



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Terms of Reference

Evaluation of the functioning of strategic partnerships between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and civil organisations

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
Policy and operations evaluation department (IOB)

10 October 2018

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1. Impetus

IOB (Policy and Operations Evaluation Department) has planned an evaluation of the partnership instrument, which will be completed early 2019¹. The main impetus is that the current strategic partnerships (SPs) that MoFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) has with CSOs (alliances) through DSO (Social Development Department) within the policy framework will expire in 2020. It concerns the 'Dialogue and Dissent' (D&D) SP of DSO/CO (civil organisations), and the 'SRHR partnerships' of DSO/HA (Health and Aids). In order to launch the new DSO SP in 2021, DSO has until May 2019 to consult with the field and gather input from others, including this IOB evaluation. In addition, DSH (Department for Stabilisation and Humanitarian Aid) also has various strategic partnerships in the area of conflict mediation and humanitarian aid, which are interesting for a study on strategic partnerships between MoFA and CSOs in general. This study focuses on the functioning of the SPs between MoFA and CSOs. This study will not examine the ultimate effectiveness of the SPs. Effectiveness will be considered in the final evaluations of the DSO SP planned for 2020². We distinguish four main aspects in the functioning of SP: (i) complementarity of MoFA's and CSO's roles; (ii) funding modalities; (iii) accountability towards donors and towards southern stakeholders; and (iv) ownership and relative autonomy of CSO's. The main questions of this evaluation are: how do SPs function? what are the causes for this? what recommendations can we draw from this?

2. Background

2.1. Strategic partnerships of MoFA with MO

Strategic partnerships with Dutch NGOs were announced in 2013 in the policy paper 'Collaborating with civil society in a new context: aid, trade and investment'. This paper explained that a different kind of collaboration between the ministry and Dutch NGOs was desirable as a follow-up to the preceding partnerships between MoFA and MO in MFS II. In addition to the role that NGOs play as service providers in the context of the spearheads food security, water, SRHR, and security and rule of law, NGOs should fulfil more of a political role than previously and reinforce civil society dialogue between civilians, government and the private sector. Four recommendations for the new SP have been made based on experiences with former partnerships with CSOs:

1. create flexibility (in programmes and types of partnership)
2. build trust between NGOs and the ministry (avoid excessive supervision and control by MoFA)
3. Strengthen the advocacy role (the biggest added value of NGOs, according to the policy paper)
4. limit the regulatory burden (which was too heavy with MFSII)

The policy framework for D&D from 2014 builds on this. In addition to the above-mentioned four recommendations for SPs, a number of desired characteristics for SPs are also mentioned:

- joint analysis and target setting at the strategic level;
- leave sufficient space for each other's identity, expertise, experience and network, and independence;

¹ Initially, the plan was to evaluate a broader set of partnerships, including the public private partnerships (PPP). These PPP turned out very different from the SP, so IOB concluded not to consider PPP in this study. The relevance of a study on PPP will be considered separately, as well as the possibility to do a broader synthesis study on partnerships.

² This study of the functioning of SP may also become an input for the policy review on 'Social Progress', planned for 2021.

- respect for each other's roles;
- consider options for the joint, complementary roles of MoFA and NGOs;
- a critical dialogue between MoFA and NGOs: collaboration is not always possible or necessary; dissent is necessary sometimes too; and
- annual strategic consultation about results driven by the theory of change, and regular informal consultation, in The Hague or at embassies.

The policy framework for the DSO/GA SRGR partnership fund 2016-2020 (2015), is in line with the D&D policy framework, and uses the same concept for SP. In both policy frameworks, the expectation was that joint action by MoFA and CSO would be more effective.

The DSH partnerships have a different ultimate objective than the DSO partnerships: they focus more on conflict mediation and reconstruction, and less on the political roles of southern civil society. DSH also has its reasons to opt for a partnership approach. An unstable context requires relative autonomy and flexibility in order to respond rapidly; conflict sensitivities require an apolitical approach and (substantive) independence from donors; and for MoFA these partnerships, which operate in the most difficult areas, are a valuable source of information for Dutch policy and strategies. One of the reasons why DSH calls certain partners 'strategic' is because these organisations are so important (and unique) for achieving the Dutch policy objectives, and because of the input in the DSH policy and strategy.

A clear picture emerges from the 2013 policy paper, the 2014 policy frameworks, and interviews with DSO and DSH staff about what an SP is understood to mean. For the purposes of this evaluation, we use the following working definition for 'strategic partnership', which will be explained in more detail below. This definition is tentative and may be adapted during this evaluation.

A strategic partnership is a collaboration between MoFA and a CSO (or alliance of northern CSOs and southern CSOs) in which the long-term objectives have been agreed upon at a strategic level, while the work method at the tactical level (who to work with) and activities at the operational level (what to do) are the responsibility of the individual partners. At the same time, MoFA and the alliance use each other's networks and knowledge, keep each other informed, and when necessary coordinate activities. Complementarity of roles lead to synergy and coherence, and thus to better results than that partners would achieve on their own.

