



Decp Dutch Employers
Cooperation Programme

DECP Annual report 2014





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Preface by the Chairman



In assuming DECP's chairmanship I was quite pleased to find a concrete confirmation of my view that promoting a better business climate is not just a national but indeed a world-wide effort. I was also pleased to learn that the Dutch government wants to be an ally in this effort.

Under the able guidance of my predecessor DECP has made a tangible contribution to the strengthening of employers' organisations in a range of developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It has developed specific instruments tailored to the needs of our partner organisations. It has trained thousands of men and women in a number of fields such as governance, negotiation skills, lobbying and advocacy, and occupational safety and health. And in order to increase DECP's efficiency it has also started to train trainers who will subsequently share their expertise with their colleagues.

However, DECP's work is unfinished and I am therefore looking forward to be a part of this worthwhile effort because I am convinced that an effective employers' organisation is an important player in the struggle for a better business climate and a healthy private sec-

tor which, as we all know, is a precondition for economic growth and increasing employment. And isn't the latter, i.e. the creation of jobs, the best way to fight poverty?

Creating jobs and fighting poverty is needed more than ever if we just look around in today's world. I think we should be duly worried by low economic growth. Part of today's turmoil and revolutions is caused by poverty and unemployment, in particular youth unemployment. The number of so-called 'failed states' is increasing and a dismal economic performance is very often the root cause.

Against such a background the work of DECP is highly relevant. Creating jobs is the key, and those jobs should above all be created by the private sector. And the private sector will do so, but only if the environment is right. Thus a favourable business climate is crucial and this is where DECP enters the equation because I can think of no better agent to articulate the need for a better business climate than an effective employers' organisation.

Thus, helping to strengthen employers' organisations is a good way to fight poverty and I feel privileged to be able to contribute to that struggle.

Hans de Boer, chairman

Introduction

This first chapter of our annual report starts off with a contribution by DECP's outgoing director, Ronald de Leij, reflecting on the development of DECP over the past years.

Chapter 2 of this report provides a number of 'cases' contributed by our country managers. This year, a special contribution was made by Mr. Alberto Arze, executive director of our Bolivian partner organisation FEPC. These 'cases' are, first and foremost not mere incidents as the word 'case' may suggest. Neither are they incidents in terms of occurrence, nor are they incidents in

the relationships between DECP and its partners. They are the tulips with the supporting relationship being the bulb and stem.

In chapter 3 we present an array of facts and figures with regard to 2014, while in the final chapter we look towards the future of our programme.

We trust you will enjoy reading this report and invite you to visit our website which provides you, alongside other information with regard to DECP, country by country an overview of activities since we started.

Developing the Dutch Employers' Cooperation Programme.



*Ronald de Leij
Director of DECP from
2009 till 2014.*

Within the framework of Dutch development cooperation the Dutch Employers' Cooperation Programme (DECP) was established in 2005 by the Dutch central employers' organisations. This at the request of the Dutch government (i.c. the ministry of Foreign Affairs) and in order to support and strengthen employers' organisations in developing countries.

For many years, programmes to support and strengthen trade unions and also the government of developing countries had been a standard feature of Dutch development cooperation. Adding a programme aimed at employers' organisations was an implicit recognition that economic development depends on the institutionalised cooperation of three parties: a functioning central government with sufficient political authority and legitimised in society, and secondly, organisations of workers representing the factor 'labour' and wor-

king for the development of that factor and thirdly, organisations of employers/entrepreneurs representing the entrepreneurial talent and prepared to make a positive contribution to society, while seeking and needing society's support.

DECP is generally opposed to outright budget support for employers' organisations, even though DECP's mandate does not exclude it and many partner organisations are facing serious financial problems. The latter is however not necessarily the case for their (potential) members, so there is no urgent reason for DECP to act as their financier.

With that in mind DECP has concentrated on the transfer of knowledge and expert coaching. The coaching is focussed on actually applying the knowledge transferred and in such a way as to have those who have been trained transferring their knowledge to colleagues thereby safeguarding it for the organisation, in case individuals were to leave for employment elsewhere.

The longer DECP and a counterpart cooperate the more the emphasis will be on turning knowledge into concrete activities. In particular activities which enhance the profile and visibility of employers' organisations

vis-à-vis their members, the government and society at large. Visibility is the key to recruiting and retaining members, because an invisible organisation is above all invisible to potential members, thus undermining its representativity and financial position.

DECP's third term.

Its first term – from end of 2005 till end of 2009 – was the start-up phase in every respect: establishing the (small) organisation, finding the right staff, getting to know the playing-field, first contacts with potential partners and gaining their trust. It was also a time of finding its way forward, not towards its own institutionalisation but rather to the institutionalisation and sustainability of its partner organisations. The independent evaluation in 2009 confirmed that DECP was well on course to find its own way. A rather exceptional way at that, because at the end of that way the programme would have made itself superfluous, just like development aid should.

The second term – from 2010 up to and including 2013 – demonstrated that acting according to plan is a worthwhile goal that deserves due attention, if only because of the time invested in thinking about the future. However, the plan's visible manifestations in the shape of time- and money bound actions can not dictate reality. Rather than requesting partner organisations to make their actions fit in with DECP's planning – this would make cooperation impossible, one is supposed to serve one's members, not DECP – we should try and keep our cooperation as such on course. And that course is better served by exploiting unplanned opportunities and gradually developing new activities, rather than slavishly sticking to the roadmap drawn up for the partner organisation in 2009.

DECP's case-by-case approach makes it hard to get a feel for the programme by simply collecting statistics. Aggregated figures tend to create their own reality that may be far removed from real life. In the course of the second term DECP has – in addition to the annual Financial report and the annual public report – started

to annually supplying the Ministry with information providing an insight into the activities undertaken on a country by country basis.

Absorbing this type of information takes more time and another kind of effort than evaluating aggregated figures. DECP is grateful to the Ministry for having been allowed to develop its own way and to also stick to its own way of reporting. This way has provided results, as the independent evaluation in 2013 confirmed. It concluded that the programme is relevant, additional and effective and also that the results achieved can be attributed to the programme and are likely to be sustained after DECP has left.

DECP in 2014

DECP's most visible choice regarding its third term – from 2014 till 2017 – is the concentration of its efforts on those partner organisations liable to make the most progress towards the objectives of our cooperation. This has led to a significant reduction (from 26 to 16) in the number of partner countries, while at the same time creating an opportunity for inviting new organisations from other developing countries on board.

DECP is not looking for permanent relationships. If a partner organisation is financially and otherwise independent and successful, we will wind down the relationship true to the motto: "if successful, just let go". We will not do this from one day to the next, but rather via a transitional period during which a partner can, to a limited degree, still benefit from DECP's advice and support. At the start of our third term DECP agreed to such a winding down with partners in Nicaragua and Surinam. In the course of DECP's third term a few more partners may well follow their example.

