4.6. Netherlands

The Netherlands has an M&D policy framework in place since 2004. The current Dutch approach to M&D focused on six priorities: circular migration, involvement of migrant organisations, institutional development in migration management, interlinks between migration and development policy areas, remittances, and sustainable return and reintegration. Furthermore, one can notice a vibrant debate on migration and PCD in Dutch politics and society. Cooperation between ministries on specific M&D issues exists, although development concerns have not always been prioritised. The Netherlands have gathered considerable experience in implementing M&D projects having a strong interest in innovation and pilot projects. At the time of writing, emphasis was placed on sustainable reintegration and return as well as on providing support to partner countries for the reception of refugees. M&D projects are primarily funded in countries which are important for the Netherlands in terms of migration. In line with this approach, the Netherlands have increased the use of migration-related conditionality, which links development cooperation with partner countries to cooperation on return. The Netherlands follows various dialogues and regional processes on migration and participates actively in the GFMD.

4.6.1. The Migration and Development concept

The Dutch government issued a note on the link between development and migration in 2004. It was among the first countries that intended to understand and react to the M&D phenomenon at this stage. The aim was to develop an integrated foreign policy which takes both migration and development policy into account. The note was framed by the objectives of the development and migration policy: On the one hand, poverty reduction, reducing wealth disparities, conflict management and protecting human rights, the interests and priorities of developing countries as points of reference for development cooperation, and on the other migration management, the prevention of irregular migration, and the Dutch and European absorption capacities as points of reference for migration policy. This integrated policy was intended to promote a balance between developing countries’ and Dutch interests and to address the lack of coherence between these two policy fields. The note declared that migration should play a bigger role in the relations between the Netherlands and those countries which received Dutch ODA as well as other countries of origin of migrants residing in the Netherlands.

In 2008, a second policy memorandum on M&D was published, noting the importance of stepping up Dutch efforts as “we are convinced that there is more to be gained by stimulating mutually positive policy outcomes where migration meets development”. The memorandum, being more concrete than the one of 2004, set

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188 Ibid

out six key priorities, underpinned by a scientific analysis of migration and development trends and the links between them. The key priorities targeted areas in which the Netherlands could make a difference and promote innovation. The six key priorities were:

1. Focusing more on migration in the development dialogue and on development in the migration dialogue;
2. Fostering institutional development in migration management;
3. Promoting circular migration/brain gain;
4. Strengthening the involvement of migrant organisations;
5. Strengthening the link between remittances and development;
6. Encouraging sustainable return and reintegration.

The memorandum sought only to address overlaps between migration and development where mutually positive policy outcomes could be achieved. An external evaluation of activities implemented under the six policy priorities was sent to the Dutch Parliament in July 2012, as alluded to below.¹⁹⁰

Both policy notes state that while the causal relationship between development and migration is not clear-cut, migration can, under certain conditions, contribute to the development of the country of origin as well as to the human development of the migrant. Whether the potential migration contains can be unlocked, partly depends on the political and economic conditions in the developing countries.¹⁹¹

The 2004 note differentiates between forced (fleeing from war, natural disasters or fear of persecution) and voluntary (emigration due to a lack of economic and social perspective) migration. The note further distinguishes between labour migration and skilled migration frequently followed by family reunification. It points out that the reason for migratory can change over time; i.e. a refugee can become a labour migrant, which is why the differentiation between forced and voluntary migration is perceived as blurry. The 2008 memorandum distinguishes between refugees (fearing persecution and entitled to international protection) and other categories of migrants. The note argues that it is important to keep the distinction between refugees and other migrants in mind, given the special status of refugees under international law.

In a presentation to the Global Migration Group in 2010, a representative of the Dutch government described key premises of the Dutch M&D policy as:¹⁹²

1. Circular migration as a new approach to development cooperation that will bring added value to the home countries;
2. Failed asylum seekers returning to their country of origin supported by a in-kind reintegration package will have a meaningful impact on their communities;
3. Temporarily assigning migrants living in the Netherlands to the developing countries brings the appropriate expertise to these countries;
4. Migrant organisations mainstreamed into development cooperation generate additional thematic and country-specific knowledge.


