how they relate to their partners, although on some accounts they are slightly more critical.⁵⁸

In particular, Southern CSOs are positive about Dutch CSOs understanding of their strategies and approaches and on what it takes to support them. Personal relations, commitment and trust are the main inspiration in the relation for both parties.⁵⁹ This is even more the case when relations go back a long time. Both Dutch and Southern CSOs indicate in the survey and in interviews that budget cuts have led to staff turnover on both sides and that as a consequence personal relations have loosened and in some cases knowledge about the organization and/or the context decreased.

⁵⁷ See annex 4, online survey, topic 23 (all, with adjusted formulated for Dutch and Southern CSOs. SCSOs average N = 259, DCSOs average N = 123.

⁵⁸ In perspective Dutch CSOs are even more positive than Southern CSOs considering that they are in general more critical.

⁵⁹ See annex 4, online survey topic 26 (Main inspiration and main frustration) and annex 5.

4.3 The practice of collaboration: Appreciation for relation with Dutch CSOs and tendency to blame the back-donor for unhelpful elements in collaboration

As far as the daily operations goes, both Dutch and Southern CSOs appreciate everyday management and communication processes and agree that the communication style between them supports good collaboration.⁶⁰ Southern CSOs appreciate the openness in communication and Dutch CSOs the commitment to the relation. Both prefer face to face meetings from time to time, as it strengthens the relation.⁶¹ It is appreciated that focus under MFS II was more on outcomes than on activities and outputs. That also allowed for more flexibility in the implementation of programs. Southern CSOs in all countries are (very) positive about the mood of the relation.⁶²

Moreover Southern CSOs show their appreciation for the combination of long term commitment and organizational capacity development that has enabled their organizations to grow over time. Southern CSOs emphasized during field visits how the long term support of the Dutch CSO in the early phases of their existence as an organization helped them to grow, innovate and experiment. They appreciate the flexibility of the Dutch CSOs approach and feel they can adjust the implementation of their programs to changing circumstances. Both Dutch and Southern CSOs emphasize how they appreciate joint learning and exchange in their relation.

Figure 10 illustrates how Dutch and Southern CSOs perceive the set up and design of their relation.⁶³



Figure 10: Set up and design (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

⁶⁰ See annex 4, online survey topic 30 (Every day management and decision making) and annex 5. N= 318.

⁶¹ See annex 4, online survey topic 14 (stories) and topic 26 (main inspiration and main frustration in the relation) and annex 5.

⁶² See annex 4, online survey topic 28 (Mood of the relation) and annex 5. N = 283. Dutch CSOs N= 118, SCSOs N= 265.

⁶³ See annex 4, online survey topic 29 (Set up and design). N=384. Dutch CSOs N=121, Southern CSOs N=263.

Perceptions about the setup and design of the relation show that especially Dutch CSOs are critical about how the program came to be. Southern CSOs are relatively critical about the extent to which roles and responsibilities and necessary systems have been jointly designed and divided. Although this doesn't show very clearly in figure 10, where scores on these statements are 4 and just below 4, it comes out strongly in the qualitative data. Field visits show that reporting formats are most of the time existing donor formats that are not always helpful to increase practice of Southern CSOs but mainly focus on accountability. Field visits also made clear that programs are developed based on set frameworks defined by Dutch government and Dutch CSOs.

The extent to which programs are designed jointly, highly depends on how the program was designed. In some cases Southern CSOs were included in the set up and design of the (joint) program from the beginning, in other cases Southern CSOs were invited later by Dutch CSOs to add their project details to fill a certain gap in the program.⁶⁴ Within the parameters of the predefined frameworks and depending on how it was designed, most programs have been developed as much as possible based on local demands and needs as identified by Southern CSOs. With decreasing funding, changing policies and shifting interests, Southern CSOs are more confronted with the boundaries of these frameworks than before.

Critical points in daily operations refer to the often complicated and not always useful reporting formats that Southern CSOs were expected to use, late transfers of money and the lack of communication and transparency about what would happen with the relation beyond 2016. Some Southern CSOs didn't know whether they would be a partner after 2015 and yet have to spend time (so far voluntarily) on meetings, preparing input for a potential future program under Dialogue and Dissent. The other point Southern CSOs brought up during the field visits is the tendency of field offices related to Dutch CSOs more and more tend to become implementers and by doing so become competitors rather than partners.

We would have preferred them to stay as funder instead of becoming an implementer of programs. They have expertise in L&A and could be implementor in that area together with us. They at the international level, we in Uganda. - Survey respondent Southern CSO.

4.4 The added value of the relation: joint learning and the potential of networks

Almost all respondents from Southern CSOs indicated in the survey that their relation with the Dutch CSO created change in their organization. The majority describes positive developments, such as increased capacity, expertise, lobby and advocacy, financial and management systems, accountability, exposure, networking and PME skills.⁶⁵ (Long term) interpersonal relations have enabled an environment in which their organizations had the possibility to grow.

Both Dutch and Southern CSOs indicate Learning, Knowledge and Expertise as the main added value for their organization, followed by Skills and Capacity Development and Network of Valuable Relations.⁶⁶ Main difference between Dutch and Southern CSOs is that for Dutch CSOs the ability to achieve the organizational mission is in its top 3, while for Southern CSOs the ability to achieve the mission doesn't appear at all in the top 3.⁶⁷ They mention Skills and Capacity Development instead (sharing a first place with Learning, Knowledge and Expertise).

⁶⁴ Logbook reports field visits Uganda, Ethiopia, Indonesia, India.

⁶⁵ Online survey, topic 32 (SCSOs); N = 242. 95% of respondents indicate that their relation with the Dutch organization created change in their organization.

⁶⁶ See annex 4, online survey, topic 31 (all); max 3 answers: N=394. Learning, knowledge and expertise was mentioned by 72%, Skills and Capacity Development by 59% and Network of Valuable Relations by 47%.

⁶⁷ With 39% the ability to achieve the mission comes in 6th.

The added value Southern CSOs see in their future non-financial relation with Dutch CSOs is mostly in networks. Networks are a useful instrument for capacity development opportunities, resource mobilization, knowledge, exposure and (L&A) leverage.

Both the survey results and interviews with Southern CSOs show that Southern CSOs - especially the local ones - hardly have contact with or access to governmental donors. Most Southern CSOs have limited or no contact with embassies, while they communicate regularly with Dutch CSOs. Southern CSOs feel that Dutch CSOs are easier accessible, speak the same language and share the same mission. Southern CSOs indicate they feel more comfortable to openly share setbacks, challenges and concerns with a Dutch CSO than with a governmental donor.⁶⁸ In addition, Southern CSOs have the feeling that the financial requirements of governmental donors are too heavy for them and rely mainly on CSOs in the Netherlands and other Northern countries for funding. The extent to which direct personal relations between Dutch embassies and Southern CSOs exist and the role that embassies see from themselves differ per country.

“We have been consistently building a holistic relationship with our Dutch Partner which has helped us to constantly engage with the changing environment around us, adapting and renewing ourselves. We are a learning Organization.” - Survey respondent Southern CSO.

4.5 Finding a new mode in a changing environment

Dutch and Southern CSOs struggle with their financial relation and the reporting requirements this financial relation brings along. Dutch and Southern CSOs consider many reporting requirements too heavy, not fit for purpose and emphasizing accountability instead of learning and increasing effectiveness.⁶⁹ A frustration for Dutch CSOs is when reports come in too late and/or incomplete, while a frustration for Southern CSOs is the complexity and level of detail required in the reporting formats or the late notice for report submission in some cases. Their main frustration is that disbursements come in (too) late.

All parties tend to blame back donor policies and budget cuts for this shift within the financial relation. The recent shift in Dutch policy towards the ‘Aid, trade and investment’ agenda has influence as well. It has resulted in less attention for development and poverty issues from the perspective of CSOs and their thinking about international development cooperation, which differs from the priorities and views of the new agenda of trade contributing to development and poverty reduction.

In many of the countries researched, Dutch CSOs have had a long term presence, in some cases dating back to the ‘90s. Despite decreasing funding, most Dutch CSOs intend to stay in these countries, sometimes with less partners than before, or with smaller programs.⁷⁰ As a result of decreasing funding, the relation and division of roles between Dutch CSOs and their partners have become more diffuse.⁷¹ Field visits show that Dutch CSOs - especially those with field offices - tend to take up an implementing role themselves in order to secure funding for themselves, leaving less (financial) space for the Southern CSOs. In the view of SCSOs this competition for funding with Dutch CSOs is ‘unfair’, as ‘Dutch CSOs have the systems, the knowledge and the connections that we don’t have’.

⁶⁸ See annex 4, online survey topic 23 (Statements about Dutch CSOs)

⁶⁹ See annex 4, online survey topic 14 (stories) and topic 26 (main inspiration and main frustration in the relation) and annex 5.

⁷⁰ See annex 4, online survey topic 14 and annex 5.

⁷¹ Quote from interview with SCSO in Uganda.

They feel that Dutch field offices compete with them over scarce resources, showing that their own organizational interest is imperative, possibly even more when back donor funding is decreasing and/ or the enabling environment for civil society is becoming more restricted by law.

The concern about decreasing funding and/or ending of the project or the relation altogether has grown in recent years. In some cases Southern CSOs indicate that their Dutch partners haven't informed them in advance that funding would be cut, reduced or stopped and if they have, they don't always know or understand the reason.⁷² The provision of funding and the ability of Southern CSOs to handle donors in the light of their future existence is of great importance.⁷³ This is confirmed in interviews during field visits where Southern CSOs emphasize that funding opportunities - especially institutional funding - are decreasing and that they don't feel self-confident enough to find sufficient funding elsewhere.

Both Dutch and Southern CSOs argue that decreasing funding is a consequence of changing priorities and strategies, leading to fragmentation and a short term focus. Ties are loosened and partners become more 'interchangeable': Southern CSOs tend to go where the money is and Dutch CSOs select partners that fit their strategy. As a result there is a shift towards more contract- and short term contracts and Southern CSOs are concerned about that shift.⁷⁴ Their main concern is that Dutch CSOs will further reduce or stop funding altogether while they have insufficient resource mobilization capacity; *"we are still too dependent on donor money"*.