Because of a delay in the granting of the subsidy for our third term DECP started slowly in 2014. It was only in April that we could get up to speed but only in as much as partner organisations could make themselves available. Inevitably, the activities planned in the late



summer of 2013, for implementation in 2014, could only be partially realised. Luckily, the ones that were realised helped set the course for the years to come. So I am hopeful and confident that the majority of the activities planned for the third term will indeed be realised in that term, including the winding down of our cooperation precisely because of the progress made.

Conclusion

I have joined the programme on October 1 2008 and have served as director from January 1 2009. Both the DECP Board and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have given me ample leeway to shape the programme in the way I saw fit. I have also enjoyed the continuous support of close colleagues and DECP's experts. As a director of DECP I have forged warm ties with both executives and staff members of many a partner organisation. I owe them a debt of gratitude for their cooperation with a demanding DECP and for the warmth of our contacts. I am also deeply grateful to the colleagues of the ILO's International Training

Centre in Turin for their efforts, their commitment, creativity and expertise as well as their patience and perseverance when organising so many international training sessions both in Turin as well as 'in the field'. The way DECP took shape during my directorship is not carved in stone. The programme owes it to its sponsors and its partners to permanently search for better ways to reach our goals. Although I have been allowed to develop and shape DECP's own specific way, I would be the first to admit that that way is not necessarily the best way. There is always a better way.

As of January 1 2015 I have resigned as director of DECP, looking back at a very special and also final stage of my working life. I have every reason to believe that Paul Witte, my successor, is a safe pair of hands. I wish him and above all DECP every success.

Because a lot remains to be done and there is always a better way to do it.

2. DECP at work

This chapter provides an insight in a selected number of activities and developments, undertaken in 2014.

2.1. *Albania A Partnership Agreement with BiznesAlbania*

By Jean-Marie Standaert



When DECP first tried to contact Albanian employers, we found that there were several fledgling organisations quite busy fighting each other rather than defending the interests of employers. So, starting out in 2007 it took us a while to find a sufficient number of business people able and willing to try

and set up an independent employers' organisation that would actually promote employers' interests. Acting upon DECP's advice in 2009 several of the leading sector organisations of Albania decided to found a new representative confederation called BiznesAlbania. However, it took almost 2 years to get the statutes approved and registered at the Court of Tirana.

Right from the start DECP has assisted and supported the activities of BiznesAlbania: it introduced the new confederation in the BOSMIP-programmes of BusinessEurope and it (successfully) recommended them for membership of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE).

With a view to important parliamentary elections that were scheduled in Albania in the summer of 2013, DECP assisted BiznesAlbania in preparing a "Policy Book" with recommendations from Albanian business to the leaders of the main political parties. This book was based on the conclusions of several regional meetings held in the main cities of Albania and also on the annual "Doing Business" report by the World Bank. The recommendations by BiznesAlbania were distributed to all parties as well as to the candidates: there was a lot of interest in the concrete proposals by

BiznesAlbania and many of them were incorporated in the programme of the new government.

BiznesAlbania is also very active in the social dialogue in Albania: a large majority of the employers' members of the National Labour Council belong to BiznesAlbania and its sector members. The president of BiznesAlbania, Mr. Luan Bregasi, is the vice-president from the employers' side of the Council, which is chaired by the minister of Youth and Social Welfare. BiznesAlbania is also represented by its president in the Economic Council, an important advisory body chaired by the Prime Minister with representatives of the main economic operators and international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF. Now that Albania has applied for membership of the EU, BiznesAlbania is well aware of its responsibility to prepare and inform its members about the consequences of EU membership. With the support of DECP, BiznesAlbania intends to organize Round Tables with its sector members and with representatives of European Sector Organisations about the challenges for Albanian business regarding the implementation of the European "Acquis Communautaire".

DECP also introduced BiznesAlbania to its colleagues of South-East Europe in order to be involved in cross-border projects of the European Commission for the candidate countries and by doing so to increase its international network of business relations. Together with the colleagues of the Dutch Centre for the promotion of imports from developing countries (CBI, now RVO), DECP organized a meeting with the exporters' association of Albania with the aim to increase the skills of the Albanian exporters. This association is a prominent member of BiznesAlbania. As a member of the IOE, BiznesAlbania participated in several training programmes of the ILO-Training Center (ITC) in Turin: in 2014 BiznesAlbania participated in a special training on data-base management with the aim to improve the management of the members' list and to better document contacts with members.

BiznesAlbania is also preparing the launch of a periodic newsletter to its members with the aim to inform them about the main achievements of the confederation for its members: it will be an electronic format and mailed with the new data-base developed with ITC.

In cooperation with experts from the Dutch embassy BiznesAlbania also organized a workshop for its members about the different facilities offered by the Dutch Government for economic cooperation.

While much has been achieved, much remains to be done. Therefore, DECP and BiznesAlbania decided to conclude a partnership agreement to underscore their commitment to continue their cooperation to further develop and strengthen BiznesAlbania. In the years to come this cooperation will focus on improving BiznesAlbania's communication with (potential) members in order to enhance its representativeness as well as its income from members' contributions.

Thus, on March 11th 2014 DECP, represented by its director Ronald de Leij, signed a Partnership Agreement with BiznesAlbania, represented by its president Mr. Luan Bregasi. The event was attended by the Minister of Youth and Social Welfare of Albania, Mr. Erion Veliaj, by the Dutch Ambassador, Mr. Martin de la Beij, and several members of the board of BiznesAlbania (see picture below).



2.2 Bolivia Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

By Alberto Arze Barrenechea,
executive director FEPC



'Promoting the inclusion of social responsibility in business culture' is one of objectives pursued by the Federación de Entidades Empresariales Privadas de Cochabamba (FEPC). Fulfilling this objective –laid down in the statutes - and foreseen in the five-year strategic plan of FEPC, the

Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was set up in 2014, with support by the Dutch Employers Cooperation Programme (DECP).

Like in many other countries, CSR is rapidly growing in importance in Bolivia. Over the past few years more and more companies and institutions are developing initiatives in this area. However, all these initiatives and activities largely stand alone and are not part of an overall strategy of the business sector or a proper application of the concept of CSR, which should be understood as "the voluntary integration by companies of social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their relations with their stakeholders."

Against this background the Centre for Corporate Social Responsibility was established in order to support and facilitate the actions of companies in the field of CSR through the setting up of a web portal (www.rse.org.bo). This portal systematically provides information about the important CSR activities that are undertaken by companies and institutions and also establishes a link between them and the public at large.

In order to get the necessary information for the web portal, the top executives of the most important companies in the region were interviewed. Once they realised what the scope and the objectives of the Centre

could be, they readily provided the necessary information.