The distinction between 'normal' partnerships and 'strategic' partnerships is not that clear. Even normal partnerships aim at a certain level of equality, trust, reciprocity, and respect. On top of that, strategic partnerships between MoFA and CSO's pay more attention to jointly setting objectives, strategic dialogue about results and steering, and where possible and useful, coordinating each other's roles and activities.³

2.2. Theoretical framework: the functioning of strategic partnerships

As mentioned in the introduction, we distinguish four main aspects in the functioning of SP:

1. complementarity of MoFA's (including Dutch embassies) and (northern and southern) CSO's roles;
2. funding modalities;
3. accountability towards donors and towards southern stakeholders; and
4. ownership and relative autonomy of CSOs.

³ Some MoFA partnerships with MO, for example the DSH SP on conflict mediation, are being called 'strategic' also because they involve important (unique) partners for achieving certain MoFA objectives.

These four aspects influence each other, for example, funding modalities and accountability towards donors can affect ownership and autonomy of the CSO, and their accountability towards southern stakeholders.

An important assumption is that well-functioning partnerships enhance the ownership for S-CSOs, and make it possible to adapt activities better (also during implementation) to the local context and needs. This in turn eases accountability towards southern stakeholders. Another important assumption is that the complementarity of the roles of MoFA and CSOs creates more synergy and coherence between the different activities, and lead to results that are more relevant, inclusive and sustainable. On the other hand, the assumption is also that the financing modality and accountability towards donors leave sufficient space for CSO's ownership and autonomy, accountability towards southern stakeholders, and for the CSO 's own roles that need to be played in the joint action of MoFA and CSOs.

SP will score differently on these four aspects, for example in the extent to which ownership and autonomy of MO is assured. This does not mean that there is only one ideal configuration – or one best score – for each of these four aspects of SP in general. In contrast, it may mean that there could be an optimum configuration that differs per context and per objective of the SP.

The effects of the 'aid chain', the relationship between donor, northern CSOs (N-CSO) and southern CSOs (S-CSO), on the policy advocacy work in the south has been considered in a study on partnerships between northern and southern NGOs (Elbers 2012), a recent literature review for DSO (Elbers, 2018), and is further elaborated in the theory of change for the DSO D&D SP (Kamstra, 2017). From these studies, hypotheses and mechanisms can be distilled that are more universally applicable for MoFA-CSO partnerships, also beyond policy advocacy. These form a good starting point for a theoretical framework, especially for the partnership aspects, that we develop for this study on SP. On top of that, we added some strategic aspects that came from policy documents and interview with DSO and DSH staff. Besides, we used the expectations of these SP (D&D: Van Wessel et al., 2017; conflict mediation: Weijers, 2018), and previous evaluations (IOB, 2017; Dieleman and Van Kampen, 2016). The theoretical framework distinguishes for MoFA, N-CSO, and S-CSO, the desired characteristics, including complementarity between roles and CSO ownership, and conditions, including financing modality and accountability, that a good strategic partnership should characterise (Figure 1). This theoretical framework is built on hypotheses, not on empirically proven mechanisms.

Results

The various strategic partnerships that MoFA has established have different outcomes and objectives, but they all assume that (i) sufficient autonomy for the (often southern) CSOs, and (ii) complementing roles of MoFA and CSO's are required to achieve more inclusive, effective and sustainable results.

Principles for a good partnership

An ideal partnership, whether this be one between MoFA and the northern coordinating CSO in a strategic partnership, or between the N-CSO and S-CSO, is based on a number of value-based principles: equality, trust, reciprocity and mutual respect. In practice, the initial situation is often unequal, in terms of funding, knowledge and capacity, and therefore also power, as a result of which the collaboration is not always able to abide by these principles. Still, partners can strive to establish the best possible partnership. The characteristics and conditions of a good partnership can be derived from these principles. 'Good partnerships' are about an optimal relation, also given the context and objective of the SP.

Partnerships between northern and southern CSOs

Both S-CSO and N-CSO benefit from strategic cooperation in setting goals together, monitoring progress, and steering. They complement each other in terms of knowledge, networks, and different roles they can play, and can cooperate at local, national and international level⁴.

For their credibility and legitimacy towards their constituency and other southern stakeholders, CSOs, southern CSOs if they are part of the partnership, need to be sufficiently autonomous, and they should have the possibility of pursuing their own mission, setting priorities based on the local context, and being flexible enough in a changing context. This also means that S-CSOs need to be able to invest in their organisation: in long-term contracted personnel, and in knowledge, research and innovation.

One of the conditions for autonomy is that funding is long-term to address root causes, flexible (partly un-earmarked), and from different sources to avoid dependence on a single donor. Another condition is that accountability takes into account the shared responsibilities and agreed-on outcomes, two-way accountability: towards donor and towards southern stakeholders, and the legitimacy of the S-CSO. Legitimacy may consist of representing a constituency, credibility through knowledge, but is in turn also affected by independence and local accountability, completing the circle.

