

KEY QUESTIONS

the big six



What are the Netherlands' strategic priorities for development?

Focus is on four thematic priorities

The objectives and priorities of Dutch development policy are laid out in the policy document of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Minister Sigrid Kaag: 'Investing in Global Prospects: For the World, For the Netherlands' (also referred to as the 'BHOS policy'). The policy document, released in May 2018, substantiates the Coalition Agreement released in November 2017. It stresses that development cooperation, as an integral part of foreign policy, aims to combat the root causes of poverty, migration, terrorism and climate change within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With this new policy, the government is working on four overarching, closely linked main objectives: preventing conflict and instability; reducing poverty and social inequality; promoting sustainable inclusive growth and climate action worldwide; and strengthening the international earning capacity of the Netherlands. Gender equality, and strengthening the position of women and girls, is a cross-cutting objective of the policy.

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 remain unchanged under the new policy.

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

The Netherlands' key development priorities:

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

CSOs has been further cut and was increasingly channeled through the funding scheme 'Dialogue and Dissent. Strategic partnerships for lobby and advocacy' (2016-2020). This scheme puts an emphasis on advocacy work (as opposed to provision of services and goods) and strategic partnerships.

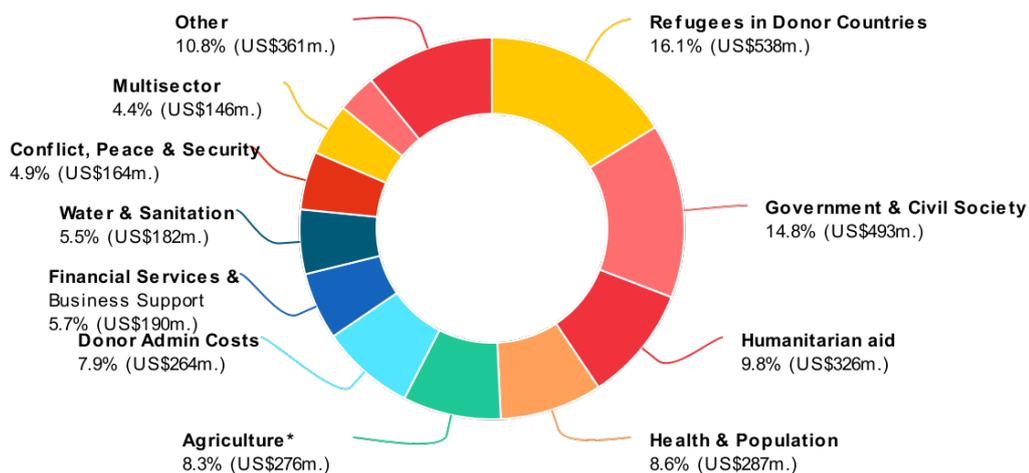
The Netherlands has stepped up its support for humanitarian assistance and is a strong advocate for this both at the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) level. The country allocated 10% of bilateral ODA to humanitarian assistance in 2016. Humanitarian assistance peaked in 2015, increasing by 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 million (US\$442 million) on emergency assistance in 2017. The Emergency Aid Fund, which ended in 2017, was part of this funding. Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Minister Sigrid Kaag has compensated for this loss by allocating an additional €140 million (US\$155 million) for emergency funding in regions affected by conflict in 2018. This comes on top of the €226 million originally budgeted for humanitarian assistance in 2018. The government plans to raise its 2019 budget for humanitarian assistance by more than €160 million (US\$177 million).

Global health, and particularly SRHR, is 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 half (50% in 2016) of health ODA multilaterally. Total health ODA stood at US\$573 million in 2016, or 11% of Dutch ODA, which is above the OECD's Development As-

sistance 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 NETHERLANDS' BILATERAL ODA BY SECTOR, 2016

Total: US\$3337 million



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