¹⁹¹ Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice, 2004; 2008, op. cit.

In the presentation the representative argues that M&D can be seen as partly donor-driven as developing countries have tended not to include the positive impact of migration into national development planning and a “commitment from their side is thus required to achieve a more evenly matched agenda-setting in M&D programming”.

In 2011, the government informed parliament that it intended to further develop further the M&D policy on the basis of the coalition agreement. It stated that while the 2008 memorandum remains the guideline for policy, future emphasis would be, in line with the coalition agreement, on return. This also includes the return and reintegration of unaccompanied minors under the condition that local reception is available for them as well as supporting efforts to strengthen the capacities for protection and reception of refugees in their region of origin.

In a policy note in 2011 on the development dimension of global public goods (GPG), migration was included as a theme having GPG characteristics on the reason that migration calls for a joint approach and can benefit all parties involved, provided it is well regulated and takes account of the interests of all the countries involved and the rights of migrants themselves. The note confirms the priorities set out in the second policy memorandum on M&D and the letter to parliament from 2011. For migration it sets out the following goals and actions:

At the time of writing, it was planned to send a first report on the implementation of this policy note to parliament in early 2013, together with the new government’s plans to further implement its GPG agenda.

Like other EU Member States, the Dutch government has also made political and legal commitments to enhance Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) at EU level in respectively the EU Treaties and in EU policy documents, most notably in the context of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM). The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in December 2009, states that the Union “shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries (Art. 208)”. More information on these EU policies can be found in the separate profile on the European Union.

4.6.2. Institutional framework and policy coherence for Migration and Development

Roles and titles of ministers and ministries dealing with migration and development have changed over the years. At the time of writing, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
the State Secretary for European Affairs and International Cooperation was responsible for Dutch development cooperation. Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Department on Consular Affairs and Migration Policy under the Directorate General for International Affairs had a Division on International Migration and Development. This division was responsible for the development dimension of migration and the migration dimension of development. Within the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, the Minister for Immigration, Integration and Asylum was responsible for migration policy. The Migration Policy Department under the Directorate General Immigration’s was responsible for the Dutch immigration and return policy. On cross-cutting migration related issues, e.g. circular migration, additional ministries might have a say, as in this case the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment is involved.

Funding for M&D programmes originates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ ODA budget. The Ministry is also solely responsible for monitoring these funds. The implementation of these programmes is ‘outsourced’ to international organisations, NGOs and universities.

Table 3: Migration and development priorities, the Netherlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal (general)</th>
<th>Indicator (general)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen the positive impact of migration on development.</td>
<td>Further reduction in the costs of transferring remittances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved cooperation with important countries of origin to combat irregular migration and facilitate return, legal migration and movement of persons.</td>
<td>Agreements with countries of origin on broad cooperation on migration, including return Projects in important countries of first asylum to boost protection and self-reliance of refugees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated approach in which migration is embedded in the broader foreign policy of the Netherlands, countries of origin and other relevant countries.</td>
<td>More support in EU and international forums (GFMD, IOM, UN) for a link between migration and development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action by the Netherlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreements on migration with major return countries, including development component</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Migration addressed in multi-annual plans on countries of origin and poverty reduction. | MASPs

Strengthen asylum systems and self-reliance of refugees in the regions of origin | Support for migration management in developing countries, including protection of refugees.

Support migrants involved in development activities in countries of origin | Developing countries supported in their policies to involve the diaspora in development aid projects Further reduction in the costs of transferring remittances from the Netherlands.
Inter-ministerial meetings take place in the context of specific projects which are implemented in cooperation with other ministries and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, e.g. projects on return and reintegration (in cooperation with Ministry of Interior); the pilot project blue birds on circular migration (in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior as well as the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour – see section 4 of this chapter).

Return has been identified as a crucial element for the Dutch government at the time of writing and the strong influence of the Ministry of Interior can be noticed on the policy agenda of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, although the MFA agenda is much broader than return as it derives from the agendas of the respective country of origin.