Strategic partnerships between MoFA and the (coordinating) CSO

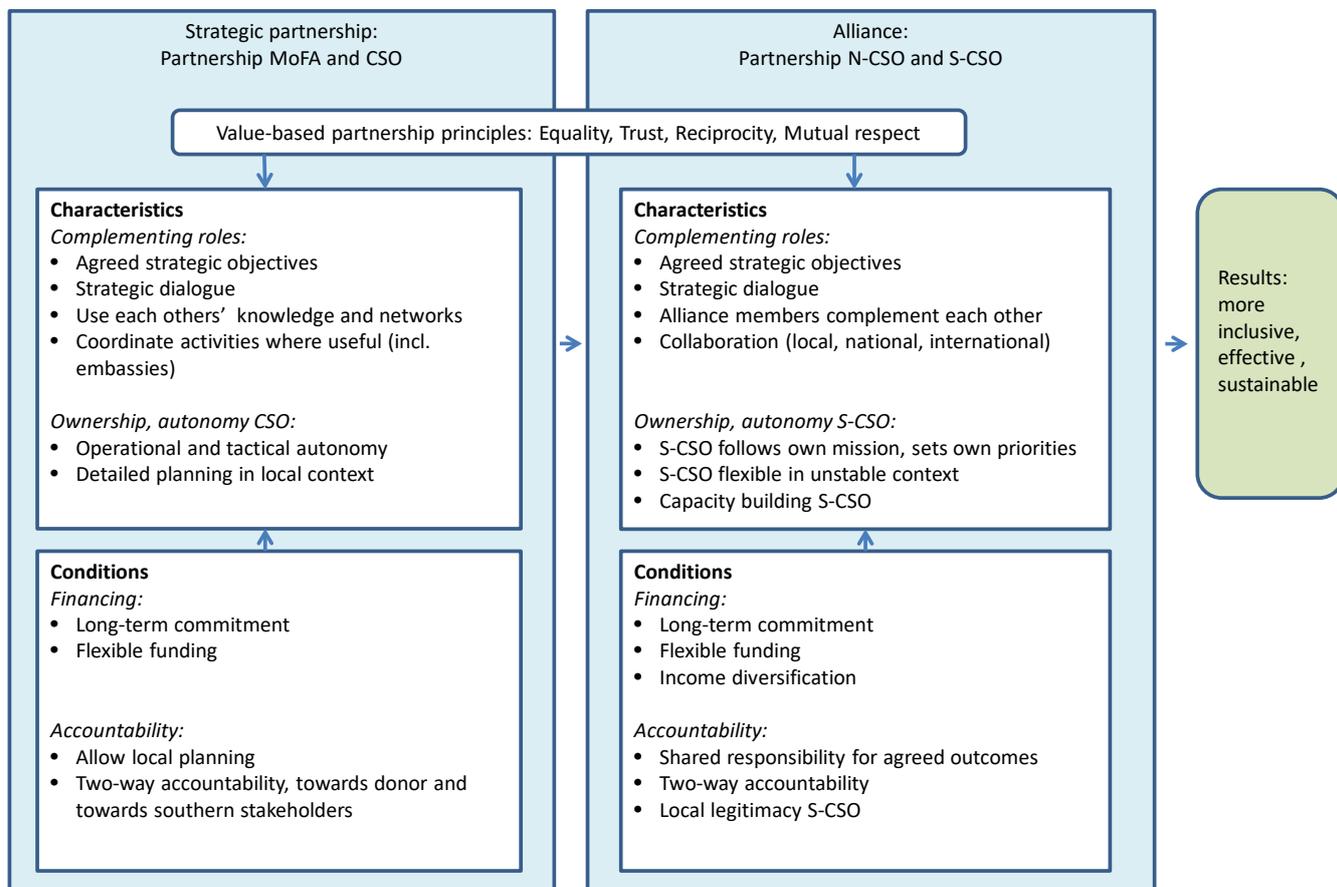
Strategic partnerships between MoFA and CSO have similar characteristics of a 'good partnership' between N-CSO and S-CSO described earlier, and put extra emphasis on several strategic aspects related to (i) complementary roles between MoFA and CSO: joint formulation of strategic objectives, a strategic dialogue about progress and steering – with space for critique; use of each other's knowledge and networks, including MoFA using CSO knowledge for their policy; informing each other and coordinating each other's roles and activities, which can create greater coherence and synergy between roles and activities towards a common objective. CSOs need sufficient ownership and autonomy at operational and tactical level to follow their own plan (flexible, and adjusted to local context), and play their own roles.

Conditions for this are the funding modalities, with long-term commitments and flexible funding, and accountability not only towards MoFA by also to S-CSO and final beneficiaries.

This policy theory is used to formulate evaluation questions about the functioning of strategic partnerships, and assist in formulating indicators to operationalise these questions. This theory will be broadened and improved, using the results of this study, and presented in a adjusted form in the evaluation report.

⁴ In the specific case of lobby and advocacy, important added values of N-CSO for S-CSO are: specialised knowledge and information, easier access to government, protection of activists, the ability to create more pressure by coordinated action, more credibility, pointing at international treaties, and – in the north – putting pressure on internationally operating companies.

Figure 1 Theoretical framework of strategic partnerships between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and CSOs, as conditions for more inclusive, effective and sustainable results



3. Scope

The main emphasis is the functioning of the SPs: how is the strategic collaboration, the complementarity of roles, between MoFA and CSO, and how does this affect ownership and autonomy, funding modalities, and accountability? How is the strategic partnership between MoFA and CSO reflected in the partnership CSO? In doing so, the evaluation examines the relevance, part of the effectiveness, the coherence and therefore also part of the efficiency, but not the long-term impact and sustainability.

This evaluation is limited to DSO and DSH's partnerships between MoFA and NGOs. This includes the D&D SP and the SRHR SP of DSO, and SPCC, ARC and 'conflict mediation' SP of DSH. These SP are still ongoing and are have not yet been evaluated (except SPCC).