In the web portal visitors can find updated information about CSR programs of participating companies (classified by subject and by sector), statistical information, a databank of projects, events and activities. On top of that the web portal also gives information about four kinds of services that the Centre offers the business sector:

- a) Awareness: With the aim of helping the staff of each company to understand the concept and importance of corporate social responsibility.
- b) Advice: To implement CSR within the company and align strategic policy through a model that allows the optimization of financial resources that currently are spent on this type of actions and which sometimes even leads to a reduction of costs.
- c) Diagnosis: the current performance of the company on CSR is evaluated using tools adapted to Bolivian reality.
- d) Audit and Evaluation Results: In order to evaluate the impact of the programs and actions in the field of CSR and determine if these are effectively communicated.

The CSR Label

The formal business sector is a cornerstone of the economy. Not only does it finance the activities of the State as its largest taxpayer, it is also the main source of stable jobs that meet all legal requirements and provides benefits in terms of social security in the short and long term. Therefore, the extra efforts made by companies through their actions in the field Corporate Social Responsibility, deserve recognition.

In this regard, the Centre for Social Responsibility has created the 'RSE

Label', that allows companies that qualify for this 'trademark' to distinguish themselves in their corporate image, services and products.

Permission to use the trademark is awarded by the CSR Centre after verification that the company actually engages in CSR in the strict sense and is taking into account relevant international standards.

Taking CSR from a regional to the national level.

Following an inter-institutional cooperation agreement between departmental Federations of Employers and with the support of DECP, the CSR Centre will expand its operations to the departments of La Paz and Santa Cruz. Some 75 percent of all Bolivian companies are concentrated in these two regions and Cochabamba.

The objective of the Centre is to cover 100 percent of the country in the near future. Therefore other federations in the country should participate, thus turning the Centre's website (www.rse.org.bo) into the major information platform on CSR in Bolivia.



2.3 Mongolia A strategic plan for MONEF

By Rogier Chorus



In the longstanding partnership between DECP and MONEF, the organisation of Mongolian employers, 2014 was the year for drawing conclusions. In the preceding year attention had been given to a study from ILO on SME policies in Mongolia, and the World Bank 'Doing Business' report

on Mongolia. In 2014 we wanted to use the abundance of suggestions made by both reports in order to incorporate them in a strategic plan for MONEF as an organisation.

In May a first seminar, that brought together 10 MONEF staff members, among them Mr. K. Ganbaatar, the Executive Director, and 10 representatives of its regional organisations, focused on strategic planning. We discussed the need to develop a strategic plan, and a clear mission statement, to set priorities and select the appropriate objectives.

The SWOT analysis proved to be a useful tool for analysing the starting position. Participants felt that MONEF's reputation and position as a partner in the tripartite dialogue were strong points; its lack of staff expertise and weak equipment and financial resources were felt to be the weak points. Opportunities were the co-operation with other NGOs and with the government, and threats in weak government policies and in the unfair competition by state enterprises. Finally the participants were asked to develop a MONEF strategic plan following the procedures discussed at the seminar.

We established the following long-term objectives for MONEF:

- Aim for a 40% increase of members and a 30% increase of fees per member in the coming 5 years.
- Lobby for more accessible company financing, that accepts movable assets as a collateral for loans (important for a country where half of the population lives in 'gers' (tents).
- Better briefing the membership on legislative proposals
- Strengthening the co-operation with professional/sectoral organisations



A seminar on Strategic Planning

In October DECP and MONEF held a workshop on the membership issue. Out of a total of 92.000 firms in Mongolia only a third is economically active of which 8000 firms are MONEF members. All firms are direct members; in the regions they are member of the regional association (and thus not paying to the central organisation!). Membership fees are fixed every 4 years by the General Assembly. Each member firm receives a certificate; in addition there is an award system with categories of Gold, Silver and Blue 'outstanding firms'.

MONEF generates most of its income through programmes it is executing for the government; next come services (training etc.) and membership fees are only third.

Organisations should aim at creating a 'virtuous circle' of excellent staff => excellent lobby/services => thus attracting/retaining members => generating finances, that allow for paying an excellent staff etc. Training services should be a by-product of lobbying, to which activity MONEF is shifting its focus.

After in-depth and lively discussions the participants established a strategic action plan for recruiting and retaining members comprising the following elements:

1. Moving from fixed fees to a payroll system with minimum fees
2. Flexibility with fee discounts, especially when introducing the new system, and a reduction in case of double memberships
3. Acquiring the sectoral associations as members: they should pass on a share of the fees they collect to MONEF.
4. Developing a new link with the regional associations that would have to pay a fee for (lobby) services they receive from the central organisation.

They agreed that the dependence on government funding has to be reduced in order for MONEF to remain the independent voice of Mongolian business.

2.4 Regional co-operation in the East African Employers Organisation

By Andrew Moore.



The successful development of the East African Community (EAC) is seen as key to the future development and prosperity of the East Africa region as it competes in the global economy.

The EAC was originally founded in 1967 but collapsed in 1977 and was officially revived in 2000. In 2010 the EAC launched its own common market for goods, labour and capital within the region, with the goal of a common currency by 2012 and full political federation by 2015.

Although a certain amount of work was undertaken in recent years to open up the borders across East Africa, a considerable amount of work still needed to be done to achieve these very ambitious goals. It was imperative therefore that Employers Organisations (EO's) rose to the challenge and played a major role in these developments at an EAC level. EO's had a responsibility to their members to ensure that the environment in which employers would be working will be one within which businesses could develop and grow.

It is in this context and with the support of the DECP that the following EO's: Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE), Private Sector Federation (PSF) Rwanda, Association of Employers Burundi (AEB), Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE) and Zanzibar Employers Association (ZANEMA) came together to discuss how they could respond to the challenges that lay ahead for employers with specific emphasis on employment issues. Resulting from the first meeting in Kampala in 2009 it was agreed that a new organisation should be established providing a focal point to represent their positions at an EAC level. This was the first step in forming the East African Employers Organisation (EAEO) which was established in Tanzania in September 2011. The

EAEO was formally launched at an event in Arusha in April 2012 in the presence of Ministers and senior representatives from the EAC and relevant stakeholders.

It was agreed that the EAEO would be governed by its Executive Committee which would be made up of the Chief Executives of each of its member organisations. This committee would be supported by a Technical Committee whose members would oversee the day to day work of the EAEO and act as the focal point within their own member organisations.



TradeMark East Africa (TMEA), a donor programme, supported the work of the EAEO for the next two years and provided funding for a full time coordinator to be based in the offices of the East African Business Council (EABC) in Arusha. This funding provided the opportunity for research work to be undertaken on a number of important employment related issues. An EAEO report was prepared and launched in Dar es Salaam in 2013 on the implementation of the EAC



EAEO Executive Committee.

Common Market Protocol and its commitments to the free movement of workers.