Southern CSOs argue that decreased funding and short term contracts are sometimes accompanied by less knowledge about their organization and context as a consequence of staff turnover both within Dutch CSOs as within their own organization. They plead for an integrated approach towards civil society strengthening, rather than what they now consider as a fragmented approach. They appreciate the networking possibilities that Dutch CSOs offer in order for them to find alternative resources. However, Dutch CSOs don't seem to take up that role very clearly as they struggle with their own financial survival.

In the webinar, the appreciated elements of the relation are recognized. However, strong concerns are expressed about the ownership, accountability structures, Dutch CSOs occupying space instead of creating space, and the role of the back donor. Participants expressed a need to reinvent the relation and an opportunity to develop a real partnership working towards an integrated approach on civil society strengthening which now is under pressure with the new Dutch foreign policy.

⁷² See annex 4, online survey topic 14 (Stories), topic 26 (Main inspiration and frustration in the relation) and topic 33 (Positive and negative influence on the relation between 2011 and 2015), and annex 5, par. 5.3. Field visits in Ethiopia, Uganda, Indonesia and India confirm these findings.

⁷³ IOB (2011). *Facilitating Resourcefulness. Synthesis report of the evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development*. Report no. 336.

⁷⁴ See annex 4, online survey topic 25 (Characteristics) and annex 5, par. 5.3. Characteristics of the relation.

5. Conclusions about the research questions

This chapter gives conclusions regarding the research questions of this perception study (see annex 3). The study draws conclusions on the **expertise and experiences** of Dutch CSOs, the Southern CSOs' **appreciation** of the non-financial support and the **cooperation** between Dutch and Southern CSOs. In annex 9 a short summary is given of the findings regarding the assumptions underlying Dutch policy.

What are the Dutch CSOs expertise and experiences regarding themes and regarding capacity development of Southern CSOs and civil society (research question 1) and how has this been appreciated by Southern CSOs (research question 2)

Under capacity development this study looked at organizational support and thematic support as well as support with regard to civil society strengthening and lobby and advocacy. MFS II Dutch support for capacity development includes a package of formal forms of support such as trainings and workshops, and more informal forms of support such as field visits and knowledge sharing. Capacity development is enabled by good interpersonal relations between Dutch and Southern CSOs characterized by trust, respect, open communication and flexibility. It is often the long term relation that enforced the informal support. The whole package is under pressure because of shifting interests and changing practices. Specific findings on each type of support are described below.

A. Organizational support

Dutch CSOs have provided a lot of organizational capacity support and this is appreciated by Southern CSOs. Dutch CSOs emphasize financial management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and reporting and this is both recognized and appreciated by Southern CSOs. The organizational support has enabled the Southern partners to improve their strategic planning and programme proposals and to (further) explore networking and funding opportunities. Furthermore, it has contributed to their exposure, credibility and accountability. Southern CSOs express a clear need for core funding and an integrated approach is preferred, combining core funding (for their organisation and their programs) and capacity development. Most Southern CSOs do not have the capacity (yet) to become financially sustainable.

B. Thematic support

Most of the Southern CSOs received some thematic support from Dutch CSOs. Thematic specialized organizations have most relevant thematic expertise (SRHR, Water and Sanitation, education, gender, human rights). They have a clearer added value (e.g. on tools, approaches and content) than the organizations with a broad scope and approach and the specialized expertise offered (SRHR, Education) is appreciated. The approaches vary. Some Dutch CSOs provide own specialized expertise, while others hire external experts to provide support on thematic issues. It varies per country to what extent thematic support is provided by Dutch CSOs and requested by Southern CSOs.

C. Civil Society support

All parties involved acknowledge the importance of civil society. In general, all CSOs consider themselves important actors in helping civil society to understand and demand their rights and to act as one strong voice. The Southern CSOs carry out civil society strengthening activities, such as training and mobilizing citizens around certain themes or issues. There are high expectations of the role of civil society organizations, for example to reduce income inequality and their ability to include the most marginalized groups of society. At the same time, there is a widespread concern about the space for civil society and CSOs becoming more restricted. On country level, policies favouring civil society might be in place, but Southern CSOs express that the enforcement and implementation of these policies is often limited.

There is no commonly shared vision on what is really needed to contribute to the strengthening of civil society. Involvement of Dutch CSOs in policy influencing and non-financial support to civil society strengthening has been limited and somewhat fragmented under MFS II. Dutch CSOs involvement in civil society strengthening is mainly through providing financial support and strengthening Southern CSOs organisational capacity.

Good examples of Dutch expertise and experiences on civil society strengthening are mainly related to contributions of the thematic specialized CSOs. Southern CSOs frequently refer to preconditions for civil society strengthening, such as literacy and basic needs and argue for a more holistic approach. However, the Dutch approach is shifting from service delivery towards systemic change. There seems to be a disconnect between specific needs of Southern CSOs (service delivery, thematic focus) and Dutch CSOs approach (more generic, global issue focus). Southern CSOs express the need for a more integrated context specific, joint (lobby and advocacy) approach towards civil society strengthening, combining the potential of both Dutch CSOs, Southern CSOs and embassies.

D. Lobbying and Advocacy (L&A) support

The ability of Dutch CSOs to provide support under difficult or politically sensitive situations is not evident. Dutch CSOs have the tendency to conform and manoeuvre within the (limited) operating space for CSOs rather than trying to defend that operating space. At the same time, some Southern CSOs received support from Dutch CSOs at an early stage for certain innovative approaches and/or politically sensitive issues and as such the Dutch CSOs found ways to reach out to and partner with organizations advocating for the greater inclusion of and a more enabling environment for civil society. Overall, the appreciation of L&A support is not as convincing as the support on organizational capacity development. The (thematic/ L&A) specialized organizations seem to have added value over broader more generic organizations, as they bring in specific skills, expertise, approaches, networks and relations. Some Southern CSOs indicate that expectations about their ability to influence policy on local level are unrealistically high.

Contribution to L&A capacity of Southern CSOs

L&A requires long-term commitment and is even more complicated when the environment is (increasingly) restrictive. Effective networks and coalitions are perceived as very important, as well as support on a long term L&A strategy, joint action plans, access to relevant information and knowledge, and monitoring, evaluation and learning in L&A. Southern CSOs' appreciation of Dutch CSOs ability to provide L&A capacity support varies per partner and country. For some organizations L&A is more inherent to their work and as such the support from Dutch CSOs more obvious. Others are more recently exploring the possibilities in this domain.

Involvement of Dutch CSOs in policy influencing

There are a few examples where Dutch CSOs have been involved in policy influencing, usually as a member of a consortium. However, Dutch CSOs apparently have not taken a clear role in direct policy influencing at national level. Even though Southern CSOs do not notice a lot of added value of Dutch CSOs in influencing policy at present, they do recognize the potential and importance of mutually reinforcing policy influencing on different levels (local, national, international) and towards different actors (governments, companies, consumers). Southern CSOs indicate that a context-specific approach and the tone of voice is crucial. The relation between Dutch CSOs and Dutch embassies with regard to L&A is limited and varies per country. Appreciation is expressed for evidence based L&A support by Dutch CSOs (e.g. research data and reports). Other non-specialized organizations merely provide funding to strengthen and mobilize community groups.

What is the nature and practice of cooperation between the Dutch CSOs and Southern CSOs? (research question 3)

Overall there is strong appreciation for relations between Dutch and Southern CSOs in the period 2011-2015. However, appreciated elements such as trust, flexibility and openness come under pressure and there is a tendency to blame the back donor for these limitations. According to Southern and Dutch CSOs, the back donor develops the conditions and regulations that shape the relations eventually. Their perception is that there is little space for them to influence these regulations. In practice equity is realized in daily operations on project level, but proofs more difficult to realize on (international) strategic and policy level, because it is limited by set (policy) frameworks defined by (back) donors.

The level of ownership and demand driven approach depends on which level is looked at and how the program was developed. Both Dutch and Southern partners feel hampered by the heavy reporting requirements from the (back) donor and struggle with the challenges of a donor-recipient relation, in achieving a mode in which there is true Southern ownership. There seems to be more transparency and accountability from Southern CSOs towards Dutch CSOs than vice versa and long-term commitment is often dependent on back donor funding.

The extent to which both Southern and Dutch CSOs together have the flexibility to respond to difficult situations of poor people and unexpected changes varies. Southern CSOs consider Dutch CSOs to be flexible in implementation of programs in terms of budget changes and changes in program activities. The extent to which Southern CSOs are equipped to respond to changing situations on the ground depends on their embeddedness in the communities.

According to the Dutch and Southern CSOs, the added value of the relation lies primarily in Learning, Knowledge and Expertise, Skills and Capacity Development and a Network of Valuable Relations. Interpersonal relations between Dutch CSOs and Southern CSOs are generally appreciated. Southern CSOs highly appreciate the flexibility, open communication and joint learning that generally characterize their relations with Dutch CSOs and have enabled them to grow as an organization. Southern CSOs feel that Dutch CSOs are better accessible than embassies. They hardly have contact with or access to governmental donors. They argue that they can't comply with governmental requirements for funding and rely mainly on CSOs in the Netherlands and other Northern countries for funding. According to them the recent shift in Dutch policy towards the 'Aid, trade and investment' agenda has resulted in less attention for development and poverty issues from the perspective of CSOs.

Southern CSOs notice a recent shift of their Dutch partners from long-term to short term programs and from core funding to project funding, making relations between them more vulnerable. Ties are loosened and partners become more 'interchangeable': Southern CSOs tend to go where the money is and Dutch CSOs select partners that fit their strategy. Both Dutch and Southern CSOs argue that this is a consequence of changing Dutch and international policies leading to fragmentation and a short term focus. It puts in danger the carefully built combination of long term relations and capacity development Southern CSOs have valued Dutch support for.

Southern CSOs express concerns about Dutch CSOs combining a donor role with the role of implementer, in order to secure funding for themselves, leaving less (financial) space for the Southern CSOs. In view of decreasing funding opportunities and changing Dutch policies, Dutch CSOs and their Southern partners struggle to find a new mode for their relation that includes less or no financial support. The potential added value Southern CSOs see in their future non-financial relation with Dutch CSOs is mostly in networks.