For the evaluation of the functioning of the SP, first of all a comparison of the current functioning with the expectations at the start will be interesting. Expectations are often related with the functioning of older, preceding instruments, so therefore a comparison with older partnerships will be interesting, especially if persons are available at MoFA and CSO who have experience with the transition from the old to the new partnership.

4. Overview of the strategic partnerships of MoFA with NGOs

An overview of the SPs with CSOs is provided in Table 1. The D&D SPs are the largest in terms of budget, and are supplemented by other MoFA-NGO strategic partnerships of DSO and DSH.

Table 1 *Strategic partnerships MoFA-NGOs*

Department	Partnership (number)	Number of countries	Period	Budget (million)
DSO/CO	Strategic partnerships Dialogue and Dissent (25)	72	2016-2020	925
DSO/HA	Partnerships SRHR (5)	40	2016-2020	215
DSH	Strategic Partnerships Chronic Crises (SPCC) (Great Lakes, Horn of Africa) (7)	7	2014-2016	30
DSH	Addressing Root Causes (successor SPCC)	(check)	2016-2021	125
DSH	Strategic partnerships conflict mediation (5)	*	2015-2018	29

* Non-earmarked funding, also supported by other donors, works in almost 100 countries.

These partnerships fall under different policy articles: 3: Social progress, and 4: Peace and security. The SPs account for a substantial part of the budgeted programme expenditures for 2016-2020, see Annex 1. These SP programmes have different substantive objectives, but they have in common the fact that they both see a form of SP as a suitable way (type of collaboration/instrument) of achieving these objectives.

Dialogue and dissent

The primary objective of the DSO/CO Dialogue and Dissent (D&D) SP is to strengthen the political ‘advocacy and lobbying’ role of southern CSOs (between citizens, on the one hand, and the government, private sector and other civil society actors, on the other hand). This political role requires relative autonomy, local ownership and flexibility for southern CSOs, for which SPs would be a good instrument. Most SPs have been thematically assigned to other departments (DDE: 3, DMM: 2, DSH: 5; DSO/HA: 3, DSO/CO: 3; IGG: 6; TFGV: 3).

SRHR Partnership Fund

The DSO/HA SRHR SPs also work ‘strategically’; for example, they use a similar way of formulating strategic objectives together, and in doing so employ a similar tender procedure as well (selection based on main features and ToC; develop country programmes later). These SPs also have a political and substantive/policy-related objective connected to the objectives of the SRHR policy: to promote the knowledge and service provision to young people about sexuality, and respecting SRH rights. For the same reason as with D&D, an SP was chosen as an instrument for SRGH.

SP conflict mediation

The DSH SPs for conflict mediation work with five major international NGOs that are specialised in this subject, fairly unique, and important to achieve the Dutch humanitarian policy objectives. That is one of the reasons why these five NGO’s are called ‘strategic partners’ for MoFA. Because they receive funds from multiple donors, and are very familiar with the context and the work, it is desirable that they determine themselves what to do (without every donor submitting its own objectives and reporting requirements). Because of the desired flexibility, autonomy, and use of each other’s knowledge and networks – including augmenting Dutch policy and strategies – SPs are considered suitable for this, in this case with non-earmarked funding.

SP Chronic Crises

The DSH SPCCs have less of a political objective and primarily a humanitarian and reconstruction objective for vulnerable groups in areas with a weak or failing government and/or where the

government is part of the problem. The SPCCs work in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region. These SPCCs have been succeeded by the Addressing Root Causes (ARC) programme. These partnerships also need a large flexibility and autonomy to operate in a fragile context.

Addressing Root Causes

De successor of SPCC. These partnerships are not called 'strategic', but are setup as a SP between MoFA and CSO, during a fairly intensive process. For DSH, especially the startup and tender procedure of ARC are interesting to look at. Apparently, MoFA has less time to play their role as partner during the implementation of the project.

Annex 2 lists the countries that work in the various programmes.

5. Research problem and aim

Interviews with people from the departments reveal that the desired functioning of a strategic partnership, such as establishing a joint strategy, coordination and synergy between the roles and activities of MoFA and CSOs, and at the same time ensuring that the CSOs have sufficient flexibility, autonomy and capacity building, are clear, even though there are differences in expectations between MoFA and MO (Wessel et al. 2017). Even the conditions for this functioning, in terms of financing modality and accountability towards MoFA (and related reporting requirements) versus accountability towards southern stakeholders, are clear. These desired characteristics and conditions for a good strategic partnership are set out in the above theoretical framework. But it is not clear yet whether the current strategic partnerships are meeting these expectations: do the current strategic partnerships really have the characteristics that we expect, and are they meeting the conditions for a good strategic partnership, i.e. an optimal partnership for the given context and objective?

DSO and DSH's main concerns and questions are presented in Annex 3, and have been used as a long list in order to come to a shorter set of questions that fit in our theoretical framework. Some of the concerns that are not explicitly formulated in evaluation questions may still come up as potential factors affecting the functioning of SP. Examples include: the MoFA staff capacity in The Hague and at embassies to play their expected partner role; the effect of the MoFA-CSO partnership relation on the relation between N-CSO and S-CSO; and the accountability towards different departments within MoFA.

