



**Decp** Dutch Employers  
Cooperation Programme

# DECP Annual report 2017



A light gray world map is centered in the background of the page. The map shows the outlines of continents and countries. The text of the Table of Contents is overlaid on the map.

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# Preface by the Chairman



Due to the combination of internal strengths and the growth of global trade, the Dutch economy is experiencing strong growth.

Consequently, Dutch companies are trading and investing more abroad. Not only within the European Union, North America and the economically strong regions of Asia, but also in developing and emerging countries all around the world.

In their investment assessments, strategic choices and decision making, Dutch companies find a country's business climate as well as its economic and social stability to be crucial factors. This is where the mutual programme of Dutch employers' organisations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs comes in, namely with the Dutch Employers' Cooperation Programme, DECP.

DECP focuses on the enhancement of employers' organisations, as major representatives of the local businesses, in developing countries in order to improve the local business climate and the social dialogue. As modern states have experienced over the last hundred years, prosperity is mainly the result of close collaboration between the three major economic factors: entrepreneurs, workers and government. In this the private sector is the ultimate driving force of economic growth.

In a growing number of countries, DECP works together with similar programmes of the Dutch trade unions Mondiaal FNV and CNV Internationaal in order to share the experiences of a harmony model in

social dialogue. The aim is not to copy the so-called Dutch polder model, but to learn from it and apply the strong parts of it when possible within the countries' own context.

The interventions of DECP are highly appreciated by the DECP partner organisations, as Berenschot Consultants concluded in its recent evaluation of the DECP programme. A large majority of the partners report that their role and effectiveness as an employers' organisation have increased since their participation in the DECP programme.

This is not only beneficial for the local businesses, but also for Dutch companies and investors that come to these countries. In the new DECP programme for the period 2018–2022, DECP is planning to involve Dutch companies based in the various DECP partner countries with the local employers' organisations. Not only will this be done to reinforce the position of these representatives of the local businesses, but also to share their experiences and insights into the way lobbying, advocacy, social dialogue and skills development could be shaped.

*Hans de Boer*  
Chairman VNO-NCW

# Introduction

2017 was an exciting year. It was the last year of the 2014–2017 programme period, which meant that a comprehensive evaluation would take place. Not only was the programme evaluation, conducted by Berenschot, crucial for the future of DECP, but the national elections in the Netherlands could influence the general criteria for foreign aid and trade as well. The staff of DECP was optimistic about the positive outcomes of these processes, as were the partner organisations that were interviewed by the Berenschot experts. This optimism was justified. The evaluator praised the efforts DECP had made over the programme period, the results thus far and the expected sustainability of their impact.

## ‘Capacity building and social dialogue remain the key carriers’

In 2017, the DECP staff also worked out a new programme for the 2018–2022 period. A five-year period was chosen based on the principles of the Theory of Change; the focus will be on the process of guiding partners toward the next level of professionalism. This is always a matter of step-by-step improvement and continuous learning. Generally, according to this approach, it takes five years to achieve sustainable impact. This vision is embraced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and decision makers therefore encourage the Theory of Change as a leading approach. In 2017 the transition from the existing programme to the new programme was set in motion. Capacity building and social dialogue remain the key issues of the DECP portfolio. There will be even more emphasis on cross-cutting activities and a supranational regional approach, in which employers’ organisations of neighbouring countries build up networks and reinforce each other. DECP works together as much as possible with local representatives of the Kingdom of the

Netherlands, such as embassies and consulates. If special expertise is needed by partner organisations – which might be available at companies and knowledge institutes in the Netherlands – DECP tries to link them to each other.



*Skills development is crucial to create job perspective*

DECP accelerated the introduction of the issue of skills development in its portfolio. Human development for both entrants and employees is a crucial condition to develop economic potential and perspective. Generally, governments and schools for vocational education do not succeed in sufficiently bridging the gap between the competencies of students and the demands of the labour market. Therefore, the private sector has to take initiatives itself, from which employers and employees might benefit. Partner organisations appeal to DECP to support them with regard to the complex issue of skills development.