During the course of 2014 a number of important developments took place within the EAEO. A meeting of the Executive Committee took place in Nairobi in August 2014. During the course of this meeting it was agreed that Jacqueline Mugo (FKE) would complete her two year term as Chair and Rosemary Ssenabulya (FUE) would take over this important position. It was also agreed at this meeting that as the funding from TMEA had finished an alternative source of funding was required. Resulting from discussions it was agreed to consult the DECP to see if it was willing to provide initial funding for two coordinators. These coordinators would be based within their own employers organisations ATE in Dar es Salaam and the FUE in Kampala but would allocate a significant amount of their time to develop the work of the EAEO. These coordinators would be responsible both for policy development and also for administration and would be supported by two interns. Following a proposal put to the DECP agreement was reached and the work of the coordinators and interns started in November 2014.

A considerable amount of work was then undertaken by the coordinators which included undertaking a visit to Arusha to meet with the relevant staff at the EAC as well as meeting with representatives from the East African Trade Union Confederation. Meetings also took place with the East African Business Council (EABC) to discuss how the two organisations could work closely together in representing the interest of employers at an EAC level. Another key development to take place during this first visit by the coordinators was to start the process of the EAEO receiving “Observer Status” within the EAC. This status would in future provide the EAEO with access to high level meetings and communications at an EAC level.

We are pleased with the important steps that were taken in 2014, allowing the EAEO to complete the year on a positive note as it faced the challenges of the negotiations of the new Common Market Protocol in 2015.

2.5 Vietnam *Supporting Social Dialogue*

By Dirk Joosse



In Vietnam the DECP has teamed up with the Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council (VWEC), a subsidiary of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). Over the past few years this relation has grown to be the most substantial of our partnerships, largely because

VCCI/VWEC readily accepted DECP's suggestion to focus on negotiation training and the training of Vietnamese negotiation trainers in particular. This proved to be successful and has now been extended to mediation training. However, in our discussions with the VCCI/VWEC leadership, in particular with the Chairwoman of the VWEC, Mrs. Nguyen Thi Tuyet Minh, we have also looked at the larger picture of the Vietnamese economy, which is deeply affected by the

global economic crisis.

In the present difficult economic climate Vietnamese companies and foreign investors look very critically at the productivity of their plants and the cost of labour. This has led to a lot of social tensions and to labour disputes which threaten a downward spiral of gradual deterioration of labour relations. Against this background we have advised our Vietnamese colleagues to devise a strategy to achieve more harmonious labour relations in Vietnam. We agreed that a first step would be to start a dialogue with relevant parties/stakeholders such as the trade unions, the ministry of Labour, the trainers trained by DECP, universities and private sector companies.

This - for Vietnam - unprecedented social dialogue got off to a promising start in what was called a Consultation Conference in Hanoi in April. Participants included senior officials of the ministry of Labour, representatives of the General Confederation of Labour (trade union federation), academics, representatives of the VCCI, as well as a num-



The Consultation Conference in Hanoi

ber of trainers. Last but not least a number of senior officials of important Vietnamese companies also attended, such as Vinacomine, the Dai Duong Electric Company, Han Noi Commercial corporations and the Hoa Lan Joint Stock Company.

This diverse group of participants made for a lively discussion on a wide range of issues such as the new (2012) Vietnamese labour code, the limitations of Collective Labour Agreements, the limited role of trade unions in policy making, the need for a better infrastructure to structurally improve the communication between employers, trade unions and the government. There was widespread agreement that the kind of experience and techniques offered by DECP and adopted by the Vietnamese trainers are important instruments to achieve more harmonious labour relations.

Participants also agreed that this type of social dialogue/conference is useful and should be continued. Thus, a second consultation conference was held in November, again in Hanoi. This time discussions focused on ways to find a larger audience for the kind of negotiation and mediation training provided by DECP and VCCI/VWEC. The need for this type of training is obvious and widespread, but unfortunately the market is hardly aware of it. Therefore participants agreed, firstly, to set up a network/club of trainers that would promote further training and ensure the quality of the trainers.

Secondly, a concerted effort will be undertaken to spread the news about this type of training and raise its profile with the private sector companies. As a first step towards that objective, VCCI/VWEC will commission a professional marketing survey in order to draft a marketing plan that should be implemented through cooperation by VCCI/VWEC, the ministry of labour, the trade unions, and possibly a number of private companies. DECP will contribute to this effort but has made clear that VCCI/VWEC will have to work hard at finding ways and means to make this network of trainers and their provision of trainings an effort that will, in due time, be financially self-supporting. DECP's contribution will be temporary and will be gradually phased out.

Thus, DECP will have made a tangible contribution to the setting up of a sustainable social dialogue in Vietnam.

2.6 Zambia Better ICT, stronger organisation

by Jannes van der Velde



ICT in the true sense of the word has quickly become the backbone of many work processes at the Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE). The new ICT infrastructure allows staff to keep information about members up to date and accessible and has helped shorten the time that members take to pay

their annual membership fee.

Improvement of the computer equipment and infrastructure had been on ZFE's wish list for quite a while. With the growth of the federation and the growing strength of the organisation in 2014 the time had come to invest. The upgrade included the installation of new desktop computers, a wi-fi network and a state of the art network server strong enough to run an extensive database and to self-host the ZFE website. Emergency power tools are in place to cover for a power failure of up to 6 hours and a separate and cooled room for the server has been constructed.

The desired database came with DECP's help and technical assistance by the International Training Centre



Employer of the year award ceremony

(ITC) of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), who are running a program to equip their partners with the so-called Sugar CRM - CRM being short for customer relations management - (system). At the core of a CRM system lies a database with information about customers, i.e. members in the case of an employer's organisation. But the CRM is more than just a database. It allows ZFE staff not only to keep information about members up to date and accessible but also to send mass email like newsletters and invitations and to put relevant information on a connected website. The system also provides management information and helps to follow up membership fee invoices. Ever since the financial system was linked to the CRM it has become much easier to send invoices and follow up on these. This has resulted in a sharp decrease of the number of debtors, thus structurally improving ZFE's financial position.

All staff were trained to use the CRM and are actually using it, for instance to follow up communications with members.

The next step in the improvement of the ICT system is improving the website and connect the website to the CRM. This enables ZFE to partially update the website automatically, for instance a webpage on the ZFE membership will 'refresh' itself every time a relevant change is made in the database.



ICT officer Pondani Phiri: 'Big step'



'A big step forward.' That is how ZFE's ICT officer Pondani Phiri values ZFE's development in his field of work. 'It makes our efforts so much easier and effective. Work processes have improved. Communications in general are more efficient. No one asks for email addresses anymore because they all have the information available on their screens.'

Phiri took an extensive training with ITC ILO in Turin to become knowledgeable enough about the Sugar CRM to be able to implement and run the system and to train his colleagues in Lusaka. To keep the data up to date Phiri has developed a procedure to keep members' information up to date. To make sure that colleagues don't fall back into old habits and keep using the new program he used the oldest trick in the book: making all old databases and related documents completely unavailable.