In September 2011, the government held a debate on the position on M&D based on a letter sent to Parliament in June 2011 and was criticised for a number of PCD-related issues. Both the State Secretary for Development and the Minister for Immigration were present at the debate. During her opening of the debate, MP Kathleen Ferrier criticised the government’s policy, because it was called an integrated approach but was actually focused on asylum and return and not development, missing the balance and coherence and the acknowledgement of the triple win. Key PCD issues emerged from the debate:

- The ‘strategic country approach’: The Netherlands have made a choice to reduce development partner countries to 15 to make development cooperation more professional, effective and concentrated. The government has decided that when it comes to M&D, this country selection (primarily based on countries’ needs and the Dutch added value) does not apply. Regarding M&D funding, priority is given to countries important for the Netherlands in terms of migration: this is not a needs-based approach.

- **Conditionality**: The government is aiming to build wider cooperative relationships with countries where it is hoping for better cooperation on return. Countries that cooperate can expect support in wider migration issues, but if they do not, or insufficiently, this may have consequences for bilateral cooperation. The government is embracing the concept of conditionality. Reducing development cooperation on the basis of a lack of cooperation on return is likely to harm the population more than the recipient government and could lead to an increase in emigration. The concept was first applied in September 2012 when the Netherlands’ government decided to cut EUR 10 million of ODA to Ghana for lack of cooperation in the field of migration.

- **OECD ODA criteria**: a few Members of Parliament questioned the use of ODA for the return of migrants who are not refugees and asylum-seekers and the use of ODA to support migration management within the country (e.g. in Ghana). They argued that the government was stretching the ODA criteria and was using ODA to prevent migration which did not fall under development cooperation.

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200 Ibid.

201 Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior 2011, op. cit.

In 2008, IOM published an evaluation on policy coherence which also covered the Netherlands. It found that the Netherlands’ efforts to foster greater institutional coherence (e.g. by adopting the 2004 policy statement and increasing analytical capacity) led to greater policy coherence than in countries that had not made such efforts, and it had been successful in bringing migration and development issues onto the wider government agenda. At the same time, the evaluation found that progress remained limited due to contrasting objectives of departments dealing with migration and development. The evaluation generally found that since migration policy is high on the domestic agenda development tends to be a secondary priority.\footnote{IOM, 2008, op. cit.}

Specifically assessing the effects of the 2004 note the evaluation found that it:

1. Played an important role in stimulating debate on migration and development at the European level;
2. Provided the basis for action by different parts of government by helping to identify areas of coherence/incoherence and raising awareness of the issue;
3. Led to the establishment of cross-departmental groups, e.g. national consultative mechanism involving development and migration ministries as well as migrant/diaspora representatives; policy coherence unit between the ministries of development cooperation and justice;
4. Provided the basis for advocacy and dialogue between government and civil society.

The failed ‘Blue Birds’ pilot (see section 4 of this chapter) may provide an interesting case to analyse governmental institutional organisation and PCD. Reporting on the cooperation between various ministries, the HIT foundation found that only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took an actual interest in the pilot project, whereas the Ministry of Social Affairs took the position that it was not necessary to experiment with labour migration from outside the EU. The Ministry of the Interior’s main interest was that migrants would not overstay the time of residence as stated in their visa, and the Ministry of Economic Affairs did not see a role for itself in actively promoting the pilot.\footnote{HIT foundation, Blue birds pilot circular migration: Towards sensible labour migration policies – lessons learnt and recommendations, 2011, viewed on 5 August 2012, http://hitfoundation.eu/docs/111110_Pilot%20Circular%20Migration_Lessons_and_recommendations.pdf.}

According to interviews, the political agenda on labour migration to the Netherlands is dominated by the perspective of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, which has the position that priority should be given to EU labour migrants, and if there are none available, that only highly skilled migrants should be recruited from countries outside the EU. However, the discussion between ministries and in Parliament on these issues was ongoing at the time of writing.