## Publication of leaflet on social dialogue

In 2017 DECP started to explore the possibility of working within a new region, West Africa, more specifically the French-speaking countries which are united in the ECOWAS (Economic Community Of West African States). This is one of the regions in Africa that has an extremely high population growth. Two thirds of the population is younger than 25 and women on average give birth to seven children. Economic perspective, based on stability and social dialogue, is needed more than ever before. Therefore, the governments of several countries, including the Netherlands, are working together to contribute to facilitating economic growth in the region. According to the Berenschot assessment, the concept of DECP is an effective tool. In order to increase its impact, DECP intensified cooperation with likeminded organisations, especially those in Scandinavia. These organisations include trade unions like CNV Internationaal and Mondiaal FNV, PUM Netherlands senior experts, Maastricht University and ITC-ILO. In 2017 several combined activities have already taken place and all participants could benefit by sharing knowledge and experiences with regard to social dialogue, capacity building and other shared issues.

The national elections in March 2017 were followed by a long period of forming a new government. The new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aid and Trade decided to continue the outlines of the existing policy of her predecessor and the new programme proposition for the 2018–2022 period was approved. DECP is extremely pleased to be able to continue its work.

One of DECP's main objectives is to help partner organisations strengthen social dialogue. Strong social partners and a good social dialogue can play an important role in the economic and social development process in a country, as demonstrated by examples from various countries. A good social dialogue results in fewer strikes, improved protection of employees, greater employee satisfaction, increased employment and higher labour productivity. In many Western democracies, social dialogue has made an important contribution to growth and continued prosperity. However, it is important that employers, unions and government are constantly aware of their mutual dependency on the further development of society. Employers and unions, particularly in the market sector, can explain to politicians that it is specifically the market sector that generates prosperity and it is the task of politicians to create good conditions for this. The government must be willing to listen to social partners.

**‘It is specifically the market sector that generates prosperity’**

DECP decided to share the theoretical background and experiences on social dialogue with partners and other interested stakeholders by publishing a leaflet on this issue.

This leaflet gives an impression of what falls under the term social dialogue, what the benefits are of constructive discussions between employers and employees and under which conditions these discussions can flourish. The Dutch context is used to illustrate how such a social dialogue can be shaped, which institutions play a role and what the benefits are.

But, of course, a social dialogue is by definition specific to a country; it is not possible to transfer it one-on-one



to another country with a different history, different institutions and a different culture. The previously mentioned leaflet does not aim to dictate to others how they should arrange their social dialogue. Instead, it aims to inspire employers' organisations in other countries and to encourage them to explore the options for social dialogue according to the conditions in their country.

### **'Inspiring employers' organisations'**

The leaflet 'Options for social dialogue' was published in March 2017 and is available in English, French and Spanish. Partners, likeminded organisations, trade unions and other stakeholders have stated that they find the leaflet very useful.



Available in English, Spanish and French

## Objectives set by DECP and partners

Time passes gradually and it is interesting to look back on the main objectives country managers have set to achieve during the programme period DECP completed in 2017. These objectives concerned 17 countries explicitly. In addition, new ideas were launched with regard to reinforcing regional cooperation between employers' organisations, such as the EAEO (East African Employers' Organisation). One can easily derive a clustering which gives a good impression of the main goals on which areas in which DECP has worked over the years.

Developing a clear strategy and business agenda together with the management and staff of employers' organisations has always been part of the DECP approach. Actually, it is of no use trying to reinforce a partner if there are no clear long-term objectives towards the government and member organisations. It is not surprising that lobbying and advocacy always play an important role in this approach. Strategy should be evaluated and adjusted regularly. Therefore, DECP country managers see it as their responsibility to act as moderator during board retreats of the employers' organisation on a regular basis. This enables them to follow progress, to detect which restrictions and unforeseen setbacks prevented EOs from reaching their goals and what decisions can be made to adjust plans and set new goals.