Annex 1: List of abbreviations and acronyms

5CC / 5-C	Five core capabilities
CC	Core capability
CD	Capacity Development
CIVICUS	CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
CNVI	CNV International
CS	Civil Society
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCSO	Dutch Civil Society Organization
Dutch CSO	Dutch Civil Society Organization
FCAS	Fragile and conflict-affected states
ILA	International Lobbying and Advocacy
IOB	Inspectie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en Beleidsevaluatie (Policy and Operations Evaluation Department)
IT	Information Technology
L&A	Lobbying and Advocacy
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MFNV	Mondiaal FNV
MFS II	Medefinancieringsstelsel (Netherlands Co-Financing System, 2nd term, 2011-2015)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGDO	Non-Governmental Development Organization
PILA	Policy Influencing, Lobbying & Advocacy
PLL	Partnership Learning Loop
PM&E	Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation
RUG	University of Groningen
SCSO	Southern Civil Society Organization
Southern CSO	Southern Civil Society Organization
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TUCP	Trade Union Co-financing Program
UvA	University of Amsterdam
VMP	<i>Vakbondmedefinancieringsprogramma</i> (Dutch for: Trade Union Co-financing Program)
WUR	Wageningen University & Research Centre

Annex 2: Glossary and definitions

Capacity Development (CD)

Capacity development concerns the development of the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully and the development of appropriate and adequate capacities to choose their own development paths.⁷⁵

According to the MFA, capacity strengthening must be aimed at strengthening the expertise, management and financial management of partner organizations, as well as at developing the core capabilities and skills needed to remain relevant in a changing context and achieve results.⁷⁶ The core capabilities (5CCs) are:^{77 78}

- the capability to act and commit
- the capability to deliver on development objectives
- the capability to relate to external stakeholders
- the capability to adapt and self-renew
- the capability to achieve coherence

Civil Society (CS)

Organizations of people that exist between state bodies and the market or corporate sector on the one hand and the private sphere (families, individuals) on the other. Civil society encompasses civil society organizations (CSOs), including non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs), less formalized groups and civil actions of individuals.

The MFS II evaluation is based on the definition of civil society as formulated by CIVICUS. CIVICUS defines civil society as follows: *The arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market – which is created by individual and collective actions, organizations and institutions to advance shared interests.*

The CIVICUS framework has five dimensions:

- Civic engagement
- Level of organization
- Practice of values
- Perception of impact
- Perception of civil society context

Direct and indirect support

Non-financial support includes direct support (trainings, workshops concerning organizational, thematic or other ways of capacity development) and indirect support (joint learning, joint design and linking and collaboration activities).

⁷⁵ Adapted from OECD (2006) and IOB (2011).

⁷⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (2014). *“Dialogue and Dissent” - Strategic Partnerships for Lobbying and Advocacy.*

⁷⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (2014). *“Dialogue and Dissent” - Strategic Partnerships for Lobbying and Advocacy.*

⁷⁸ IOB (2011). *Facilitating Resourcefulness. Synthesis report of the evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development.* Report no. 336.

Lobbying & Advocacy (L&A)

Lobby and advocacy covers a wide range of activities conducted to influence decision-makers in the public and private sectors at international, national or local levels towards the overall aim of combating the structural causes of poverty and injustice, and contributing to sustainable inclusive development.

Mutual support

Aligning groups of people in a common activity for the creation of social value. This is closely associated with 'international solidarity' with like-minded groups.⁷⁹

Perception survey

Perception surveys measure what respondents believe, think or feel and can produce information about: (a) Knowledge (e.g. levels of awareness and understanding of particular issues); (b) Experiences (e.g. in regards to service provision) (c) Beliefs and values (e.g. norms, beliefs and levels of tolerance of certain behaviours) (d) Attitudes and opinions (e.g. views of performance of actors, satisfaction with services); and (e) Expectations (e.g. fears and hopes).⁸⁰

Service delivery

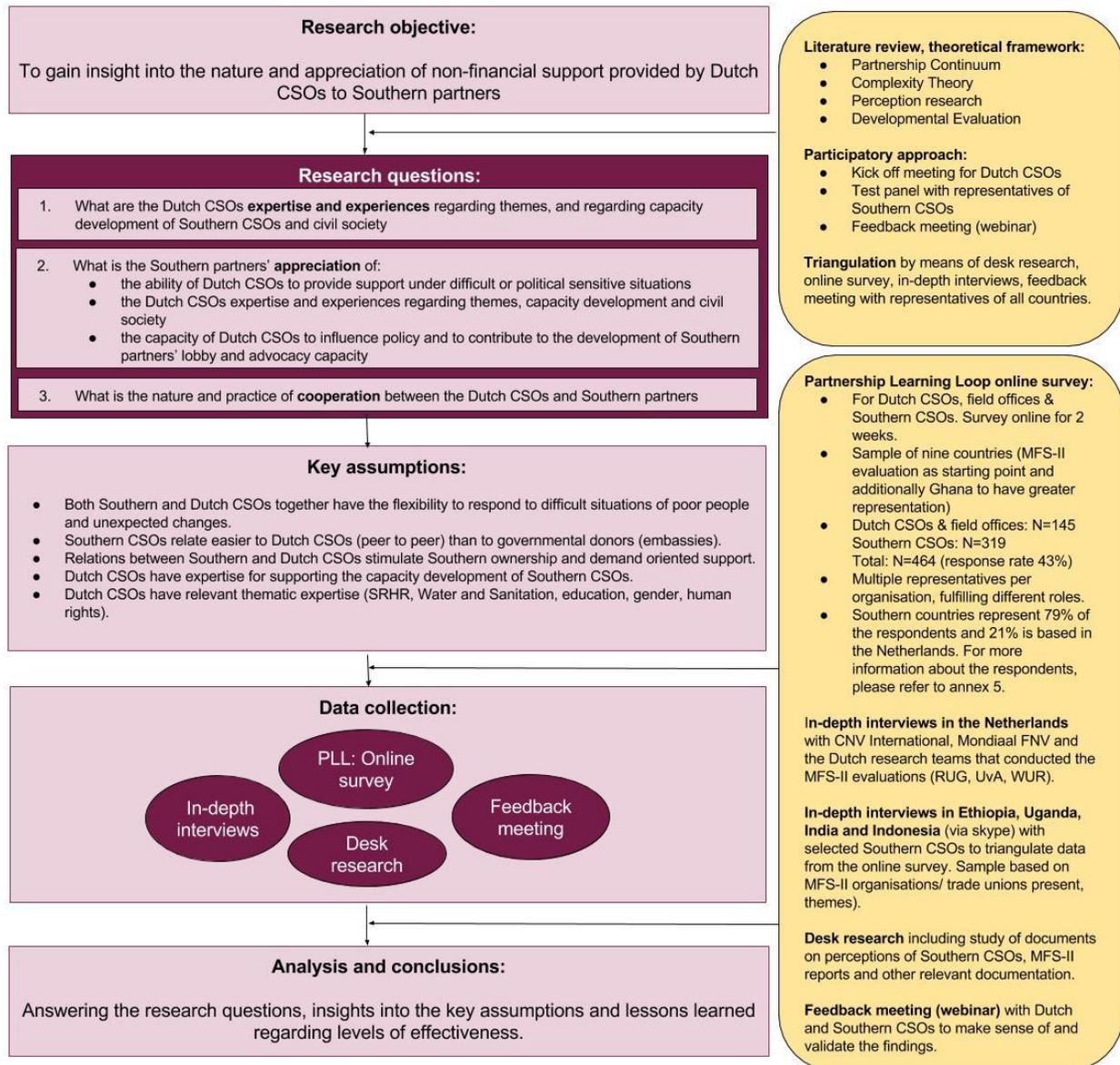
Providing services to citizens. In this case, NGOs take up a role which otherwise could be fulfilled by the government or private sector.⁸¹

⁷⁹ IOB (2016). *Terms of Reference for the policy review 'Support through Dutch NGOs for the sustainable development of civil society in developing countries' (policy objective 3.3).*

⁸⁰ Herbert, S. (2013). *Perception surveys in fragile and conflict-affected states.*

⁸¹ IOB (2016). *Terms of Reference for the policy review 'Support through Dutch NGOs for the sustainable development of civil society in developing countries' (policy objective 3.3).*

Annex 3: Research methodology⁸²



⁸² Total number of surveys sent to unique respondents was 1184 (238 DSCOs and 946 SCSOs). 111 bounced or blocked. Of 1073 surveys successfully sent, the overall response rate was 43%: 63% for Dutch CSOs and 38% for Southern CSOs. Effective response rates are higher as some staff members have left their organizations in the last years, while their email address have remained active.

Annex 4: Topics online survey

An overview is given of the topics of the questionnaire among Dutch CSOs, field offices, intermediaries and Southern CSOs. In the online survey, a distinction has been made between:

- Questions for all respondents, both Southern and Dutch CSOs (see topic list: all);
- Questions for Southern CSOs (see topic list: SCSOs);
- Questions for Dutch CSOs and field offices/ staff, including local intermediaries, consultants and trainers (see topic list: DCSOs).

Topic list:

1. Country in which respondents are based (all)
2. Organization for which respondent works (all)
3. Type of organization (SCSOs)
4. Geographical area in which organization is active (SCSOs)
5. Role between 2011 and 2015 (all)
6. Description of the organization (SCSOs)
7. Theme or Millennium Development Goal (MDG) contributed to between 2011 and 2015 (all)
8. Dutch alliance in which organization has been involved between 2011 and 2015 (all)
9. Dutch organization that provided supported between 2011 and 2015 (SCSOs)
10. Average annual amount received from the Dutch organization chosen (SCSOs)
11. Start and end support Dutch organization (SCSOs)
12. Duration relation with Southern partner (DCSOs)
13. Presence before 2011 and phase out in 2016 in countries (DCSOs)
14. Stories from Dutch and Southern CSOs that characterize the relation (all)
15. Importance and appreciation of thematic support (all, DCSOs only importance)
16. Importance and appreciation of organizational support (all, DCSOs only importance)
17. Importance and appreciation of lobby and advocacy support (all, DCSOs only importance)
18. Division of 100 Euro available to support the organization (SCSOs)
19. Willingness to pay for support from Dutch CSOs (SCSOs)
20. Statements about Capacity Development (SCSOs)
21. Statements about Lobby and Advocacy (all, with adjusted description for DCSOs and SCSOs)
22. Statements about Civil Society (all, with adjusted description for DCSOs and SCSOs)
23. Statements about Dutch CSOs (all, with adjusted description for DCSOs and SCOS)
24. Area of support towards CSO chosen (DCSOs)
25. Characteristics relation with partner organization chosen between 2011 and 2015 (all)
26. Main inspiration and main frustration in the relation (all)
27. Statements collaborative mind-set and skills in the relation (all, with adjusted description for DCSOs and SCSOs)
28. Mood of the relationship (all, with adjusted description for DCSOs and SCSOs)
29. Statements set up and design of the relation (all, with adjusted description for DCSOs and SCSOs)
30. Statements everyday management and decision making in the relation (all, with adjusted description for DCSOs and SCSOs)
31. Added value for the own organization (all)
32. Change in the organization as a result of the relation with the Dutch CSO (SCSOs)
33. Positive and negative influence on the relation between 2011 and 2015 (DCSOs)
34. Extent to which the relation in mind is exemplary to other relations (all)
35. Names and e-mail addresses of colleagues to receive the survey (SCSOs)
36. E-mail address to be kept informed of the results of the research (all)

Annex 5: Figures and data online survey

The chapters 2, 3 and 4 present the main findings based on the online survey. Only additional information collected with the questionnaire is included in this annex.