The aim of this study is to find out to what extent the current SP function as expected on the characteristics (i) complementarity of roles MoFA-CSO, and (ii) relative autonomy of CSO; and to what extent the required conditions, in terms of (iii) financing modality and (iv) accountability are met. Then, we will investigate factors that affect these characteristics and conditions, and finally we will draw recommendations for future strategic partnerships.

6. Evaluation questions

The three related main questions of this study are: (1) how do the SP function, (2) which factors have affected the functioning of SPs, and (3) what recommendations can we take from this for future strategic partnerships?

These three main questions can be divided into detailed sub-questions, which are based on the theoretical framework with characteristics and conditions for 'well-functioning SPs', and overlap with the questions that concern DSO and DSH.

A number of these questions will also be answered in mid-term reviews, evaluations and ongoing studies. We first present all questions here; in the section on method, we will then examine what can be reasonably expected from other studies – which IOB can synthesise – and what should come from our own primary research.

1. How do the strategic partnerships function with respect to (i) complementarity of roles MoFA-CSO, (ii) ownership and autonomy of CSO, (iii) funding modalities, and (iv) accountability?
 - 1.1. What were the initial expectations of the SP by the different stakeholders? (different departments of MoFA in the Hague, embassies, N-CSO, and S-CSO)
 - 1.2. To what extent have these expectations been reflected in agreements on collaboration within the SP?
 - 1.3. How do SP function in practice between MoFA and lead CSO?
 - 1.4. How does MoFA's strategic partnership with the (often Dutch) coordinating NGO affect the partnership between N-CSO and S-CSOs?
 - 1.5. How do financing modality, accountability, complementarity in roles, and ownership of CSO influence each other?
 - 1.6. Can something be said already about how the functioning of SP affects the effectiveness of the SP?
2. Which factors have affected the functioning of SPs, with respect to (i) complementarity of roles MoFA-CSO, (ii) ownership and autonomy of CSO, (iii) funding modalities, and (iv) accountability?
 - 2.1. Which factors have affected the functioning of the partnership between N-CSO and S-CSO?
 - 2.2. Which factors have affected the functioning of the SP between MoFA and (lead) CSO?
3. What recommendations can we take from this for future strategic partnerships?

7. Method

To assess the functioning of the current SP, a comparison with two different references are interesting.

1. First, the current functioning can be compared to the expectations, as has also been documented for the 25 DSO D&D SP (Van Wessel et al., 2017) and for the five DSH 'conflict mediation' SP (Weijer, 2018)
2. Moreover, in some cases, the current SPs can be compared to preceding instruments, especially if persons at MoFA and CSO have experienced this transition.

A great deal of information has been or is being gathered in the form of mid-term reviews, evaluations, and studies conducted by DSO through NWO WOTRO-Include.

- (1) This IOB study will be able to synthesise some of these, insofar as this is not already being done by DSO or DSH. This can be supplemented by a (limited) literature study.

Part of the evaluation questions require IOB to conduct primary research. It mainly concerns:

- (2) Interviews with MoFA staff and the partners in the Netherlands from a selection of SPs.
- (3) A structured survey by local researchers in 4-6 countries.

A validation and discussion workshop in the Netherlands will help to supplement, and potentially correct, findings and provide the opportunity to think about conclusions and recommendations, after which a final version of the report can be written.

1) Synthesis of other research, supplemented by a literature study

The following reviews, evaluations and studies are ongoing and will generate useful input for this IOB study before early 2019.

- DSO / CO (dialogue and dissent):
 - has conducted research through Include and NWO-WOTRO on three themes:
 - The political role of civil society organisations in the south.
 - How MoFA aid affects this role.
 - How to deal with diminishing political space.

This research already generated an initial series of findings from the desk study in May 2018, and it will also generate field work findings in January 2019.

 - MTR of the SP, which DSO will synthesise (with IOB's help?). Not all SP will do an MTR, and there are not standard guidelines for it. For the DSO SRGR SP, IOB developed recommendations / guidelines for the MTR (validate ToC, functioning of partnership, initial findings). Will be finished in late 2018.
- DSO/HA (SRHR):
 - Annual survey, e.g. how do partners value the collaboration. (Analysis of 2017 survey not complete yet, follow up)
 - MTR, ongoing. Will be finished in 2018.
 - Evaluation of old partnerships (by KIT), available.
 - DSO/HA will also hold a series of knowledge management sessions in 2018, where these strategic partnership themes will be discussed.
- DSH (chronic crises, conflict mediation, addressing root causes):
 - IOB evaluation of SPCC. Seven NGO alliances have done their own evaluation, and IOB has made an overview document containing, among other things, a reflection on the partnership: useful for this IOB partnership evaluation. It will not be necessary to re-visit these projects again for this IOB study.
 - 5 SPs conflict mediation (handle partner info confidentially)
 - DSH had a study done by Frauke de Weijer on the added value of these strategic partnerships and how they can be strengthened. Draft report is already available.
 - DSH will examine partners' M&E, preferably in consultation with IOB. (Finish in 2018?)
 - For DSH, it will be interesting to assess the relation with the Dutch embassies; however, the relationship with S-CSO is less relevant for DSH.
 - Addressing Root Causes. The IOB evaluation of SPCC has also looked at the startup of ARC. For DSH, it will be interesting if IOB can look at the start-up and tender procedure, in comparison with the other (DSO) SP.