In view of EU approach on migration and development, the Netherlands has the opinion that the EU should seek cooperation with main countries of origin. Hence the Netherlands is positive about the model of ‘mobility partnerships’; promoting inclusion of migration in cooperation and poverty alleviation plans of countries of origin; strengthening of asylum systems and self-reliance of refugees in the region of origin and support to migrants for development initiatives in countries of origin. The Netherlands takes part in three EU mobility partnerships and is positive about these tools, but of the opinion that they should be evaluated. The Netherlands also supports linking
migration policy where possible closer to other areas, such as foreign affairs and development policy.205

4.6.3. Operationalising the Migration and Development policy

In 2008 and 2009, the migration and development programme had a budget of 9 million Euro per year from the Ministry of Foreign Affair’s ODA budget. In 2009, migration and development thus made up 0.1% of overall Dutch ODA (4.6 billion Euro according to the OECD).

In 2010, 9 million Euro were made available for M&D activities and an additional 4 million Euro earmarked for the return and sustainable reintegration of former asylum seekers. Overall, Dutch ODA in 2010 added up to 4.8 billion Euro, of which funding for M&D was 0.2%. In 2011, another 9 million Euro were earmarked for migration and development. The budget in 2012 accounted again for 9 million with 4 million earmarked; a figure that is also projected for 2013. The table below shows the distribution of funding according to the six policy priorities set out in the 2008 memorandum for the period 2009-2011.

At the time of writing, the countries eligible for M&D project funding were the 40 development cooperation partner countries. In 2008, three additional countries (Morocco, Iraq and Angola) were added as they were considered to be significant from a Dutch migration perspective.

The government decided to reduce the list of partner countries to 15, but an exception was made for the development budget for international M&D projects. The budget designated to M&D projects was opened up to all countries that are eligible for development aid according to the OECD. Priority is given to activities related

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures (EUR million) per policy priority</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Total 2009-2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focusing more on migration in the development dialogue and on development in the migration dialogue</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering institutional development in migration management</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting circular migration/brain gain</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the involvement of migrant organisations</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening the link between remittances and development</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging sustainable return and reintegration</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research voor Beleid (2012)


Table 5: Dutch partner countries on M&D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Return</th>
<th>Care and reintegration of returning unaccompanied aliens under 18 (AMVs)(^{208})</th>
<th>Reception and protection in the region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Djibouti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Guinea Conakry</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea Conakry</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Somalia (Somaliland/Puntland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior, April 2011

...to countries which are important for the Netherlands in terms of migration, and with which the Netherlands wishes to build up a broader, more sustainable relationship on M&D.\(^{207}\) The ministries have categorised countries according to the Dutch priorities of return.

Since 2004, and sporadically also before, the Netherlands have funded a large range of M&D projects in its M&D policy priority areas (see Annex III.v.).\(^{209}\) Between 2008 and 2012, the Netherlands funded approximately 40 different activities. A selection of projects presented in this section is primarily based on the government’s own presentation of M&D programmes to Parliament in 2011.\(^{210}\) The first M&D policy priority area is not addressed in this overview as it largely covers the Dutch contribution to the

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\(^{207}\) Ministries of Foreign Affairs the Interior, 2011, op. cit.

\(^{208}\) Applies to failed asylum seekers and illegal aliens. Under OECD criteria, only asylum seekers and refugees qualify for ODA-funded assistance with voluntary return. In italics = Country included on the new list of partner countries proposed in the policy letter to parliament of March 2011. The Netherlands’ current aid relationship with Egypt, Suriname, Pakistan and the DRC is being phased out.

\(^{209}\) Some programme descriptions in this section are adapted from Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior (2011).

\(^{210}\) Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior, 2011, op. cit.; Due to space constraints, in-depth information on EU programmes co-funded by the Netherlands cannot be included here. Key programmes at EU level can be found in the EU mapping. The Dutch government has also funded a number of Dutch NGOs who have implemented projects related to migration and development (e.g. Oxfam Novib) which could also not be mentioned here.
debate at the international level (addressed in the fourth section of this chapter).