Recently Pondani Phiri attended an extensive course in website management to be able to complete the next step in the plan: redeveloping the ZFE website and fitting it in with the overall ICT structure.



GEA Council meeting in Ghana.



Training the Masters in Turin.



MOU between VCCI and DECP.



A visit to the FEPT in Bolivia.



MONEF's Mr. Ganbaatar and Rogier Chorus.



Lobby and Advocacy workshop in Moldova.



FOODDRINK EUROPE pays a visit to its Albanian counterpart.



3. Facts and Figures

Mission and strategy

DECP's mission is to support and strengthen business and employers' organisations in a limited group of developing countries. Our strategy is to partner in such countries with the most relevant employers' organisation and share knowledge and experience, exchange good practices and provide consultancy where needed, as much as possible linked to or even within the daily routines of the organisation.

Countries

The world still counts a large number of developing countries. The DECP, mainly funded by the Dutch government as part of Dutch development assistance, is not at liberty to partner with all of these developing countries. Nor are the other Dutch 'Private Sector Development'-programmes (PSD-programmes) that are mainly or substantially funded by the Dutch government.

By the end of 2014 the DECP was operational in 16 countries (see Table 1). This implies or may seem to imply that the DECP is rather selective in its country approach. And in fact, in a way it is.

There are a number of countries where the state of affairs is highly unstable and occasionally even hostile towards foreign visitors. Our programme cannot make a sensible contribution under such circumstances.

Secondly, we cannot and do not want to impose ourselves or our ideas upon any partner in any country. So, we are demand-driven. In – again - a number of countries we have come across potential partners who showed little or no interest in our contribution. And some of them for very good reasons, because they are already well on their way. With these we try to maintain a relationship as friends. Their experience, skills and expertise can be of great value to boost regional cooperation between and beyond DECP-partners.



Thirdly and finally, our capacity is limited - in terms of finance as well as experts with the required mix of skills (including linguistic), experience, personality and seniority to do our job our way. So, some countries are still on our list for the near future.

Partners

Though almost every country counts multiple business organisations, we strongly believe that in view of our programme's objective it is unity that builds strength, not division. Secondly, improving the business climate – an essential element in our vision - is also a means to an end, the end being structural alleviation of poverty by way of formal (and proper) employment. It makes the employers' part of the business climate extremely important.

It is for these two reasons that in most countries we team up with the apex employers' organisation. Local circumstances are however decisive. So, as Table 1 shows, in some countries we do have more than one partner. In most cases this is because partners are closely linked, in one case (Bolivia) it is because the provincial level is of greater relevance vis-à-vis our objectives.

Table 1: List of countries and partners in 2014

Albania	BiznesAlbania and the National Businesswomen Association	●
Armenia	Republican Union of Employers of Armenia (RUEA)	●
Bolivia	Federación de Entidades Empresariales Privadas de Cochabamba (FEPC)	●
	Federación de Empresarios Privados de Chuquisaca (FEPCh)	●
	Federación de Empresarios Privados de Santa Cruz (FEPSC)	
	Federación de Empresarios Privados de Tarija (FEPT)	
	Federación de Empresarios Privados de La Paz (FEPLP)	●
Burundi	Association des Employeurs du Burundi (AEB) and the Association des Femmes Entrepreneurs du Burundi (AFAB)	
Ghana	Ghana Employers Association (GEA)	●
Indonesia	The Indonesian Employers' Association (APINDO)	●
Kenya	Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE)	●
Macedonia FYR	Business Confederation of Macedonia (BCM) and the Association of Business Women of Macedonia (ABW)	●
Moldova	Confederatia Nationala a Patronatului din Republika Moldova (CNPM) and the Federatia Nationala a Patronatului din Agricultura si Industria Alimentara (FNPAIA)	●
Mongolia	Mongolian Employers Federation (MONEF)	●
Pakistan	Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP)	
Rwanda	Private Sector Federation of Rwanda (PSF)	●
Tanzania	Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE) and the Zanzibar Employers' Association (ZANEMA)	●
Uganda	Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE)	●
Vietnam	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council (VWEC)	●
Zambia	Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE)	●
<p>● P.A. = partnership agreement. A partnership agreement is usually signed once cooperation between DECP and the partner(s) is on its way, that is when there is detailed understanding of 'demand' and 'supply' and trust shared by all parties that a multi-annual agreement will also by itself contribute to fruitful cooperation.</p>		

Activities

- Advisory missions

Advisory missions are the prime product and output of DECP. They are generally carried out by a 'country manager' who is much more than a linking pin between DECP and a respective employers' organisation. DECP's country managers are experts in the field of organising employers towards lobby and advocacy. Their expertise comes from years of practical experience. Years that also provide them with the kind of seniority that is required to really make the connection. It gives them a leading edge in becoming a trusted partner in whom the executive director of an employers' organisation can confide. And such confidence is much needed to make consultancy, training, workshops and conferences worthwhile.

DECP's country managers visit 'their' employers' organisations up to two to three times a year, to actually 'sit' together with the Executive Director, members of the board and senior staff to put things to work. Things like a strategic plan or a business agenda for example. It is as hands-on as possible; we dislike producing paper to occupy shelf or drawer space. In between their visits, country managers are in regular contact with 'their' partners using modern devices like email, Skype, etc.

In 2014 DECP's country managers carried out 64 advisory missions, many of which were alongside other activities such as a conference or a workshop. These missions were carried out in a total of 18 countries.

Advisory missions



- Training and workshops

Major trainings are frequently organised in close cooperation with the ILO Training Centre in Turin, either in Turin or on location in the country or region. These trainings can be as 'basic' as the 'Effective Employers' Organisation'-training that deals with all aspects of organising employers, but just to grasp the basics. They can, however, also be as specific as an in-depth training on how to set up a specific new service to members. Such trainings usually take up to 4 or 5 days.

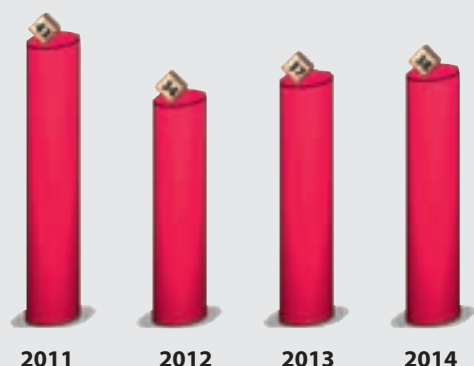
They are mostly carried out by bringing together participants from employers' organisations in a particular region, which also helps to build regional relationships.



An East African policy workshop.