IOB will agree with DSO and DSH which components to include in the IOB study, which components are able to stand on their own and be immediately used by DSO/DSH, and which components need to be synthesised by DSO/DSH or by IOB.

The supplemental literature study will be limited to sub-questions that other research and primary research has not found answers to.

2) Interviews and focus group discussions in the Netherlands

The aim of the interviews and focus group discussions in the Netherlands is open critical reflection on the SPs, with a limited number of SPs as examples. In the Netherlands, the interviews and focus group discussions will be held with people from the ministry (DSO, DSH, and other departments involved in the SO: DDE, DMM, DSH, IGG, TFIG), people involved in previous evaluations (former IOB employees, contracted researchers and scientists) and people from partner organisations involved in a selection of SPs who will also be visited for country studies.

3) Research in countries

IOB will first select types of projects as case studies, and then make a pragmatic choice of projects and countries to cover the different types of projects, in consultation with DSO and DSH.

Selection criteria for projects and countries:

- SPCC is currently being evaluated by IOB, who also looks at the functioning of partnerships. No need to visit these again.
- Try to cover the diversity of SP types, based in differences in characteristics (and conditions) of the functioning of the SP. This categorisation will be further elaborated, and result in covering different programmes as well as different categories within programmes. For example, within the 25 D&D SP, SP can be grouped into:
 - direct support to a limited number of S-CSO;
 - support to a network of many CSO;
 - financial partnerships, such as Mama Cash;

Another comparison can be made with SP with a Northern lead CSO, and SP with a Southern lead CSO. Another categorisation, linked to the theoretical framework, can be based on:

- duration of the partnership
- size of the partnership (number of partners)
- political SP versus service provisioning SP
- capacity of the Dutch embassy
- Categorisation of the SP will be done with DSO and DSH
- Logistically, it is practical to choose a limited number of countries that cover the diversity of SP. The countries with most SP, as short list, is presented in Table 2, but this list does not yet distinguish different categories of SP.
- Choose countries that are not yet studies extensively (DSO-NWO research going on in Kenya and India).

Table 2 Shortlist of countries with most different programmes

	DSO		DSH			
	SP (S&T)	SRGR SP	Conflict mediation*			ARC
Interpeace			Int Alert	ICTJ		
DRC	8	1	1	1	CO	1
Indonesia	19	4			1	
Kenya	17	3	1+CO	1	CO	
Mali	10	2	1	1		1
Myanmar	11	1		1	CO	
Nigeria	9	1		1		
Pakistan	9	5		1		1
Philippines	9	1		1		
Uganda	19	3	1	1	CO	

CO : Country Office. * Of the 5 conflict mediation SP, these 3 are interesting because they also work with S-CSO.

In a selection of (4-6) countries, a selection of SP will be visited by local researchers, guided by a researcher in the Netherlands (or Belgium). These researchers will conduct semi-structured interviews with:

- a selection of SPs in which all involved partners of each SP are spoken to;
- the ultimate target group (when possible);
- the Dutch embassy (consider one country without an embassy)
- independent experts (other NGOs, donors, potentially also government);

At the end of each country visit a short debriefing will take place at the embassy with several representatives from local NGOs and experts.

[This country study will be further elaborated in an annex, a supplement-ToR. The selection of countries and projects will be made in consultation with DSO and DSH.]

4) Validation and discussion workshop

Draft findings and conclusions will be presented and discussed in the Netherlands with both MoFA and NGO staff, as well as several 'external' (independent) experts. This also creates the opportunity to see whether findings in a small number of countries and SPs are recognised by other SPs and in other countries, or whether some findings are not recognised and turn out to be coincidental. Moreover, this workshop will be used to jointly formulate recommendations for future strategic partnership programmes.

Option: webinar

In response to IOB's evaluation of MFS II, a webinar was organised in which many southern organisations participated (in 2017). The experiences were positive. If discussion points, draft conclusions or draft recommendations arise from the case studies that we would like to test among a larger number of organisations, a webinar would be an option.

8. Representativeness and limitations

Most attention will go to the DSO SP with the aim of making recommendations for a new DSO SP programme after 2020. Examining the DSH SP is an expansion, which provides additional insights about the functioning of the SPs that could be useful to DSO and DSH, but are limited by the fact that the DSH SP has different substantive ultimate objectives. In other words, an SP that 'functions well' for the DSO D&D objectives can be different than one that 'functions well' for DSH humanitarian and conflict mediation objectives.

The selection of countries and SPs that will be examined is not representative of all countries and all SPs, but we will try to cover the diversity of types (categories) of SP. They will generate findings, however, that can be assessed in a validation and discussion meeting according to what MoFA and Dutch NGOs have experienced with different SPs. That creates the opportunity to ask whether specific findings can be more broadly recognised, in order to thus increase the validity.

9. Organisation

IOB will conduct the interviews in the Netherlands, and in consultation and collaboration with DSO and DSH, synthesise the relevant evaluations and studies. Proposal: Ferko Bodnár together with Rob van Poelje. IOB will develop a detailed ToR (as an annex to this ToR) for the country studies.

IOB will contract an external, independent, Dutch-speaking researcher from an organisation with a network in the case study countries. This (Dutch or Belgian) researcher will supervise local researchers who will interview people from the Dutch embassy, the target group and other stakeholders, other projects, and independent people. IOB will produce short country reports in English from these interviews.