In 2012, an external evaluation of the programmes conducted since 2008 was carried out.211 The evaluators deemed it impossible to identify the impacts of implemented activities and focused on concrete results instead. It was argued that impacts can only be measured in the longer term and that there was a lack of concrete operationalised impact-indicators defined at the beginning of activities. Objectives were also found to be formulated too broadly to provide a solid basis for an assessment. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation have informed decisions made by the Ministry on its future migration and development interventions. 212

The Netherlands has co-financed a number of projects to assist developing countries in developing and implementing their own migration policy. Most were multi-annual projects geared to data collection and strengthening policy and regulations (migration management in Cape Verde, return to and reintegration in Georgia, and an interactive map on migration (i-Map) to support the Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue), border management (combating document fraud in Ghana and a regional training institute for the border police in Tanzania) and strengthening reception and protection of refugees (local integration in Tanzania and Yemen and setting up an asylum system in Mauretania).213 The evaluation, led by Research voor Beleid214, found that, in general, the activities implemented under this priority largely achieved their intended results.

In early 2010, the HIT foundation started with the implementation of a circular migration215 pilot project called ‘Blue Birds’ to assess whether circular migration can achieve the ‘triple win’ of a) development of the migrants involved, b) development of the country of origin and c) positive effects for the Netherlands, particularly for the employer. Dutch businesses could employ up to 80 Indonesians and South Africans for up to two years in professions where labour shortages exist, excluding the health sector who completed their vocational training at secondary school level. After this period, migrants may use the knowledge gained in the Netherlands in their countries of origin. The official steering committee of the pilot consisted of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Social Affairs & Employment and Interior & Kingdom Relations. The project was terminated in June 2011.216

An independent evaluation carried out by the Maastricht School of Governance217 found ten main issues that led to the failure of the project:

211 Research and Beleid, 2012, op. cit.
212 Besluit van de Minister voor Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking van 9 november 2012, nr. DCM/MAA-154/2012, tot vaststelling van beleidsregels alsmede een subsidieplafond voor subsidiering op grond van de Subsidieregeling Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 2006 (beleidsregels en subsidieplafond Migratie en Ontwikkelingsprogramma 2013)
214 Research and Beleid, 2012, op. cit.
215 Academics have argued that this is a temporary rather than a circular migration project but the official Dutch definition of circular migration is ‘migration in which the migrant successively spends a relatively long time in various countries, including his or her country of origin’, see Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Interior (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken), Beleidsnotitie Internationale Migratie en Ontwikkeling 2008. Den Haag: Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 2008.
1. The lack of flexibility in the project at several different levels made it difficult for the pilot project to adapt to the actual situation;

2. Lacking flexibility in the time frame, skill level and type of jobs was a main concern for employers;

3. A key difficulty was the ambiguity in framework rules leading to different interpretations;

4. The financial crisis made acquisitions, matching and the political environment more difficult;

5. The political climate played an important role with regard to the acceptance and political support for the project, which decreased over the duration of the pilot project;

6. There was a need to have access to employers at the right level and the right contacts with industry as well as with a larger network;

7. Multiple steering groups/advisory boards made communication about different aspects of the project more difficult, particularly concerning the resolution of problems;

8. Communication was perceived to be an obstacle to efficiency;

9. The approach to acquisition seemed to be neither effective nor efficient. It was perceived that more focus and a clearer planned strategy would have been helpful;

10. The choice of countries made the project less flexible and prejudices emerged from employers for people from Indonesia.

