

## KEY QUESTION



### Who are the main actors in Dutch development cooperation?

#### **Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation leads; no implementation agency**

Currently, Prime Minister Mark Rutte (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD) leads a coalition government with the Labour Party (PvdA) until the next elections in March 2017. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) defines priorities for Dutch development policy. The MFA is headed by Bert Koenders (PvdA). The Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (MFTDC), Lilianne Ploumen (PvdA), who is part of the MFA, leads the MFA's work on development cooperation. Within the MFA, the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) is responsible for designing and coordinating the implementation of development policy, and is led by Director General Christiaan Rebergen, formerly the Dutch Ambassador for the Millennium Development Goals. The Netherlands does not have an implementing agency; the Dutch embassies are in charge of strategic planning and administration of bilateral programs.

The role of Parliament is to scrutinize development policy and budget allocations. Parliament can annually amend the government's draft budget bill and has the right to initialize a parliamentary debate. Parliamentary debates in November/December can lead to significant changes to the ODA budget.

Dutch civil society organizations (CSO) play an active role in Dutch development cooperation. The development CSO umbrella association is Partos, and represents over 100 such organizations. They lobby the Parliament and the MFA. Many CSOs implement their own in-country programs, and are funded by the Dutch government and through private donations. In 2014, more than a fifth of the country's bilateral ODA was channeled through CSOs. However, since 2015, program funding for CSOs active within sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) has been sharply cut, and a larger focus is placed on strategic partnerships and advocacy (for more details, see question two: "What are the Netherlands' strategic priorities for development?").

### THE NETHERLANDS' DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION SYSTEM