Caspar Lobbrecht and Rafaela Feddes form the soundboard group, assisted by Otto Genee at several crucial moments: ToR, plan for country studies, and draft rapport. Wendy Asbeek Brusse will chair the soundboard group meeting.

The reference group will have the following internal members: someone from DSO/CO, someone from DSO/HA, and someone from DSH; and as external members: someone from the Dutch NGO world (e.g. Partos), a scientist (e.g. CICAM), and if possible someone that represents the southern NGOs, by e-mail and Skype. The reference group will also monitor the ToR, the country study plan and the draft report.

10. Planning and products

This study will have to be ready by the end of March 2019, for DSO to use as input for the new policy framework on future strategic partnerships (D&D and SRGR), which will start after 2020. DSO and DSH will be the main users of the results of this study, which will be written in Dutch. The evaluation report may also be interesting for other departments of MoFA and embassies, and the involved partners in the SP, and therefore an elaborate English summary will be added. The final report will be made public and will be sent to parliament. If necessary, certain information may be anonymised, in coordination with DSO and DSH. The following calendar gives the main activities and products.

Period	Activities	Time, who	Products
Early Oct 2018	Approved ToR	dir. IOB	ToR on website
Early Oct	Detailed planning, internal	IOB, 1d	
Mid Oct	Selection case studies with DSO and DSH; research plan	IOB, DSO, DSH; IOB; 4d	ToR Country studies
End Oct	Contracting out country studies	IOB; 3d	
Nov. - end Jan	Country studies (3-5 country studies, parallel) Supervision IOB	Outsourced, 80d in 8 week period. IOB, 5d	Country study reports (EN)
Nov. - half Dec.	Interviews in NL (MoFA, partners)	IOB, 20d	
Dec-Jan. 2019	Synthesis MTR (with DSO)	IOB/DSO 8d Option: outsource	
10 Jan 2019	Presentation NWO research results	DSO, 1d	
End jan.	Synthesis literature (NWO) Synthesis interviews	Option: outsource IOB, 15d	PPT draft findings;
	1 ^e Draft findings in ppt	IOB, 2d	
Begin Feb	Synthesis country studies;	IOB 4d	
Feb.	Validation and discussion workshop	IOB, 3d	Internal report workshop
Feb	Option, webinar	IOB, 3d	Intern report webinar
March	Update draft findings Discussion 2 ^e draft findings with DSO, DSH, others	IOB, 5d	Intern draft rapport (voldoende als input DSO beleidskader)
	Reference group discussion	IOB, 3d	Intern verslag
End March	Incorporate comments MoFA and ref group	IOB, 5d	Public final reort 30-50p NL + 4-6p EN summary

Literature (not complete)

- Dieleman R, H van Kampen. 2016. Intentions and interest. Collaboration among MFSII alliance members and the relations between Dutch CSO's and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs under MFSII and TUCP 2011-2015. Partnership Learning Loop.
- Dieleman R, H van Kampen. 2016. Shifting interests, changing practice. Key insights into the perceptions of Dutch civil society organisations and their Southern partner organisations about Dutch non-financial support. Partnership Learning Loop.
- Wessel M, L Schulpen S Hilhorst, K Biekart. 2017. Mapping the expectations of the Dutch Strategic Partnerships for lobby and advocacy.
- Kamstra J. 2017. Dialogue and Dissent Theory of Change 2.0. Supporting civil society's political role.
- IOB. 2017. Policy review of Dutch support to southern civil society development. (416)
- IOB. 2015. Opening doors and unlocking potential. Key lessons from an evaluation of support for policy influencing, lobbying and advocacy. (407)
- IOB. 2014. Useful patchwork: direct funding of local NGO's by Netherlands embassies (2016-2012) (391)

Policy documents (not complete)

- Brief regering: Samenwerking met het maatschappelijk middenveld in een nieuwe context – Hulp, handel en investeringen. 2013-2014. KST 33 625 No. 39, 9 okt 2013.
- Beleidskader S&T 13 mei 2014
- SRGR partnerschap fonds 2016-2020, (mrt 2015)
- Beleidskader chronische crises 2014-2016 (decision 27sept 2013)
- DSO accountability fund publieksbemo
- Addressing Root Causes Fund
- Leading from the South (start 2017 – 4 years)
- Voice (voorheen inclusiefonds, was aangekondigd als innovatie fonds in S&T beleidskader)

Annex 1 Programme budgets (in million euro)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
3. Sociale vooruitgang	756	717	725	725	726
3.1 SRGR, HIV/Aids, totaal	424	418	418	417	417
Subsidies centraal (<i>incl. SRGR SP</i>)	169	167	175	176	176
3.2 Gelijke rechten vrouwen	58	44	53	52	52
Subsidies centraal	45	32	42	42	42
3.3 Versterking maatschappelijk middenveld	230	221	220	221	221
SP S&T	225	218	218	218	219
3.4 Opleiding en onderzoek	43	35	35	35	35
4. Vrede en veiligheid	786	714	397	400	400
4.1 Humanitaire hulp	247	220	205	205	205
4.3 Rechtstaat, wederopbouw (<i>inclusief SP conflict bemiddeling, SPCC en ARC</i>)	354	334	192	195	195
4.4 Noodhulpfonds	185	160			

Bron: BHOS budget 2018.