### **'Employers' organisations define clear long-term objectives'**

A topic which gets a lot of attention, from both DECP country managers and employers' organisations, is the development of social dialogue. Employers' organisations are not isolated institutions, and neither are their members. Therefore, bipartite dialogue and decision making with trade unions are strengthening lobbying and advocacy towards the national and regional government. If the government is structurally involved, a constructive tripartite dialogue can take place.

### **Capacity building is defined as:**

**Enhancing the operational quality of the business membership organisations (BMOs).**

**The following are themes that fit into capacity building: strategy and operation, development of staff members, recruitment and retention, membership conditions and fees, lobbying and advocacy and female entrepreneurship.**

Strengthening representativeness, CRM and communication are focus points which are playing an important role in nearly every country. The question ‘Who do we represent?’ should always be easy to answer. This question can be related to criteria such as the majority of the formal private sector, members located in one specific region or spread over the country, or certain specific sectors. Ambitious employers’ organisations need the right tools to maintain a good overview of their data. Thus, at several partner organisations ITC-ILO installed CRM systems and staff was trained to use these systems efficiently. Improving websites – often in combination with developing a newsletter – is one of the channels used to inform member companies and affiliated sectors about the portfolio and achievements of the employers’ organisation. Communicating with members increases the retention rate. Furthermore, it is a way to inform potential members and it contributes to the recruitment goals. Some employers’ organisations – mainly in the larger countries, including Indonesia, the Philippines and Kenya, amongst others – are convinced that they can be more effective if they have a regional presence. A policy of regionalisation towards economically strong regions can achieve the objective of contributing to the success of employers in this region and increase the number of members. DECP country managers support this development.

### **‘Added value to attract new members’**

Developing new services, which meet the needs and expectations of member companies, is another objective that has been set in order to deliver higher added

value. Employers’ organisations that innovate and offer their members valued services, such as high-impact training, advice and business support, stay attractive. Moreover, if there is a clear added value, contributors are less likely to hesitate to pay their yearly contribution. For this reason, DECP country managers proposed the introduction of so-called membership packs. These contain very concrete information, like the explanation of mission and vision statements, board members, secretariat, advocacy issues, services and international affiliations. A dozen BMOs developed these packs with support of DECP.

A more geographical issue is the support of supranational regional partnerships of employers’ organisation. Although Ghana is not situated in the East African region, this country joined several activities in the EAEO region. In South East Asia, DECP supports ACE (ASEAN Confederation of Employers) which consists of eight Asian members. In the Himalayan region, the establishment of the South Asian Forum of Employers (SAFE) was initiated with the financial and organisational help of DECP and ITC-ILO. These objectives obviously fit into the main objectives of the DECP approach: capacity building and social dialogue. Emphasis can vary between countries and regions.

### **Social dialogue is defined as:**

**Improving the impact of negotiation, consultation and information sharing between business organisations, trade unions and national and regional governments, within the framework of social-economic policy.**

**On the one hand themes that fit into the social dialogue on company or sectoral level are: negotiation skills, collective bargaining agreements, wages, skills development, occupational safety and health and gender. On the other hand in the bipartite dialogue between employers and trade unions at the national or regional level a broad range of economic and social issues may be discussed, sometimes leading to consultations and agreements with the government.**



Facilitating board retreats

### Clusters of DECP objectives

- Developing a clear strategy and business agenda
- Facilitating board retreats
- Developing social dialogue
- Representativeness, CRM, communication and regionalisation towards economically strong regions
- Developing new services
- Supporting supranational regional partnerships

### ‘Sharing knowledge and experiences to reinforce each other’

Instruments that DECP applies to develop these main objectives are advising, coaching, training, (cross-cutting) workshops and conferences.

For a complete overview of projects and interventions that illustrate these objectives, please see the ‘activities’ section of the DECP website.