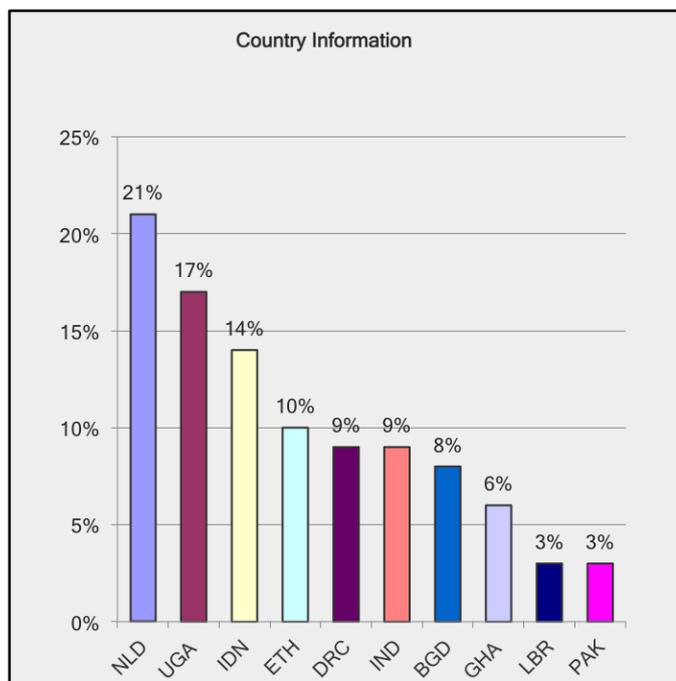
5.1 Characteristics respondents

Country information

The Southern countries represent 79% of the respondents and 21% is based in the Netherlands. The countries selected for the interviews and field visits account for 50% (Uganda 17%, Indonesia 14%, Ethiopia 10% and India 9%).⁸³

Organization and role

Multiple representatives per organization were asked to complete the survey, fulfilling different roles. The majority (69%) of the respondents work for a Southern partner organization, 22% for a Dutch organization funded by MFS II and 5% for a field office related to a Dutch organization funded by MFS II. The trade unions in the Netherlands represent 2% of the respondents and their field staff 1%.⁸⁴



The respondents fulfilled a variety of roles, such as director (41%), head of department/ programme/ project manager (35%), PM&E (21%) and/ or country coordinator (13%). Other roles were alliance/ consortium manager (8%), field officer (8%), local trainer, consultant or intermediary (8%) and/ or finance (4%).⁸⁵

5.2 Dutch alliances/ organizations

Involvement Dutch alliances

The respondents were asked about the alliance they have been involved in between 2021-2015. The ICCO Alliance accounts for 30% of both Dutch and Southern respondents together, followed by the SRHR Alliance, Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance, WASH Alliance and Partners for Resilience (respectively 12%, 11%, 11% and 10%).⁸⁶ From the perspective of the Southern partners, 41% of the respondents were involved in the ICCO Alliance. The Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance accounts for 14%, the WASH Alliance 13%, the SRHR Alliance 12% and Partners for Resilience 9%.

⁸³ Online survey, topic 1 (all): N = 464.

⁸⁴ Online survey, topic 2 (all): N = 464. Note that the category 'field office/ staff' includes local intermediaries, consultants and trainers.

⁸⁵ Online survey, topic 5; multiple answers possible (all): N = 450.

⁸⁶ Online survey, topic 8; multiple answers possible (all): N = 343.

DSCOs providing support (who, where, when)

In terms of the Dutch organization providing support, ICCO is mostly mentioned (17%) followed by HIVOS (9%), Cordaid (9%), Mensen met een Missie (8%), Edukans (4%), Oxfam Novib (4%) and Simavi (4%). Plan Netherlands, Word and Deed, ZOA and Mondiaal FNV each account for 3%.⁸⁷

The figures below shows in which countries Dutch CSOs have been active between 2011 and 2015 and whether they expect to phase out after 2015.⁸⁸

% Presence in countries before 2011	Yes (%)	No (%)	N
Uganda	89	11	81
Indonesia	85	15	68
India	81	19	63
Ethiopia	78	22	68
Bangladesh	76	24	63
DRC	72	28	61
Ghana	69	31	52
Pakistan	53	47	47
Liberia	44	56	45

The country in which relatively most organizations were already active before 2011 is Uganda (89%), followed by Indonesia (85%) and India (81%). Uganda also seems to be the country where most Dutch organizations participating in the survey were present at all between 2011 and 2015, followed by Indonesia and Ethiopia. Ethiopia is the country where least respondents anticipate their organization will phase out in 2016 (15%), whereas Indonesia has most respondents anticipating to phase out this year (33%).

% Phase out in 2016	Yes (%)	No (%)	N
Ethiopia	15	85	62
DRC	18	82	49
Pakistan	18	82	39
Bangladesh	21	79	56

⁸⁷ Online survey, topic 9 (SCSOs): N = 295. If the respondents were supported by more than one Dutch organisations, they mentioned the organisations they received most non-financial support from. Note that non-financial support includes direct support (trainings, workshops concerning organizational, thematic or other ways of capacity development) and indirect support (joint learning, joint design and linking and collaboration activities).

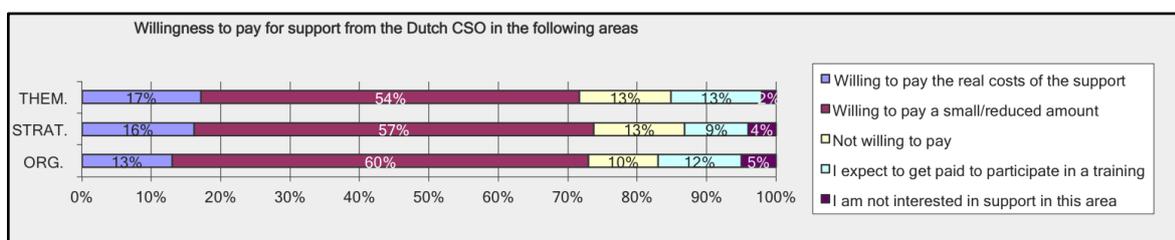
⁸⁸ Respondents could skip the question if they were not active in a certain country between 2011 and 2015. The different number of respondents for the two questions however show slight differences, indicating that some respondents might have skipped a certain country although they were active. Therefore, no conclusions can be drawn about the exact numbers. Online survey, topic 13 (DCSOs): average N = 57.

Ghana	21	79	43
Liberia	24	76	37
Uganda	26	74	77
India	27	73	59
Indonesia	33	67	63

As illustrated in the table below, 32% of the respondents had an existing relation with 75% or more of their partners before 2011 and 30% of Dutch partners is continuing their support to 75% or more of their partners in 2016.⁸⁹

Duration relation	< 25%	25 - 50%	50 - 75%	> 75%
The % of Southern partners that we already supported before 2011 is:	18%	22%	28%	32%
The % of Southern partners that we continue to support in 2016 is:	19%	23%	28%	30%

As shown in the figure below, the majority of the respondents (54-60%) are willing to pay a small/reduced amount for the organizational, strategic and thematic support from the Dutch CSOs and about 15% is willing to pay the real costs of the support. However, besides the people not willing to pay (10-13%) there is also a group of people expecting to get paid (9-13%) or not interested (2-5%).⁹⁰

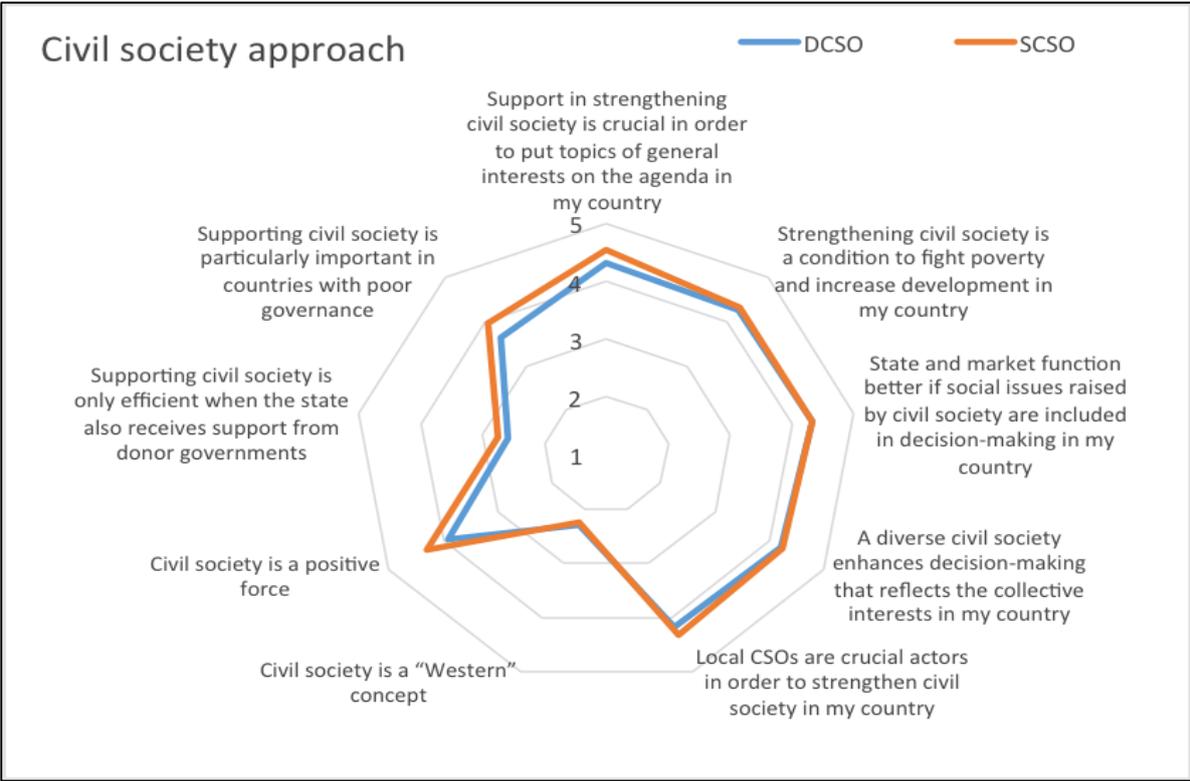


⁸⁹ Of the total group of partners the DCSOs supported between 2011 and 2015. Online survey, topic 12 (DCSOs); N = 119 (supported before 2011) / N = 115 (continue to support in 2016).