Workshops are more limited in time and scope, dealing with a specific topic like 'How to set up a newsletter' or 'Lobby, Core Business of EO's'. They are focused on practical exercise and can be concluded with specific assignments like actually producing a newsletter or writing a press communiqué and organising a real live press conference within a defined period of time.

Training and workshops



In 2014 DECP carried out 38 trainings and workshops with a total of 804 participants. Of these trainings and workshops 9 were at a regional level (i.e. including participants from more than one country).

Trainings and workshops address a range of topics: governance, attracting members, lobby and advocacy, providing services, etc.

- Conferences

Conferences are one way for employers' organisations to get in contact with their members. These conferences are organized by the employers' organisation and they are fully responsible for its contents. DECP supports the activity with a small financial contribution and with the presence of the DECP country manager. A total of 270 participants attended these conferences in 2014.

Conferences



- Finance projects

DECP is generally opposed to budget-funding. It is too easy to become addicted to donor funding and extremely difficult to survive once the donor stops his contribution and members have to pay for what they have over the years become used to getting (almost) for free.

Yet, without some financial support an organisation may find itself trapped in a vicious circle, sometimes even unable to stand up as an organisation. If (potential) members do not know what the organisation is (or could be) doing, why should they become a member and pay their subscription, let alone pay on time and to the proper amount? So, too often they simply do not become a member or do become a member but simply don't pay.

But money is needed to produce newsletters, to set up a website (and keep it up-to-date!), to start a service, etc. Advertising paid for by members may finance a newsletter or a magazine, but in the beginning what do you have to show for?

On such occasions DECP may provide some 'seed money', but always limited in time and amount, clearly specified and conditional.

Finance Projects



In 2014 DECP provided financial assistance in 26 cases to all in all 12 partners in 8 countries, most frequently to co-finance a study, a survey, starting up a newsletter or a website.



In Burundi we supported the setting up of a health insurance scheme for workers in the private sector, the Mutuelle du Secteur Privé (see picture above).

The biggest financial contribution is, however made in cooperation with FNV Mondiaal - DECP's counterpart focussing on trade union development in developing countries - to a project by The WageIndicator Foundation (www.wageindicator.org).

Cooperation between DECP and WageIndicator started in 2011 and focused on improving the social dialogue in Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana by providing - via the internet - detailed and continuously updated information on wages, wage formation and also labour law in the country, readily accessible to all parties concerned: employers, trade-unions, workers, politicians, scholars, etcetera. The programme has been expanded to take Uganda and Rwanda on board as well and will run at least till 2015.

WageIndicator started in 2001 in the Netherlands out of an initiative taken by the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Labour Studies (directly affiliated to the University of Amsterdam) and FNV, the Dutch Trade Union Federation. Today WageIndicator covers over 80 countries around the world.

In DECP's view there can be no discussion about the value of real information: information that is accurate, factual, objective and up-

to-date to build and foster dialogue. It is the only information parties should bring or be allowed to bring to their dialogue and negotiations.

Achievements

All of the above activities are generally called 'output'. It is the type of result DECP can be held accountable for.

Still, rendering advice, organising trainings, doing workshops or providing for the purchase of printing material or a computer, always remains a means to an end. The objective is independent, representative, well governed, self-sustaining employers' organisations effectively advocating the interests of private business vis-à-vis governments and the public at large, thus contributing to a better business climate and more formal and proper employment.

So, can DECP's performance be measured in terms of an improved business climate of the target countries? An increase in jobs? Less unemployment? It will be impossible to ever answer any such question with an honest and wholehearted 'Yes!' though it is clearly the focus of what DECP is about.

We urge our partners to single-mindedly work towards the necessary improvements and time and again we point to research data provided by the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation.

Doing Business



A very useful instrument to our partners is the information that has been - since 2004 - collected annually by the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation and is presented in yearly 'Doing Business'-reports.

It is a work in progress, which makes year by year comparisons somewhat difficult. The major significance however, is not so much the overall ranking of partner countries. It is rather the detailed information it provides on a well-selected set of items that are of great importance to anyone who contemplates starting up a business or who actually runs a small or mid-sized business in any of the economies surveyed (which in fact are almost all the economies around the world). The items in the DB 2015 listing are: (1) Starting a business; (2) Dealing with con-

struction permits; (3) Getting electricity; (4) Registering property; (5) Getting credit; (6) Protecting Investors; (7) Paying taxes; (8) Trading across borders; (9) Enforcing contracts; (10) Resolving insolvency.

If the doing business climate in your country ranks high in worldwide comparison, but shows poor performance in providing you with e.g. electricity (many procedures, many days to get connected, high costs), would that be acceptable since registering property in your country is as easy as can be? The answer, of course is a clear and absolute 'No'. And so it should be a top priority on the agenda of the apex business- and employers organisation.

The detailed information that is available for each country on the website is very helpful in assessing and understanding the precise needs of the business community in focussed discussions with members. That is why we consistently draw our partners' attention to these reports and in particular to the Country Report that is available for every single country at www.doingbusiness.org.

Measuring Characteristics

Measuring achievements is as important as it is a methodological challenge.

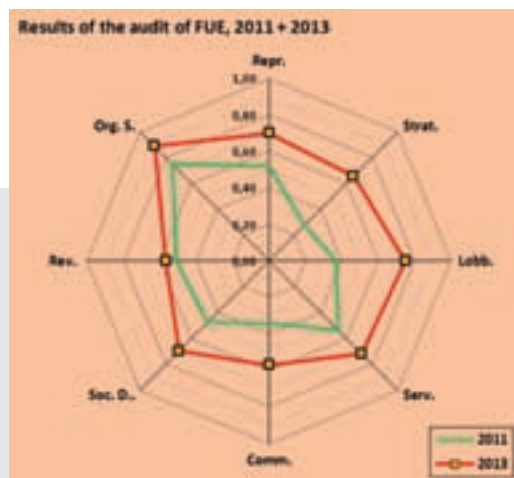
We have developed a method that focuses on eight important characteristics of an employers' organisation. We address these characteristics in a questionnaire totalling 57 questions overall. Each question requires assessment of a specific issue, situation or aspect referring to one of the eight characteristics on a scale that ranges from 0.0 to 1.0.

The various assessments result in an average per characteristic. These averages are graphically presented in a 'spider web' graph, immediately showing the difference in comparison to an ideal situation (that is when all characteristics would meet a full 1.0; such an orga-

nisation would be beyond any possible improvement and can therefore only exist in our imagination) as well as to previous assessments.

The characteristics the DECP method assesses are the following:

1. Representativeness
2. Strategic orientation
3. Lobbying
4. Services to members
5. Communication
6. Involvement in Social Dialogue
7. Revenues of the organisation
8. Organisational structure, including Governance



The spider web graph above shows the results per characteristic of assessments carried out in 2011 and 2013 of one of our partner organisations. In 2015 a new assessment will be carried out.