To promote circular migration, IOM implemented a project on the temporary return of qualified nationals (TRQN), finalized in 2011. For each participating country (Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ethiopia, Georgia, Sierra Leone and Sudan) a limited number of priority sectors was identified, in consultation with various government parties. Some ‘virtual postings’ to Afghanistan and Sudan also took place that migrants can share their knowledge via the Internet. Research voor Beleid found that TRQN was highly successful and achieved its results. More specifically, the evaluation found that countries of origin benefitted as migrants returned to work and thus making positive contributions in terms of brain gain. The government prematurely terminated the Sustainable Return Foundation (Stichting Duurzame Terugkeer) pilot project in 2011 (launched in March 2010) after an interim evaluation concluded that the initiative had not resulted in extra return, and thus failed to meet expectations. The Sustainable Return Foundation consisted of ten organisations providing in-kind support for returnees, such as help in setting up a business, training and courses, and assistance in finding housing. The interim evaluation emphasised that returnees considered the in-kind support to be less attractive than the financial support offered by the Return and Reintegration Scheme. A combination of in-kind and financial of support was recommended. This recommendation was taken up.

Under the theme sustainable return and reintegration, the government at the time of writing also included projects (like the UNHCR/UNDP transitional solutions initiative) in regions of origin which strengthen the protection for refugees who never reached the Netherlands. These projects are implemented in countries and regions with a substantial flow of migrants to the Netherlands. These projects aim to

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218 Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Interior, 2011, op. cit.
make refugees economically independent and strengthen the local infrastructure and assisting the local government and NGOs, who in turn increase the protection of refugees and/or contribute to their self-sufficiency, and emergency aid. The Netherlands has also financed two reception facilities for unaccompanied minors in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, offering shelter, training and mediation in finding suitable work, and is aiming to fund more of these facilities.

A study carried out by the European Migration Network on assisted return and reintegration found that foreign nationals who have lived an active life in the host country, e.g. who have been employed, had their own accommodation and social networks, are better able to build up a new life than persons who, at the time of their residence abroad, were rather dependent.221 In addition, persons who are aware that their residence in the host country is temporary are more effective in maintaining their social network in the country of origin, which allows for an easier reintegration upon return.

Two research projects on migration and development received M&D funding at the time of writing: the IS Academy’s programme ‘Migration and Development: A World in Motion’ (2009 to 2014) which aims to strengthen the relationship between research and policy implemented by Maastricht University, and the ‘The Hague Process on Refugees and Migration’ (THP) which is conducting a study on the direction and nature of future global and regional migratory flows and their effect on countries of destination in Europe and countries of origin in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. With support from the government, the Maastricht University will offer a Migration Management Degree Programme as of April 2013. 10 scholarships are offered for developing country nationals working in migration and asylum.

On the basis of their findings, the 2012 evaluation of the programmes conducted since 2008 made the following recommendations for future policy:222

1. **Subsidy criteria and process:** Criteria, as stipulated in the Dutch grant (subsidy) decision and the subsidy framework for migration and development, are relatively broad. It could be considered to define these criteria more explicitly, as is currently done with regard to sustainable return. This offers more concrete tools for an in-depth policy assessment of project proposals, which makes a more critical appraisal possible.

2. **Establishing an evidence base on the contribution of migration and development policy to development:** It is recommended to establish more solid evidence base on the contribution of migration and development policy to development, and to explicitly incorporate this into policymaking. Furthermore, evaluations should be a standard practice included in all projects.

3. **Integration of policy priorities:** Several activities, especially those involving migrant organisations, show strong overlaps with other policy priorities. It would be beneficial to strive for further integration of different policy priorities in the future.

4. **Circular migration:** It would be beneficial to focus more on circular migration in the

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222 Ibid.
future, especially given the international consensus with regard to the potentially beneficial effects of circular migration, both for sending and receiving countries. Based upon academic literature, several concrete suggestions for future circular migration projects could be formulated. These include aspects such as: Length of stay: creating possibilities for longer periods of stay; flexibility in the migration process: more legal possibilities for repeated migration between sending and receiving countries; maximising learning opportunities: for example, by offering education, so that circular migrants can obtain not only work experience but also knowledge and formal education; active involvement of all stakeholders: both government bodies in receiving countries (responsible for the national labour market, development cooperation and migration), and in sending countries, as well as private stakeholders (enterprises).