⁹⁰ Online survey, topic 19 (SCSOs): THEM refers to thematic support (e.g. health, gender, education, civil society, poverty and hunger, good governance, sustainable living etc.); N = 230. STRAT refers to support regarding strategy (e.g. support on campaigning, service delivery, lobby and advocacy, participatory approaches); N = 234. ORG refers to organisational support (e.g. management and leadership, financial management, governance, long term planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning, resource mobilization etc.); N = 237.

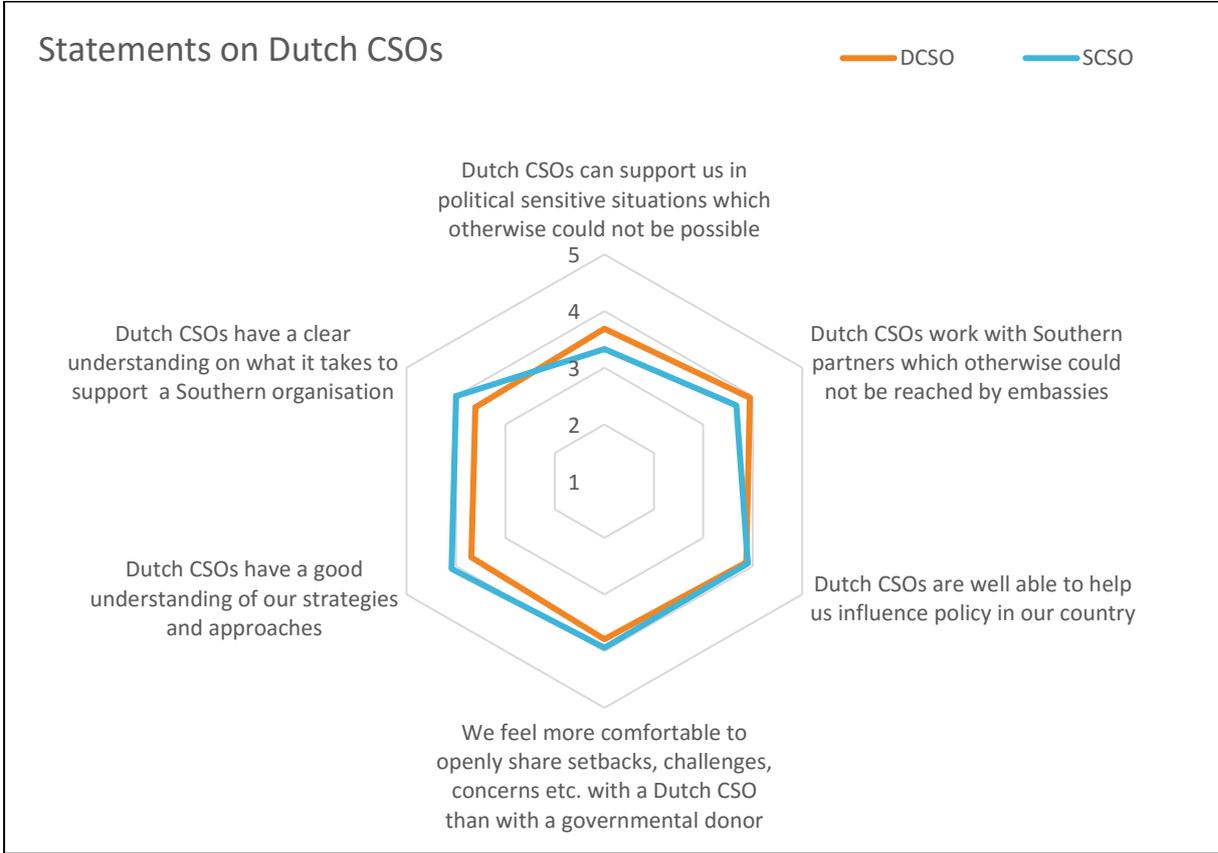
5.3 Statements about Civil Society

In the online survey, the Dutch and Southern CSO are aligned about the statements regarding Civil Society. All respondents agree on most statements but do not agree that civil society is a Western concept and that supporting Civil Society is only effective when the state also receives support from donor governments. They also don't agree that supporting Civil Society is only effective when the state also receives support.



5.4 Statements about Dutch CSOs

The figure below shows to what extent Dutch and Southern CSOs agree with statements about Dutch CSOs.⁹¹



Overall the scores on most statements are between neutral and positive (score between average 3 - <4). SCSO are positive (> 4) about DCSOs understanding on what it takes to support SCSOs and on SCSOs strategies. DCSOs are more critical about their own understanding (<4). SCSOs perception about the extent to which DCSOs are able to provide support in political sensitive situations is more critical (3,33), and even more critical than their Dutch partners (3,67). A difference between countries is noted with Ethiopia least convinced (2,84 which is a low score), that DCSO are able to provide support in sensitive situations, and Uganda most positive with a score between neutral and positive (3,67). SCSOs are furthermore not convinced that they could not be reached by Embassies. Also on this statement they score lower than the Dutch partners. SCSOs are overall also more critical about the extent to which DCSOs are able to influence policies in their country than DCSOs. Only in Uganda SCSOs are confident about the ability of DCSOs to influence policies. The relatively low scores from SCSOs compared to their Dutch partners on these three statements are noteworthy, because SCSOs tend to score higher on almost all statements in the survey

⁹¹ Online survey, topic 23 (all, with adjusted description for Dutch and Southern CSOs); SCSOs average N = 259, DCSOs average N = 123. 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree.

5.5 Added value and appreciation of the relation

Stories⁹²

Respondents were asked to describe the relation with their Dutch or Southern partner in a story. Of the total 102 stories from respondents working for Dutch CSO's 8 were formulated neutrally, describing activities and/or the relation without giving an opinion about it. 7 were explicitly critical about capacity of the partner organization (staff turnover, weak management or loss of funding) or about the relation between the Dutch and the Southern organization (compliance and ownership).

With respect to the other 87 (positive) stories, these can roughly be categorized as stories regarding:

1. Capacity (47): strengthened capacity of SCSOs, technical support, mutual learning and exchange
2. Relation (40): complementary, long term relations, trust, respect, open communication, face to face meetings, ownership
3. Results (32): changes in approaches, upscaling, expanding successful approaches

Of the 319 respondents from Southern CSOs, 254 responded with a story.⁹³ The stories are overall very positive. 207 out of the total 254 stories reflect on the positive experience of working with Dutch CSOs. 32 stories are neutral. This means that a program, project or event was described without making reference to their Dutch partner or to positive experiences. 14 stories (5%) were critical.

Positive stories by SCSOs can be categorized as:

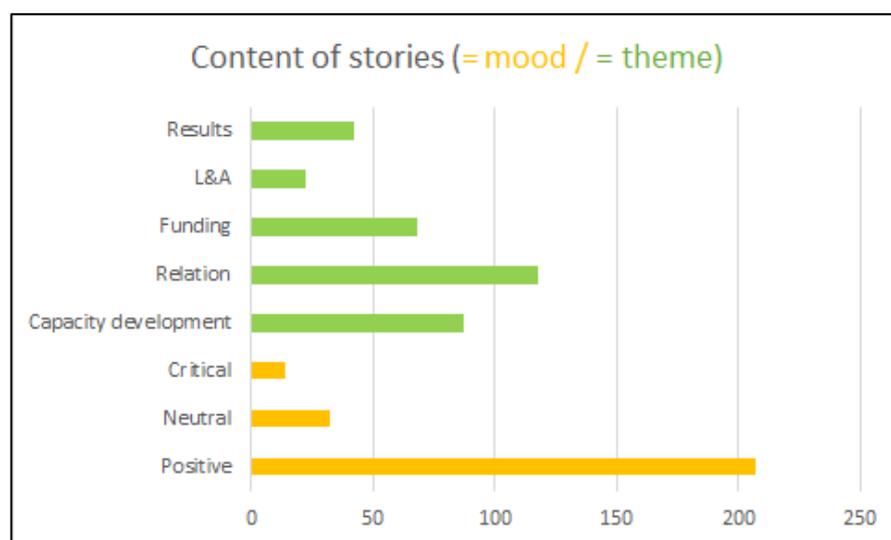
1. Relation (118): openness, flexibility, trust, mutuality and respect
2. Capacity development (87): organizational and institutional development in form of trainings on the job mentoring in financial management, PME, report writing, leadership, strategic development, project management
3. Funding (68): important driver to partner, either project/program funding or funding to enable SCSOs to strengthen their organization
4. Results (42)
5. Lobby and advocacy (22)

Most critical stories refer to a perceived bad ending of a relation. Southern partners did either feel excluded in decision making or not understood. Other critical stories relate to shifting priorities or plans at Dutch level which put pressure on the programs and relation, unclear communication, shift from people empowerment to managerial, economic enterprise development. There were no critical stories from Ethiopia, Liberia and Pakistan.

⁹² See annex 4, question 14.

⁹³ This is 78% of all Southern CSO respondents. Most stories come from Uganda (61), followed by Indonesia (45), DRC (32), India (30), Ethiopia (29), Bangladesh (24), Ghana (17), Liberia (9) and Pakistan (7) .

