

KEY QUESTIONS

the big six

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What are the Netherlands' strategic priorities for development?

Focus is on four thematic priorities

The former government laid out the objectives and priorities of Dutch development policy in the strategy paper: 'A World to Gain: A New Agenda for Aid, Trade and Investment' (released in 2013). As of March 2018, a new development strategy is under development in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Traditionally, the Netherlands focuses its development assistance on four thematic priorities: 1) security and the rule of law, 2) water management, 3) food security, and 4) sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR, including HIV/AIDS). Other priorities include climate protection, humanitarian assistance, private-sector development, women's rights, and gender equality. The Netherlands puts a strong emphasis on the interlinkages between these priority themes in its policies and programs. These priorities are based on the 'added value' and expertise of the Netherlands, and are likely to remain unchanged under the new strategy.

According to the coalition agreement of the new government, the overall aim of Dutch development cooperation for this legislative period is combatting the root causes of poverty, migration, terrorism, and climate change within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the traditional Dutch development priorities will continue to remain in place. Additionally, the new government plans to increase its focus on the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children.

Increased funding for humanitarian assistance and refugees; decreased funding for CSOs

According to OECD data, the Netherlands channeled almost two thirds (65%, or US\$3.3 billion) of its total ODA bilaterally in 2016. However, 16% (US\$538 million) of this was used to cover the costs of hosting refugees within the Netherlands, making it the largest expenditure area of bilateral ODA.

Despite decreases since 2012, the second-largest share of bilateral ODA was allocated through 'government and civil society' (15%). Since the end of 2015, funding for CSOs has been further cut and was increasingly channeled through the funding scheme 'Dialogue and Dissent'. Strategic partnerships for lobby and advocacy'

The Netherlands' key development priorities:

- Sexual and reproductive health and rights (including HIV/AIDS)
- Security and the rule of law
- Water management
- Food security

(2016-2020). This scheme puts an emphasis on advocacy work (as opposed to provision of services and goods) and strategic partnerships.

The Netherlands has stepped up its support for humanitarian assistance and is a strong advocate for this both at the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) level. The country allocated 10% of bilateral ODA to humanitarian assistance in 2016. Humanitarian assistance peaked in 2015, increasing by 88% compared to 2014. This peak was driven by the creation of the Emergency Aid Fund (€570 million or US\$630 million for 2014 to 2017) to support victims of conflict and natural disasters. In 2016, funding for humanitarian assistance decreased again (by 31%), going from US\$475 million to US\$326 million.

According to its own reporting, the Netherlands spent €400 (US\$442 million) on emergency assistance in 2017. As part of this funding came from the Emergency Aid Fund (which ended in 2017), Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Minister Sigrid Kaag has committed to compensate for this loss, by allocating an additional €140 million (US\$155 million) for emergency funding in regions affected by conflict in 2018. This funding comes on top of the €204 million originally budgeted for humanitarian assistance in 2018 (see question four: 'How is the Dutch ODA budget structured?' for more details). The funding will be used to support shelter for refugees and vulnerable populations, as well as educational programs in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa.

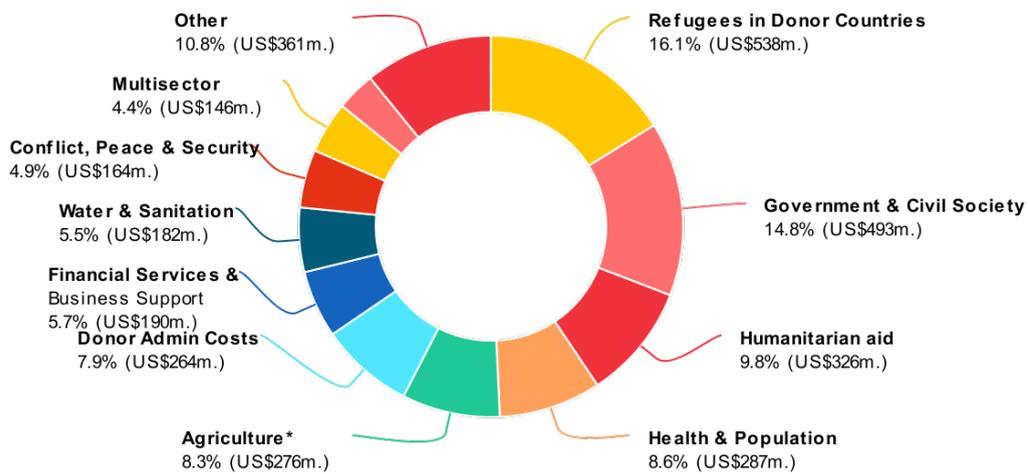
Global health, and particularly SRHR, is another major priority area of Dutch development cooperation. Health accounted for 9% of Dutch bilateral ODA in 2016. However, total ODA to health is much higher, as the Netherlands

channels more than half (52% in 2015, the latest year for which complete data is available) of health ODA multilaterally. Total health ODA stood at US\$497 million in 2015, or 9% of Dutch ODA, which is on par with the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) average. The Dutch government continues to be a global leader on SRHR: in 2017, it launched the global initiative 'She Decides' in 2017 to support organizations that focus on

SRHR and family planning. (See question six: 'How is Dutch ODA spent?' for more details.) For further information on global health, see 'Deep Dive: Global Health'. The new United States (US) administration to cut funding to organizations that support access to or provide information about safe abortion. (See question six: 'How is Dutch ODA spent?' for more details.) For further information on global health, see "Deep Dive: Global Health".

THE NETHERLANDS' BILATERAL ODA BY SECTOR, 2016

Total: US\$3337 million



OECD CRS. Gross disbursements. *Includes agriculture, forestry, fishing, and rural development. In 2016 prices.