## Vietnam, train-the-trainer programme speeds things up

Over the last few years, DECP has trained over 30 trainers in Vietnam with the aim of expanding and speeding up innovations in the field of social dialogue. Skills that are relevant and even crucial for improving the business climate were transferred to those trainers. Moreover, skills on negotiation, mediation, lobbying and OSH (Operational Safety and Health) were discussed, trained and practiced. The trainers now are able to act at a professional level and share this knowledge and insight with the staff of employers’ organisations and their member companies. Per topic item more than 10 trainers are available in both North and South Vietnam.

### ‘Relevant issues for improving the business climate’

All the trainers are united in the VCCI/VWEC Club of Trainers. 2017 was the first year in which these quali-



Train-the-trainer. A continuous process



fied trainers started to apply their skills in practice. The people who participate in the training sessions are all professionals who deal in one way or another with the processes of developing the economy and internationalisation. Internationalisation is the key to further growth of the economy. This means for Vietnam participation in all kinds of Free Trade Agreements (FTA). To gain access to FTAs, some legislative changes are necessary. The issues mentioned above are useful tools for achieving this goal. Skilled workers contribute to the implementation of new collective labour agreements, the elimination of child labour and the development of freedom of organisation. The tools already mentioned help management and staff of employers' organisations and companies or sectors develop balanced employment relationships, a constructive and healthy working climate in companies and hence greater productivity and employee satisfaction. In 2017 the trainers together conducted 158 two-day courses on OSH, negotiation skills, mediation and lobbying. They reached a total number of 6896 participants from universities, trade unions, companies and sectors in various regions all over the country. With this new service, VCCI/VWEC could offer more added value to their members.

## Nigerian delegation on study tour in the Netherlands



*Mr Hans de Boer hands over a present to the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade & Investment Aisha Abubakar*



One of the fields of expertise of DECP is skills development. High standard vocational education and training is one of the key conditions to economic growth. This has been proven over the last decades in the Netherlands as well as in other prosperous countries. That is why the Nigerian employers' organisation NECA (Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association) decided to pay a study visit to the Netherlands, financially supported by the EU. NECA and the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) have been promoting Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria for over seven years through a public-private partnership for the same purposes. Nigerian youths are being empowered with skills for employment, entrepreneurship and wealth creation through the ITF-NECA Technical Skills Development Project (TSDP). Nigeria has approximately 200 million inhabitants, of which 25% are younger



*Welcome at the STC-Group, Brielle*

than 18. Well-functioning skills development programmes are crucial to creating economic advancement. NECA had asked DECP to develop and organise an enlightening programme.

Skills development is considered to be so important that the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade & Investment Aisha Abubakar decided to lead the delegation of decision makers and advisors during this study tour in the Netherlands. The members of the delegation can be seen as critical stakeholders who want to study the Dutch approach to skills development – especially at the vocational level – to compare it with projects that take place in Nigeria and to exchange experiences and achievements. All institutes that have been approached by DECP opened their doors. Schools for (technical) vocational education and training, companies and (regional) governments were involved. A detailed report can be found on the DECP website under ‘publications’.

## Achievements and reinforcements

DECP works together with a large variety of countries and employers’ organisations. At one extreme, DECP deals with countries that have just left civil war behind and are starting to recover and rebuild the organisation. On the other, some partners have already reached an advanced level, which manifests through strategic planning and improvements of the portfolio and, finally, through an increase in membership. Let’s take a look back on the last years’ achievements which, obviously, are the results of the four-year programme period.

In Indonesia, DECP and CNV Internationaal worked together on a training programme on negotiation skills. This program has some elements in common with the achievements in Vietnam, where DECP successfully trained around 30 local trainers to transfer knowledge and train skills in order to increase impact. In April a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Indonesian employers’ organisation APINDO and the Indonesian trade union KSBSI, co-signed by DECP and CNV Internationaal. An agreement was reached on the introduction of social dialogue (SD) in the Indonesian regions.