Annex 2 Overview partnerships and countries

Row Labels	DSO		DSH				SPCC	ARC
	SP (S&T)	SRGR partnership fund	Interpeace	Int Alert	ICTJ	conflict totaal		
Afghanistan	3			1	1	2		1
Algeria	1				1	1		
Angola								
Argentina					1	1		
Armenia	1			1		1		
Azerbaijan				1		1		
Bangladesh	10	2						
Belize	1							
Benin	6	2						
Bolivia	10	1						
Botswana		1						
Brazil	1	1			1	1		
Burkina Faso	5	1						
Burundi	6		1	1	1	3	1	1
Cambodia	8				1	1		
Cameroon	2	1						
Central African Republic	2	1						
Chile								
Colombia		1	1		CO	1		
Congo, Dem. Rep.	8	1	1	1	CO	2	1	1
Costa Rica								
Cote d'Ivoire	3		CO		CO			
Cuba								
Cyprus			1		1	2		
Dominican Republic		1						
Ecuador								
Egypt	5				1	1		
El Salvador	6		1			1		
Eritrea							?	
Ethiopia	7	3					1	1
Gambia	1				1	1		
Georgia	3	1		1		1		
Ghana	14	2						
Guatemala	8				1	1		
Guinee	1							
Guinee-Bissau	1		1			1		
Guyana	2							
Haiti	3							
Honduras	8		1			1		
India	8	2						
Indonesia	19	4			1	1		
Irak					1	1		
Israel			1		1	2		
Jordan				1		1		1

Row Labels	DSO		DSH					
	SP (S&T)	SRGR partnership fund	Conflict med				SPCC	ARC
			Interpeace	Int Alert	ICTJ	conflict totaal		
Kenya	17	3	CO	1	CO	1	1	
Kosovo	1							
Kyrgyz Republic	2	1						
Lao PDR	2							
Lebanon				1	CO	1		1
Liberia	5			1	1	2		
Lybia			1			1		
Madagascar	2							
Malawi	6	3						
Malaysia								
Mali	10	2	1	1				1
Mauretania	1							
Mexico								
Moldova	1							
Mongolia	1							
Morocco	2				1	1		
Mozambique	7	2						
Myanmar	11	1		1	CO	1		
Nagorny Karabakh (eurasia)				1		1		
Nepal	7	2		1	CO	1		
Nicaragua	5	1						
Niger	3	1						
Nigeria	9	1		1		1		
Pakistan	9	5		1		1		1
Palestinian Territories	4		1		1	2		
Panama								
Paraguay	2							
Peru		1			1	1		
Philippines	9	1		1		1		
Puerto Rico								
Rwanda	4		1	1		2	?	
Senegal	7	1						
Sierra Leone	5	1			1	1		
Somalia	3		1	1		2	1	1
South Africa		1			1	1		
South Sudan	1						1	1
Sri Lanka	3			1	1	2		
Sudan	4				1	1	1	1
Suriname	1							
Syria	2			1	1	2		1
Tajikistan	1	1		1		1		
Tanzania	8	1						
Thailand		1						
Timor-Leste	2		1		1	2		

Row Labels	DSO		DSH					
	SP (S&T)	SRGR partnership fund	Conflict med				SPCC	ARC
			Interpeace	Int Alert	ICTJ	conflict totaal		
Tunesia				1	CO	1		
Uganda	19	3	1	1	CO	2	1	
Ukraine	3	1		1		1		
Uruguay								
Uzbekistan	2							
Venezuela, RB								
Vietnam	5	1						
Yemen	2							
Zambia	7	1						
Zimbabwe	8	1						

Annex 3 Strategic questions from the policy departments, (from interviews with IOB)

At the policy departments DSO and DSH, the following strategic questions were formulated about strategic partnership with CSO's:

1. What is 'strategic' about a partnership, what is the added value, and how can this added value be enhanced? (DSH)
2. How to deal with the shrinking space for CSO's in the South (this subject is less well covered by the DSO-INCLUDE –NOW/WOTRO research) (DSO/CO)
3. Have the new SP led to more influence of S-CSO in the design, implementation and evaluation? (DSO/CO)
4. What are the consequences of direct support to S-CSO for the role of N-SCO, the power relations between S-CSOs and N-CSOs, and for the delegations of tasks to Dutch embassies? (DSO/CO)
5. How does alliance forming take place between N-CSO and S-CSO? Is there synergy and are S-CSO's capacities enforced? To what extent are complex (and staggered) collaboration partnerships effective and efficient? (DSO/GA)
6. Does MoFA have the capacities to deal with SPs, considering the number of staff and staff turnover? (DSO/HA)
7. Are subsidies, with a maximum duration of 5 years, the right instrument for 'transformative change'? Or do we need longer funding periods, e.g. 10 years, and other instruments, e.g. working through international specialised NGO's? (DSO/HA).
8. Should more be done in a decentralised way, directly between Dutch embassies and S-CSOs? (DSO/HA; DSO/CO), in which S-CSO can hire expertise of N-NGOs? (DSO/CO)
9. What does the M&E system of S-CSO look like, and is this sufficient for MoFA? (DSH)

This short list of strategic questions from the policy departments, together with questions arising from the Theory of Change, is used to formulate the evaluation questions for this IOB study.