The figure below shows the mood and main content of the stories by SCSOs.



All countries write the most stories about their relation with their Dutch partner, most countries (except Indonesia, and DRC) mention Capacity Development next, followed by Funding. DRC mentions results as second most and funding as third, whereas Indonesia mentions funding as second and Capacity development as third. Stories about results achieved are especially mentioned by Uganda, Bangladesh and DRC. Indonesia makes most explicit mention of Lobby and Advocacy in their stories.

Positive and negative factors influencing the program with Southern partners.⁹⁴

120 Dutch respondents shared factors that influenced the program with their Southern partner positively between 2011 and 2015. These can be categorized as influencing factors with regard to:

1. Capacity (40): exchange and learning, individual capacity (empowerment and training), organizational capacity (leadership, thematic knowledge, network, visibility) and financial capacity (long term funding, resource mobilization).
2. Relation (40): equal relations, long term collaboration trust, commitment, common understanding, mutual accountability, open communication, face to face meetings, respect and joint planning/design
3. Results (30): (changes in) interventions, flexibility in funding, ownership and relations with other organizations and governments, the extent to which the program is demand driven.
4. Context (9): positive changes in governmental policies, political priorities, enabling factors with regard to civil society (strengthening)

Dutch respondents also shared 92 stories about factors that according to them influenced the program negatively between 2011 and 2015. They can roughly be categorized as follows:

1. Capacity (28): insufficient long term funding due to budget cuts, decreasing funding, dependence on one source (MFSII) and the implications that has had: short term projects, withdrawal after 2015 and staff turnover.
2. Relation (26): cultural and language barriers, the geographical distance, lack of time for face to face meetings and inequality between the Dutch and the Southern organizations.

⁹⁴ What influenced the program with your Southern partner positively and what negatively between 2011 and 2015? Only Dutch CSOs were requested to answer this question. See annex 4, online survey topic 33.

3. Context (21): the (increasingly) restrictive environment for CSOs, natural disasters, inflation, increasing political instability, conflict situations.
4. Accountability (17): monitoring and reporting requirements, program compliance pressure, too heavy reporting requirements, and administrative work with strict deadlines.

Inspirations and frustrations⁹⁵

362 respondents have shared stories about their main inspiration in the relation with a specific partner, and 339 about their main frustration in that relation. Stories about their main inspiration shared by 100 respondents related to Dutch CSOs can be categorized as:

1. Commitment (27): the passion, dedication, energy and drive with which their partners do their work, sometimes under difficult and dangerous circumstances
2. Relation (26): mutual understanding, open communication, shared responsibility and joint learning.
3. Growing capacity of partner (26): understanding the local context, their ability to secure funding from other sources, and increasing networking skills.
4. Effect (16): how the lives of people in different programs are affected positively and what impact their programs have made, new methods and innovations.

97 stories shared by Dutch respondents about their main frustration:

1. Capacity (34): HRM (staff turnover), financial and M&E capacity of partner
2. Relation (33): cultural differences, not the right 'fit', (perceived) donor-recipient relation, lack of pro-active and critical thinking, lack of (financial) openness (including (fear of) fraud).
3. Reporting (23): late, bad quality, reporting formats too complex (some blame MFSII framework)
4. Context (12): unfavorable political changes in the Netherlands or the partner country, poor governance by (local) authorities, corruption and decreasing funding opportunities in the Netherlands

245 stories about the main inspiration of Southern CSOs include:

1. Relation (156): flexibility, openness, trust, understanding, respect, commitment, support, listening, open communication, commitment to a shared vision, flexibility of their partner to adapt to local changes, reciprocity, complementarity
2. Capacity (61): Dutch understanding of the local context, technical support, funding, institutional support, linking and learning activities, joint learning, M&E, technical support, L&A.
3. Results (25): inclusiveness of support, innovative ideas, integrated development, Most Significant Change method, L&A approaches, successful thematic approaches

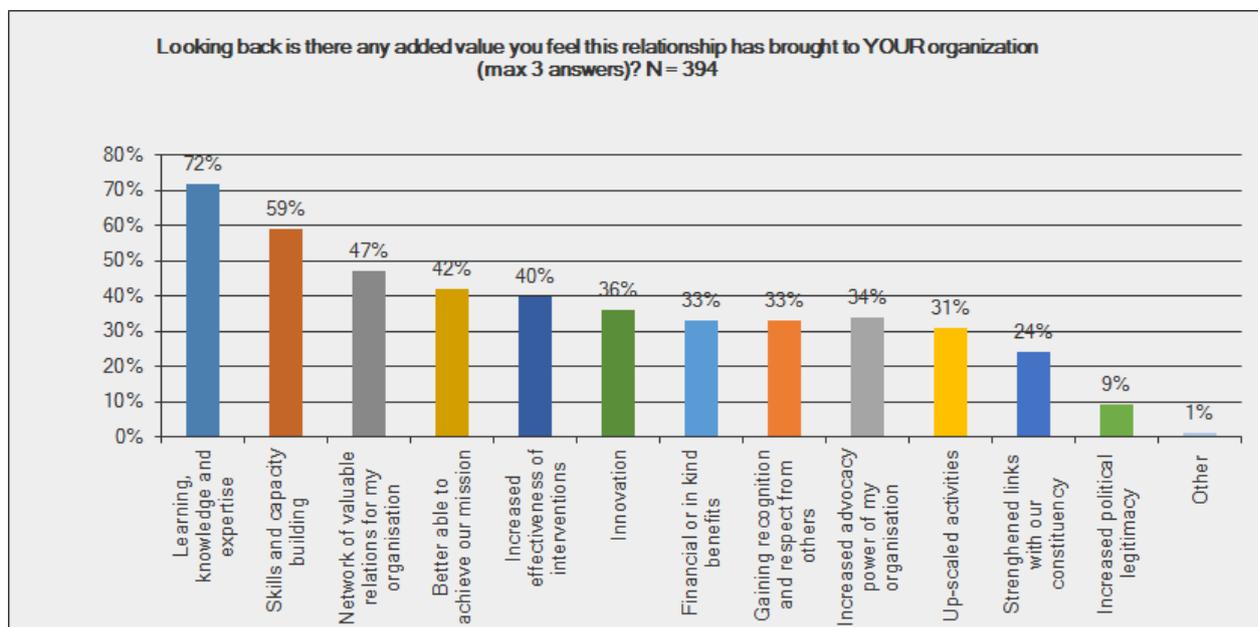
199 stories about the main frustration of Southern CSOs include:

1. Funding (111): Insufficient/decreased funding, (sudden and/or unexpected) budget cuts, delays in disbursements, termination of the project, short term contracts, inflation.
2. Relation (37): decreased trust, unwelcome changes in the relation, lack of understanding, (too high) expectations, communication (vague, strict, late), lack of professionalism, lack of transparency, staff turnover, not keeping promises.
3. Reporting requirements (21): complex and/or heavy reporting requirements, formats and tools, bureaucracy.

⁹⁵ See annex 4, online survey topic 26.

Added value of the relation⁹⁶

On average for all organizations Learning, Knowledge and Expertise is mentioned most as added value for the own organization (72%), followed by Skills and Capacity Development (59%) and Network of Valuable Relations (47%).



Both Dutch and Southern CSOs indicate Learning, Knowledge and Expertise as the main added value for their organization. Main difference between Dutch and Southern CSOs is that for Dutch CSOs the ability to achieve the organizational mission (50%) is in its top 3, while for Southern CSOs the ability to achieve the mission doesn't appear at all in the top 3. They mention Skills and Capacity Development as main added value instead (shared first place with Learning) with 71% (33% for DCSOs).

Top 3 Added value for your own organization: Comparison between Dutch and Southern CSO's.

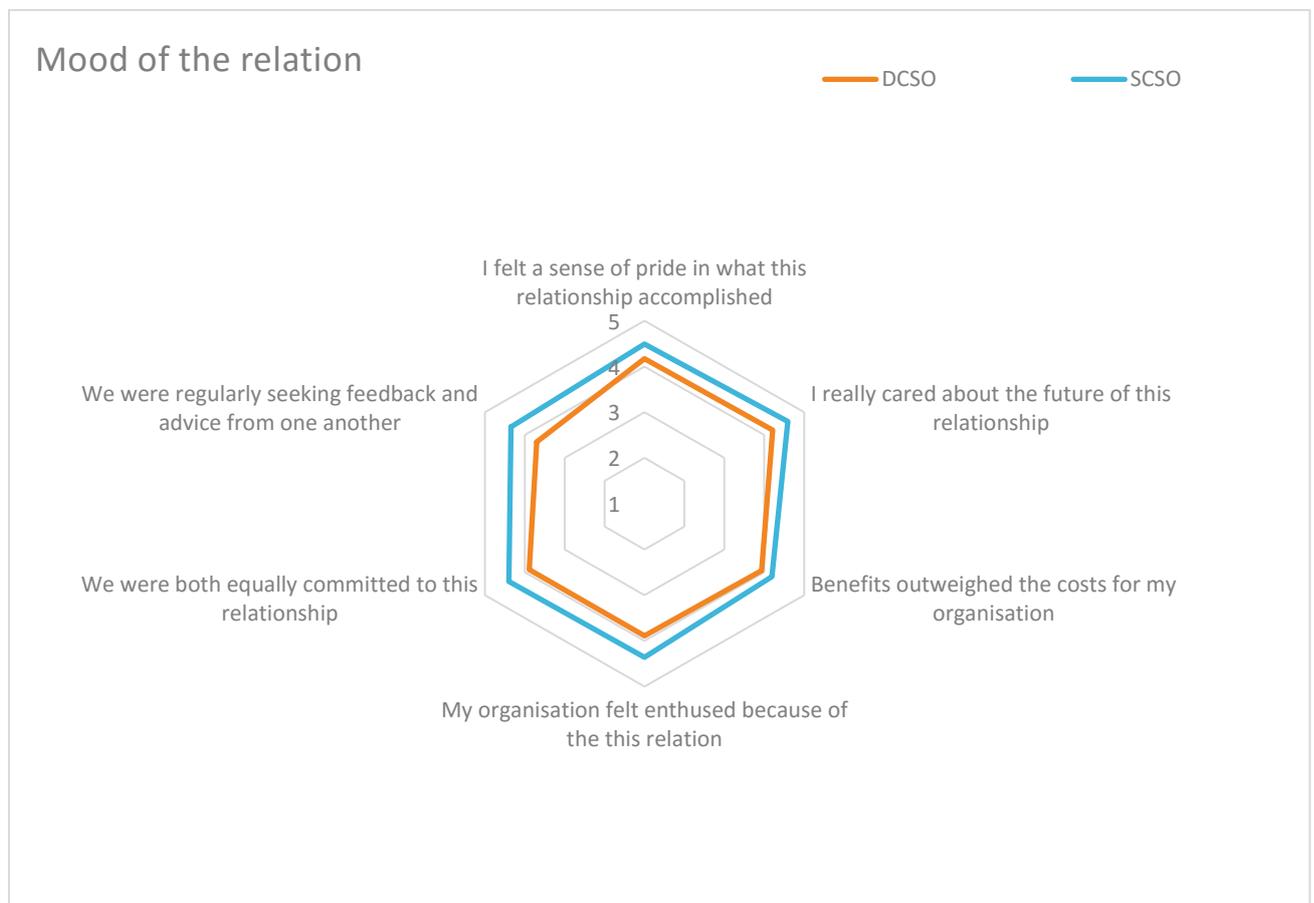
Top 3 Added value for own organization		
Nr.	DCSOs (N= 122)	SCSOs (N = 272)
1	Learning, knowledge and expertise (75%)	Learning, knowledge and expertise (71%)
2	Network of valuable relations for my organization (52%)	Skills and capacity development (71%)
3	Better able to achieve our mission (50%)	Network of valuable relations for my organization (45%)