The graph clearly shows that over the years improvements were achieved regarding almost all the characteristics especially in representativeness, strategic orien-

tation and lobbying. On the other hand there is quite some room left for improvement especially with regard to revenues.

The graph also shows we move in little steps. No chance of leaping to 1,0 scores on any characteristic without distorting reality.

Evaluation

There is one type of result that, although it still is not outcome, is more than output. It is how our output is evaluated by the recipients.

A first evaluation of the entire programme was done

South Asian business on Minimum Wage issues

At the end of October the South Asian Forum of Employers (SAFE), that was set up in 2011 with the support of DECP, held its 4th meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Representatives from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangla Desh and Sri Lanka exchanged information on minimum wage (MW) policy developments in their countries. Some of the conclusions that were drawn are:

- MW levels should be set by tripartite bodies, not by political or populist interference
- Make MW increases as objective as possible, with a link to inflation
- Regional and sectoral variations are acceptable; exceptions should be limited

- Employers' representatives in Wage Boards that set MW levels should be briefed and trained on negotiation skills.

- Importance of MW data collection and sharing inside SAFE

SAFE also discussed membership policies and recent lobby activities at the national level. The updated SAFE website www.safe.org.lk was presented by its webmaster. It now has the possibility to upload position papers of the SAFE members, and to share info on events and meetings that are open for SAFE. A window on comments and questions is available: all members are automatically informed by e-mail. The Sri Lankan organisation EFC appointed webmaster Dasunk, who will help SAFE members with problems.



during a Midterm Review conducted by outside consultants in the beginning of 2009. Their survey showed clear appreciation among our partners. Another overall evaluation of the programme has been carried out in 2013 and concluded that the programme is effective, additional and relevant.

Trainings and workshops are generally evaluated using an evaluation form in which participants are grading the quality of the organisation of the workshop, the applicability of its content, the quality of the expert contribution and the benefits to the partner organisation.

Gender



Valentina Disoska and Mile Boskov resp. President of ABW and BCM

Despite numerous obstacles in many countries the number of female-owned businesses continues to increase. However, we at DECP are convinced that things are not moving fast enough and that much more can and should be done. We are therefore pleased that in a number of partner countries we have found a second partner in the women business organisations alongside the apex employers' organisation. This is the case in Albania, in Burundi and in Vietnam. And we are aiming for more: In June 2014 DECP supported a conference in Macedonia on "Women Entrepreneurship: Promotion, Lobbying and

Advocacy" organised by the Association of Business Women of Macedonia (ABW), which is a member of our partner organisation Business Confederation of Macedonia (BCM).

Do women participate in our activities? The next graph shows that over the years, they clearly do! The number of women participants in 2014 even totals 421 women versus 380 men.

Participants in training & workshops



When talking about gender, one type of activity deserves a special mention.

Starting in November 2011, the ITC-ILO Programme for Employers' Activities, supported by DECP, developed a project called 'Employers' organisations and women entrepreneurs: How to reach out?' which aims at identifying mutual benefits for EO's and women entrepreneurs to work together and ways to do so effectively.

The first expert workshop -in Turin- was so highly valued by participants that ITC-ILO and DECP decided to hold more of this type of workshops in the regions. In 2012 events were organised in Johannesburg (attended by staff and board members of business organisations from 12 African countries) and in Bangkok (attended by members from business organisations from 12 Asian countries).

In 2013 this activity was continued with regional workshops in Ouagadougou attended by staff and board from 9 different Frenchspeaking countries in Africa and later in that same year in Kingston, attended by board or staff members from business organisations from 12 countries in the Caribbean region.



In June 2014 a similar workshop was held in Casablanca (attended by 17 women and 1 man) with 6 business organisations from North African countries. And in November a Stock-taking conference took place, again in Turin. The highlights of this project were as follows:

- 150 staff and board members from Employers Organisations and Women Entrepreneurs Associations worldwide were trained (mostly women);
- Surveys, case studies and training materials were developed;
- Good practices were identified and discussions took place on how to effectively reach out to women entrepreneurs;
- Concrete action plans were developed and the impact of these plans was evaluated;
- A Guidance toolkit as well as a web based platform for participants has been developed.

This website can be accessed through the following link: <http://www.itcilo.org/en/the-centre/programmes/employers-activities/world-map-good-practices>

These activities underline the importance of women entrepreneurship in boosting the economies of developing countries. However, for women to start a business is often even more difficult than it is for men. There are formal obstructions like property rights, but also important informal impediments to women entrepreneurship.

Both require special attention from the dominant business and employers' organisations – including

women business federations – since they are in a position to improve the country's business climate – for men as well as for women.

Women business federations are nonetheless a very important and indispensable 'portal' to voice the specific interests of women entrepreneurs within and - in close cooperation with the apex business and employers' organisations - also outside the business community.

DECP in cooperation

National partners

DECP is one of the Netherlands' development programmes directed towards private sector development. While others, like PUM and the NEA (Netherlands Enterprise Agency), support companies and FNV Mondiaal and CNV International support trade unions, DECP is focused on promoting and fostering a stimulating business climate by enhancing the capacity of employers' organisation to speak on behalf of the business and employers' community. The separate programmes deal with complementary but not identical aspects of private sector development and often at different stages of development. Still, they do cooperate when cooperation brings benefits to all. E.g. at the request of FNV Mondiaal, DECP received a delegation of Peruvian employers to inform them about Social Dialogue in The Netherlands. (see picture on next page).

DECP and its Dutch partners in private sector development (PSD) regularly meet in a PSD-platform and



A visit by Peruvian social partners.

though every participant in this platform is more or less unique, they very much fit together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece is clearly focused, together they make almost the whole picture.

In every country in which DECP is actively supporting the main employers' organisation, we are in close contact with the Netherlands Embassy. Without their marked support and detailed and up-to-date knowledge of the local situation, DECP would not be able to do its job. We are very grateful for their continuous support.

On the national level DECP in 2014 again worked frequently with the Algemene Werkgeversvereniging Nederland (AWVN), e.g. in Vietnam where AWVN trainers continued their substantial investment in the training of trainers on negotiations' skills and coaching them when they give their own trainings.



PUM expert Roos Stolker and former PUM representative Hedwig Kowsoleea in Bolivia

International partners

Since the start in early 2006, DECP cooperates closely with the training centre of the ILO in Turin (ITC-ILO). Over the years ITC-ILO and DECP have in cooperation conducted many multi-day trainings on The Effective Employers' Organisation, on Lobby and Advocacy, Membership Services and on the Effective Business member Organisation (Master training). These trainings were held in the region as well as in Turin. ITC-ILO has furthermore proven to be a valuable partner to DECP in organising multi-country trainings and meetings as is often done in the East African region.

DECP also works with the ILO's bureau for employers' activities ACTEMP as well as with the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) in Geneva. We encourage membership of the IOE for those of our partners which are not yet a member.