5. **Involvement of migrant organisations:** Overall, it does not seem that migrant organisations have become more professional over the past years. Generally, the Foreign Affairs Department is still cooperating with the same organisations that were at a certain level of professionalism before. Hence, it is important to consider whether it is necessary for more migrant organisations to professionalise, and to what extent this should be actively stimulated. Alternatively, a decision could be made to work with a selected number of organisations, encompassing greater potential, and with whom good cooperation is already in place.

6. **The relation between remittances and development:** There are several possibilities to further strengthen the relationship between remittances and development. These include: investment funds in which migrants deposit money, collective remittances, building on the relationship between remittances and entrepreneurship of migrants, and mobile remittances (transferring remittances by mobile phone). This also provides possibilities to involve the diaspora, enabling integration with the fourth policy priority. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently exploring several of the above mentioned possibilities. From a perspective of striving for a coherent migration and development programme, consisting of coherence between different policy priorities, it is recommended to continue such developments.

7. **Sustainable return and reintegration:** It is important to monitor the effects of reintegration support on the return decision and the sustainability of return, more explicitly and intensively than before. Within the new policy framework on voluntary return, monitoring became a more important aspect of the assessment criteria of project proposals. It may be questioned however, whether the current design of monitoring is sufficient. The development dimension of sustainable reintegration support should be defined more explicitly, to clarify what is intended by return support (macro or micro development). From a development perspective, it is recommended to strive for more coherence between return policy and, for example, labour market policy in the Netherlands, so that former asylum seekers are able to maximize their contribution to development upon return, through the experiences and competences obtained in the Netherlands.

Key partners of Dutch programmes in the country are national authorities and international organisations (IOM, UNHCR etc.). The Dutch government holds dialogues with diaspora organisations twice a year to discuss policy-related issues, e.g. on issues discussed at the GFMD. The government faces some
challenges in working with diaspora organisations in that many are run by volunteers which sometimes results in a lack of professional project proposals. Implementing capacity is also often lacking. The government is currently reflecting on whether it should invest more in diaspora organisation capacity-development or whether to treat diaspora organisations like any other Dutch NGO.

The Dutch government is interested in cooperating with other ministries/agencies in Europe on migration management and the use of remittances for development and SME projects (the Netherlands recently began supporting the training of entrepreneurs with a migrant background to help them develop their business plans). There is an interest in strengthening such initiatives supporting entrepreneurship as well as strengthening local communities.

4.6.4. Involvement in international fora on Migration and Development

According to interviews, the priority dialogues/regional processes below provide a platform for discussion on a broad range of issues and have the potential to lead to balanced cooperation in the field of migration, taking into account the interests of countries of origin and destination as well as those of migrants. The Netherlands actively participate in these dialogues and is in some cases involved in the implementation of activities under action plans.

The Netherlands is a member of the steering group of the GFMD and provides core funding to the GFMD Support Unit as well as a voluntary contribution. It is part of the Assessment Team coordinating the evaluation of the work of the GFMD so far which will feed into the UN High Level Dialogue in 2013 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012b). The Netherlands also chaired two round tables and participated in several country teams. As a result of the GFMD in 2009, the Netherlands has funded a handbook titled Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development together with Switzerland. The primary objective is to provide an instrument for policymakers for involving the diaspora and working with them in countries of origin and destination.

The Netherlands is a partner state in the (Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue) dialogue and provided co-funding to the electronic database of the MTM (MTM i-Map, currently in phase III 2011-2014). The interactive map is a support instrument to the MTM Dialogue, aimed at promoting and facilitating intergovernmental information exchange, and fostering cooperation between participating states.

Regarding EU dialogues, the Netherlands has been leading the discussion of diaspora policy within the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership’s theme Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME). The Netherlands has also taken a strong interest in the ACP-EU dialogue on migration as it is particularly interested in making progress on implementing the readmission clause included in the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement.

Other priority processes of the Netherlands are: the Prague Process, the Budapest Process (in particular the Silk Routes working group and translating the results of the project “Fostering Cooperation in the Area of Migration with and in the Silk Routes Region” into the interactive online visual tool i-Map), the Rabat Process and the Intergovernmental consultations on migration, asylum and refugees (IGC).

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4.6.5. Sources