⁹⁶ See annex 4, online survey topic 31 (all). N = 394.

Differences between countries are generally subtle, except for DRC, which has Skills and Capacity Development by far as the most indicated main added value of all with 86%. Bangladesh mentions Gaining Recognition and Respect from others in its top 3, Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda Financial or Inkind Benefits.

Mood of the relation⁹⁷

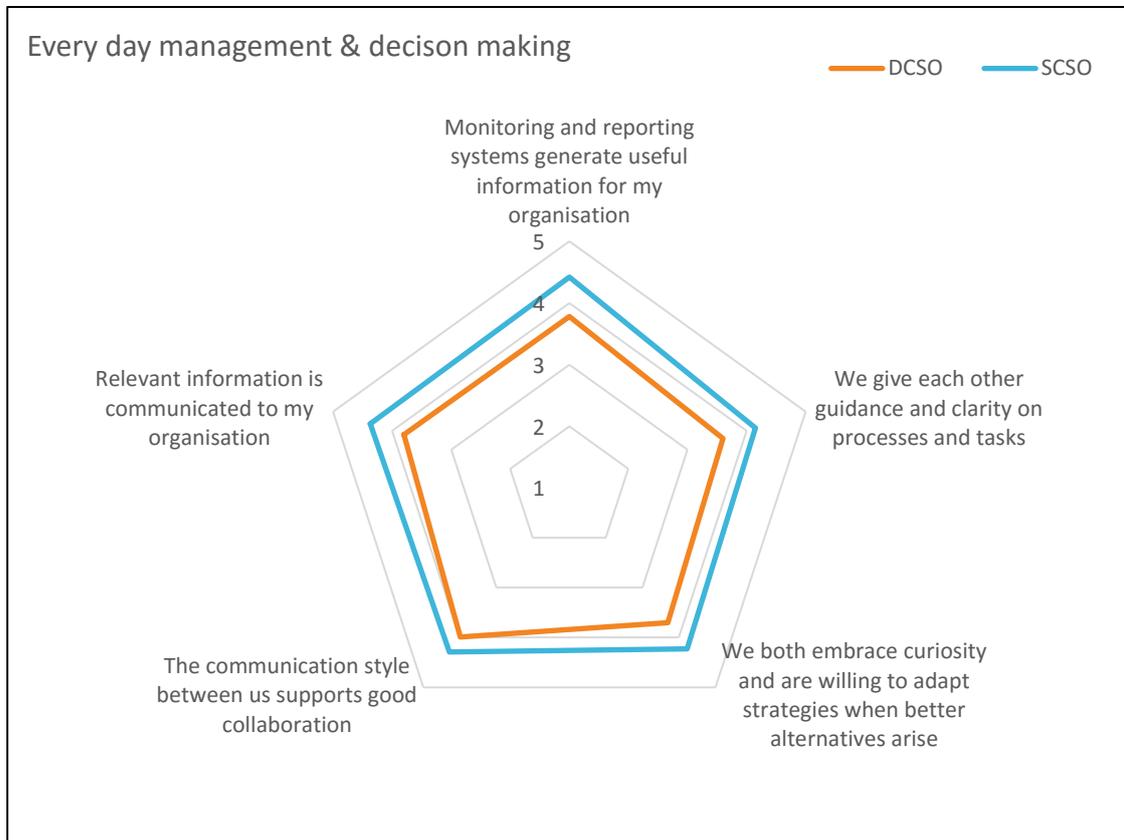
SCSO in all countries are (very) positive about the mood of the relation. All scores are between positive and very positive. Dutch CSOs indicated that they feel a sense of pride on what the relation accomplished and that they cared about the relationship. They are a bit more conservative (between neutral and positive) about their level of enthusiasm their feeling of equal commitment and the extent to which SCSOs and DCSOs seek for regular feedback. The other area that DCSOs score is the extent to which benefits has outweighed costs. This is interesting as this may indicate that benefits most likely are perceived as financial benefits and that other contributions that CSOs may be valued less.



⁹⁷ Online survey topic 28 (all, with adjusted formulation for Dutch and Southern CSOs.) N = 283. Dutch CSOs N= 118, Southern CSOs N = 265 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree.

Daily operations⁹⁸

SCSOs are overall satisfied with daily operations. All countries are (very) positive in the survey about the different elements in daily operations. Dutch CSOs score between neutral and positive on all elements. Hardly any difference between different countries.



⁹⁸ Online survey topic 30 (all, with adjusted formulation for Dutch and Southern CSOs.) N = 318. Dutch CSOs N = 97, SCSOs N = 221. 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree.

Annex 6: Alliances and trade unions active in sampled countries

MFS II Alliance	Alliance member	Alliance lead party	DRC	Ethiopia	India	Indonesia	Liberia	Pakistan	Uganda	Bangladesh	Ghana
Communities of Change (CoC)		Cordaid	y	y	y	y			y	y	y
Communities of Change	Cordaid	Cordaid	y	y	y	y			y	y	y
Communities of Change	Mensen met een missie	Cordaid	y		y	y			y		
Communities of Change	PAX	Cordaid									
Communities of Change	Impunity watch	Cordaid									
Communities of Change	WEMOS	Cordaid									
Communities of Change	Netherlands Red Cross	Cordaid		y					y		
Communities of Change	Both Ends	Cordaid									
Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation		ZOA	y				y		y		
Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation	ZOA	ZOA	y				y		y		
Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation	Care Nederland	ZOA	y								
Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation	Healthnet TPO	ZOA									
Dutch Consortium for Rehabilitation	Save the Children	ZOA	y				y		y		
IMPACT Alliance		Oxfam Novib	y					y	y	y	
IMPACT Alliance	Oxfam Novib	Oxfam Novib	y					y	y	y	
IMPACT Alliance	Fairfood	Oxfam Novib									
IMPACT Alliance	SOMO	Oxfam Novib									
IMPACT Alliance	1%Club	Oxfam Novib									
IMPACT Alliance	Butterfly works	Oxfam Novib									
IMPACT Alliance	HIRDA	Oxfam Novib									
ICCO Alliance		ICCO	y	y	y	y	y		y	y	y
ICCO Alliance	ICCO	ICCO	y	y	y	y	y		y	y	y
ICCO Alliance	Edukans	ICCO		y	y				y		y
ICCO Alliance	Kerk in Actie	ICCO									
ICCO Alliance	Prisma	ICCO	y	y	y	y			y	y	y
ICCO Alliance	Share people	ICCO									
ICCO Alliance	Yente	ICCO									
ICCO Alliance	Zeister Zendingsgenootschap (ZZG)	ICCO									
Freedom from Fear Alliance		PAX	y						y		

MFS II Alliance	Alliance member	Alliance lead party	DRC	Ethiopia	India	Indonesia	Liberia	Pakistan	Uganda	Bangladesh	Ghana
Freedom from Fear Alliance	PAX	PAX	y						y		
Freedom from Fear Alliance	Amnesty International NL	PAX							y		
Freedom from Fear Alliance	GPPAC (formerly: ECCP)	PAX									
Freedom from Fear Alliance	Free Press Unlimited	PAX									
Ecosystem Alliance		IUCN	y			y			y		y
Ecosystem Alliance	IUCN	IUCN	y			y			y		y
Ecosystem Alliance	Wetlands International	IUCN				y					
Ecosystem Alliance	Both Ends	IUCN									
People Unlimited/ HIVOS Alliance		HIVOS	y		y	y			y		
People Unlimited/ HIVOS Alliance	HIVOS	HIVOS			y	y			y		
People Unlimited/ HIVOS Alliance	IUCN	HIVOS									
People Unlimited/ HIVOS Alliance	Mama Cash	HIVOS			y	y			y		
People Unlimited/ HIVOS Alliance	Free Press Unlimited	HIVOS	y						y		
Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance		Plan Nederland		y			y	y		y	y
Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance	Plan Nederland	Plan Nederland		y			y	y		y	y
Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance	Child Helpline International	Plan Nederland		y			y	y		y	y
Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance	Defence for Children International/ ECPAT Nederland	Plan Nederland		y			y				y
Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance	International Child Development Initiatives	Plan Nederland		y				y		y	
Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance	Women Win	Plan Nederland		y			y			y	
Child Rights Alliance/ Girl Power Alliance	Free Press Unlimited	Plan Nederland					y			y	y
SRHR Alliance		Rutgers WPF		y	y	y		y	y	y	
SRHR Alliance	Rutgers WPF	Rutgers WPF				y		y	y	y	
SRHR Alliance	Amref	Rutgers WPF		y							
SRHR Alliance	CHOICE	Rutgers WPF									
SRHR Alliance	Dance4life	Rutgers WPF		y	y				y		
SRHR Alliance	Simavi	Rutgers WPF			y	y				y	