DECP and IOE/ACTEMP/ITC are not the only ones who are in support of employers' organisations. Since 2009 DECP has contacted EO-support organisations from Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Germany. In October 2012 a DECP delegation visited the NHO in Oslo to exchange views and compare notes on a number of countries where both DECP and NHO have deployed activities such as i.a. Ethiopia, Vietnam and Indonesia. In 2013 these consultations were continued by e-mail and phone. DECP paid another visit to NHO in early 2014 to exchange ideas and assess opportunities for cooperation.



Masters at work

4. Looking ahead

A slight change of course for a smoothly riding vehicle.

by Paul Witte



If DECP were a vehicle it could be described as a well-engineered and smoothly driving car with unlimited mileage ahead. The new driver however would like a slight change of course. Not for the sake of a new driving sensation but because of the fact that the environment changes rapidly. So DECP has to

adapt to the change of scenery.

Thus, DECP should firstly focus on increasing the sustainability of its efforts. Our investments in transferring knowledge and experience should make a lasting impact on the partner organizations. Therefore DECP has become more process oriented instead of project oriented. Secondly, we have noted that there is a wide variety of organisations both in the Netherlands and abroad, working on private sector development. How do we best organize cooperation and avoid competition? Thirdly, we have seen some partner organisations, with a little help from DECP, improve their performance to a level that we call 'graduation', meaning that DECP's assistance can be slowly phased out. Within the financial limits of the program this enables us to start the DECP program in new countries. Fourthly, DECP's success was above all achieved through the quality of the country managers, several of whom have already worked for many years on the program. In order to safeguard the continuity of the program and as a consequence of adding new countries, new country managers will be needed. Finally, public opinion requires ever greater transparency and accountability by the government. Hence, the vexing paradox of increasing monitoring and evaluation

on the one hand, while keeping the administrative burden tolerable on the other.

Sustainability

During the eight years of DECP's existence, we learned that one-off 'stand alone' projects mostly have a low impact on the development of partner organizations. Building up trust through coaching the board and staff has achieved a more enduring effect. Changing organisations is mostly changing attitudes. We all know how difficult that is. Organisations change slowly but steadily. Therefore DECP developed the spider diagram so that our partners' performance on the 8 criteria can be monitored. After the surveys carried out in 2011 and 2013, we will undertake a new survey in 2015. DECP has developed from a project to a process organisation. The next step in our coaching of partner organizations is increasing their financial self-sufficiency. Primarily this means that members need to pay their membership fee. Organisations will be trained in communicating frequently about what they are doing and what they have achieved, this combined with a firm management of the debtors ledger. Occasional small investments in staff or facilities will also be necessary. We have supported the development by ITC-ILO of software and training courses for Customer Relations Management (CRM). It will be the task of the country managers to see to it that the knowledge and expertise thus acquired remains alive and available within the partner organizations. Sustainability thus implies that a viable structure remains in place, once DECP's country manager has left.

Cooperation

In the Netherlands there are quite a few organizations active in the private sector development area. Although these organizations each have their own mandate and specific field of expertise, cooperation across the borders can be very useful. DECP intends to play an active role in this cooperation.



This will also be the objective with similar organizations abroad. E.g. the cooperation with ITC-ILO will certainly be continued. Here too the DECP-country managers will try and monitor the implementation of the knowledge and expertise that was acquired in the training courses of ITC-ILO.

We have found that there are organisations somewhat similar to DECP in a number of neighboring donor countries. We are looking for opportunities for cooperation, esp. in Africa. Although their approach is somewhat different from DECP's, we will investigate whether cooperation can intensify mutual programs and can prolong their duration, in case DECP would want to terminate its contribution.

New countries

In recent years some partner organizations improved their performance to such a level that our support was no longer necessary. They have "graduated", in our perception. In the years ahead we expect a few other organisations to do likewise, especially in East Africa. All the same, the underlying infrastructure remains rather weak especially when it comes to a sustainable funding of these organizations. That's why we are considering a system of graduation under which DECP support for these organizations will be more gradually reduced.

As outlined in our business plan 2014-2017 the employers' organizations of Colombia, Philippines, Cambodia and Thailand will be considered as possible new partner organizations for the coming years.

New people

Because of DECP's approach as a trusted advisor of our partner organizations a lot of knowledge and experience has been accumulated by our country managers. DECP has always tried to select advisors with lots of experience, a good track record and many "flying hours". But they are not getting any younger. Younger advisors have recently been recruited and they expressed a wish to benefit from their older colleagues' experience. Also, as a result of the selection of new countries, new experts and specialists in specific fields may be invited as an advisor for DECP. Bearing in mind the above, DECP will start an "intervision" program where specific knowledge and experience will be shared among the advisors.

Reporting

The DECP way of advising has always been characterized by long-term processes, rather than short-term projects. Furthermore, because of the trusted position of the advisors some information will have to remain confidential. Change comes slowly but steadily. It is hard to measure immediate results of a single activity. That's why DECP has elaborated the spider diagram. In view of the need for more transparency regarding the disbursement of development aid the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will introduce in 2016 a new reporting system called the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). This system is focused on projects, measurability and complete openness for everybody. In the years to come DECP intends to cooperate with the ministry to harmonise DECP's way of working with this new reporting approach.

The DECP organisation

In 2014 the DECP board consisted of:



Hans de Boer
Chairman of
VNO-NCW
(Chairman)



Michaël van
Straalen
Chairman of
Royal MKB-
Nederland
(Vice-chairman)



Mees Hartvelt,
AWVN
(Treasurer)



Albert Jan Maat,
Chairman of
LTO Nederland
(Member)



Elco Brinkman,
Bouwend
Nederland
(Member)



Ineke Dezentjé
Hamming-
Bluemink
Chairman of
FME-CWM
(Member)



Niek Jan van
Kesteren,
Director general
of VNO-NCW
(Member)



DECP Senior and Office Management 2014

On DECP

The foundation Dutch Employers' Cooperation Programme (DECP) is a public-private partnership established by Dutch employers and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 2005 with the aim of strengthening the position of employer organisations in developing countries.

Via DECP, Dutch employer organisations offer professional expertise to employer organisations in developing countries.

Dutch employer organisations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs took the initiative to set up DECP because they believe that well-functioning business organisations can make a contribution to sustainable economic development in the partner countries.

DECP wants to strengthen the capacity of business organisations in developing countries by transferring knowledge and experience, by cooperating with national and international organisations and through

financial contributions to programme activities.

In implementing its programme DECP works closely with several international organisations including the ILO (in Geneva), the International Training Centre of the ILO (in Turin) and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) in Geneva. As one of the Dutch agencies active in the field of private sector development DECP cooperates with fellow agencies in the Netherlands, such as the PUM Netherlands Senior Experts programme and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO).

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