MFS II Alliance	Alliance member	Alliance lead party	DRC	Ethiopia	India	Indonesia	Liberia	Pakistan	Uganda	Bangladesh	Ghana
Connect4Change		IICD		y					y		y
Connect4Change	IICD	IICD		y					y		y
Connect4Change	AKVO	IICD									
Connect4Change	Cordaid	IICD							y		y
Connect4Change	Edukans	IICD		y					y		y
Connect4Change	Text to Change	IICD		y							
Connect4Change	ICCO	IICD		y					?		?
Woord en Daad & Red een Kind		Woord en Daad		y	y					y	
Woord en Daad & Red een Kind	Woord en Daad	Woord en Daad		y	y					y	
Woord en Daad & Red een Kind	Red een Kind	Woord en Daad		y	y						
WASH Alliance		Simavi		y					y	y	y
WASH Alliance	Simavi	Simavi		y					y	y	y
WASH Alliance	AKVO	Simavi									
WASH Alliance	Amref	Simavi		y					y		
WASH Alliance	ICCO	Simavi		y					y	y	y
WASH Alliance	RAIN	Simavi		y					y		
WASH Alliance	WASTE	Simavi							y	y	y
Partners for Resilience		Netherlands Red Cross		y	y	y			y		
Partners for Resilience	Netherlands Red Cross	Netherlands Red Cross		y		y			y		
Partners for Resilience	Care Nederland	Netherlands Red Cross		y		y			y		
Partners for Resilience	Cordaid	Netherlands Red Cross		y	y	y			y		
Partners for Resilience	Red Cross/ Red Crescent Climate Center	Netherlands Red Cross									
Partners for Resilience	Wetlands International	Netherlands Red Cross			y	y					
Together4Change		ICS		y	y						y
Together4Change	International Child Support (ICS)	ICS									
Together4Change	Wilde Ganzen	ICS			y						
Together4Change	Wereldkinderen	ICS		y							
Together4Change	SOS Kinderdorpen	ICS									y

MFS II Alliance	Alliance member	Alliance lead party	DRC	Ethiopia	India	Indonesia	Liberia	Pakistan	Uganda	Bangladesh	Ghana
Kind en Ontwikkeling		Terre des Hommes		y					y		
Kind en Ontwikkeling	Terre des Hommes	Terre des Hommes							y		
Kind en Ontwikkeling	Kinderpostzegels	Terre des Hommes		y							
Kind en Ontwikkeling	Liliane Fonds	Terre des Hommes		y					y		
Press Freedom 2.0		Free Press Unlimited				y				y	
Press Freedom 2.0	Free Press Unlimited	Free Press Unlimited				y					
Press Freedom 2.0	Mensen met een missie	Free Press Unlimited				y					
Press Freedom 2.0	European Partnership for Democracy	Free Press Unlimited									
Press Freedom 2.0	European Journalism Center	Free Press Unlimited									
Press Freedom 2.0	World Press Photo	Free Press Unlimited								y	
United Entrepreneurship Coalition		SPARK					y				
United Entrepreneurship Coalition	SPARK	SPARK					y				
United Entrepreneurship Coalition	BiD network	SPARK					?				
Conn@ct Now		War Child							y		
Conn@ct Now	War Child	War Child							y		
Conn@ct Now	Child Helpline International	War Child									
Conn@ct Now	TNO	War Child									
Conn@ct Now	Free Press Unlimited	War Child							y		
Fair, Green & Global Alliance		Both Ends			y	y			y		
Fair, Green & Global Alliance	Both Ends	Both Ends			y						
Fair, Green & Global Alliance	Transnational Institute (TNI)	Both Ends			y						
Fair, Green & Global Alliance	SOMO	Both Ends			y	y					
Fair, Green & Global Alliance	Milieudefensie/ FoEI	Both Ends				y			y		
Fair, Green & Global Alliance	Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC)	Both Ends									

MFS II Alliance	Alliance member	Alliance lead party	DRC	Ethiopia	India	Indonesia	Liberia	Pakistan	Uganda	Bangladesh	Ghana
Fair, Green & Global Alliance	NiZA-Action Aid	Both Ends									
Trade unions			DRC	Ethiopia	India	Indonesia	Liberia	Pakistan	Uganda	Bangladesh	Ghana
Mondiaal FNV			y		y	y			y	y	y
CNV International						y					y

Annex 7: Organizations consulted

Country	Organization	Type of consultation
All	Online discussion about findings of the perception study with representatives of +/- 80 Dutch and Southern CSOs from all countries.	Webinar 7 June 2016
Ethiopia	16 interviews, of which 1 with the Dutch Embassy, 3 with Country offices (Field office NL Red Cross, CARE and Plan) and 13 with Southern CSOs: FC, OSRA, ECFA, Maedot, SSD, OSSA, Hiwot, FSCE, FAWE-ETH, YNSD, Red Cross Ethiopia and Farm Access.	Field visit interviews 14 - 22 May 2016
India	14 interviews, of which 1 with the Dutch embassy, 1 with Country office (ICCO) and 12 with Southern CSOs: SMILE, Help Age, IDEI, NASVI, Dalit Foundation, FICCI, National Alliance for Social Security (NASS), Building and Wood workers' International (BWI), Focus on the Global South, Madyam, Caritas India and PWESCR.	Field visit interviews 14 - 22 May 2016
Indonesia	18 interviews, of which 1 with the Dutch embassy, 3 with Country offices (Wetlands International, ICCO and Hivos) and 15 with Southern CSOs: Cifor, WALHI/Friends of the Earth Indonesia, Indonesia for Global Justice (IGJ), Kopernik, Penabulu, Yayasan Pelita Ilmu (YPI), CD Bethesda, Ardhany Institute Jakarta, Trade Union Rights Centre (TURC), KSBSI, Ecpat Indonesia and Palang Merah Indonesia.	Skype interviews (5-14 May 2016)
the Netherlands	7 interviews, of which 1 with CNV International, 1 with Mondiaal FNV, 1 with Groningen University, 3 with Wageningen University/CDI and 1 with University of Amsterdam.	In depth interviews March - April 2016
the Netherlands	Joint meeting with IOB and representatives of 15 Dutch CSOs: Both Ends, CNV, Cordaid, ICCO, Free Press Unlimited, Hivos, Mensen met een Missie, PAX, Red een Kind, Rode Kruis, Rutgers, SPARK, SOS Kinderdorpen, Wilde Ganzen, Woord en Daad.	Kick off meeting 31 March 2016
Uganda	17 interviews, of which 1 with the Dutch embassy, 2 with Country offices (Oxfam and War Child Holland), 1 with a company (Mango Tree) and 13 with Southern CSOs: Caritas Gulu, LABE, HEPS, ESAFF, NAPE, Katalemba Chesire Homes, St. Elizabeth Girls Home, Restless Development, Chaford Uganda, Justice and Peace Commission Gulu (JPC), GWED-G, UHISPAWU and NOTU.	Field visit interviews 14 - 22 May 2016

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Annex 9: Findings regarding key assumptions

Findings regarding key assumptions underlying Dutch development policy and intervention strategies:

Both Southern and Dutch CSOs together have the flexibility to respond to difficult situations of poor people and unexpected changes.

- Southern CSOs consider Dutch CSOs to be flexible in implementation of programs in terms of allowing budget changes and changes in program activities. The extent to which Southern CSOs are equipped to respond to changing situations on the ground depends on their embeddedness in the communities.
- On strategic level Dutch CSOs seem to adapt to changing political and economic circumstances. Shifts in strategies can be a result of new approaches to address developmental issues as well as a response to changing (back donor) policies or restrictions for CSOs in the host countries. The effects are yet to be seen but Southern CSOs express concerns about some Dutch CSOs shifting towards a more implementing role for their own field offices because of decreasing budget. Questions may arise about legitimacy and the role of Dutch CSOs on the ground as compared to local CSOs who are more familiar with the context and embedded in the community.

Southern CSOs relate easier to Dutch CSOs (peer to peer) than to governmental donors (embassies).

- Most Southern partners have limited or no contact with embassies, while they communicate regularly with Dutch CSOs. Southern CSOs feel that Dutch CSOs are easier accessible, speak the same language and share the same mission. In addition, Southern CSOs have the feeling that the financial requirements of governmental donors are too heavy for them and rely mainly on CSOs in the Netherlands and other Northern countries for funding. The recent shift in Dutch policy towards the 'Aid, trade and investment' agenda has influence as well, resulting in less attention for development and poverty issues (from the perspective of CSOs and their thinking about international development cooperation, which differs from the priorities and views of the new agenda of trade contributing to development and poverty reduction).

Relations between Southern and Dutch CSOs stimulate ownership and demand oriented support.

- The level of ownership depends on which level is looked at and how the program was developed. Local ownership and demand oriented support on program level is in most cases evident. Most programs have been jointly developed based on local demands and needs as identified by Southern CSOs although within certain frameworks defined by Dutch government and CSOs. With decreasing funding, changing policies and shifting interests, Southern CSOs are more confronted with the boundaries of these frameworks than before. In cases where Dutch CSOs have initiated or developed programs, Southern CSOs consider them less fit for purpose. The thematic focus by Dutch CSOs tends to be driven more by Dutch and global policy than by demands on the ground. Overall there is little ownership over the broader development agenda. Southern CSOs hardly feel ownership or involvement in co-creating this broader agenda. This may be an explaining factor for the disconnect between the global agenda and local needs.
- The current accountability structure between Dutch CSOs and their Southern partner favours accountability from Southern CSOs towards Dutch CSOs. Both Dutch and Southern partners feel hampered by the heavy reporting requirements and struggle with the challenges of a donor-recipient relation, in achieving a mode in which there is true Southern ownership and a demand based approach.

Dutch CSOs have relevant thematic expertise (SRHR, Water and Sanitation, education, gender, human rights).

- This assumption mainly applies to the thematic specialized CSOs;
- Most of the Southern CSOs received some thematic support;
- The approaches vary from Dutch CSOs providing own specialized expertise to Dutch CSOs hiring external experts to provide support on thematic issues.

Dutch CSOs have expertise for supporting the capacity development of Southern CSOs.

- This assumption largely applies to organizational support provided to the Southern partners
- Financial Management and Monitoring & Evaluation were mentioned most;
- The support on themes and Southern CSOs' L&A capacity is less convincing and differs per organization.