*DECP and CNV Internationaal cooperate in Indonesia*

As a start, five ‘model’ provinces were selected, in West Java and East Java, South Sumatra, East Kalimantan and South Sulawesi. In September, the first training took place in Bandung, the capital of West Java. In November a training was held in Surabaya, the capital of East Java and another was held in Palembang, the capital of South Sumatra. All of the trainings were attended by representatives from APINDO and from KSBSI. During each of the trainings, the DECP and CNV experts first explained the Dutch SD ‘polder model’ and the need to have a creative dialogue aiming at a win-win result. The catchwords are trust, transparency, integrity, respect and the need to share information. Then both APINDO and KSBSI presented subjects for mutual discussion. All participants agreed that it takes time to work together in this way and also that there is a need to find common ground for open and constructive discussions.

The ambition is to start a pool of Indonesian trainers who will introduce social dialogue in the other Indonesian provinces. The last two trainings are scheduled for early 2018, after which an evaluation of the project will take place before making any plans for the future.

Positive achievements were also reached with regard to improving communication in order to reach members and potential members. For example, the staff of the Moldavian employers’ organisation CNPM received training and advice from DECP on setting up a communication plan including how to develop a regular newsletter. With limited resources, an external specialist was hired (supported by DECP) to take over the communications role. Within only a few months, this person was producing regular, high-quality newsletters, which ensured the visibility of CNPM inside and outside the organisation. This resulted in an increase in new members. The know-how is being transferred to the staff of CNPM, who could take over and embed this activity in their regular tasks.

Working out a clear strategy and business agenda has



*The digital newsletter of CNPM Moldova. Supported by DECP*

been successfully completed in several African countries and step by step improvements were made. For instance, in Ghana three new regional offices were opened and the number of members has slowly increased.

## **‘Results of the four-year programme period’**

New countries involved in cooperation with DECP, such as Peru and the Philippines, are interested in developing the social dialogue. In cooperation with Mondiaal FNV, DECP advisors are now intensively supporting the partner organisation in Peru in setting up a dialogue with one of the most important trade unions. In order to increase impact in other regions, ECOP of the Philippines is now establishing new chapters in several regions. Social dialogue at a regional level is a main focus point.

Generally speaking, the idea is accepted that a dialogue between the employers’ organisation, trade unions and the government is the best framework for improvements that last.

Supranational cooperation in regions has gained ground in all parts of the world as a way for employers’ organisations to achieve more successes in dealing with national governments. DECP has contributed substantially to reinforcing EOs in the East African region as well as ACE (ASEAN Confederation of



Employers) and SAFE (South Asian Forum of Employers).

DECP continued to develop its vision on social dialogue. The leaflet on this issue, which was released in March, turned out to be a guideline and checklist for employers' organisations that definitely do not want to copy the Dutch polder model, but do want to get inspired by the models and examples.

## 'Intensifying cooperation with likeminded organisations'

Another achievement of the DECP portfolio is skills development as a building block of social dialogue. A vision document has been developed 'towards an action agenda'. This was immediately applied during two cross-cutting workshops in Nairobi and Bangkok as a kick-off for country-specific implementation of programmes and support. DECP is cooperating with Maastricht University on a regular basis on developing insight and useful tools with regard to workplace innovation, adult learning and organisational learning. One of the results is an in-depth survey to measure the learning climate in large companies. In order to upscale impact, DECP intensified coopera-

tion with likeminded organisations, especially from Scandinavia, with trade unions, PUM and ITC-ILO. Already in 2017 all could benefit by sharing knowledge and experiences with regard to objectives they all have in common, such as social dialogue, skills development, and capacity building both during face-to-face meetings and by phone and e-mail.

As preparation for extending DECP's activities to West Africa, a fact-finding mission was undertaken to Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso. Further discussion with leaders from West African BMOs was held during the Geneva ILO conference in June. Directors from several West African employers' organisations expressed their interest in receiving support in the field of skills development. They consider this a crucial tool to combat youth unemployment.

As a first result, a cross-cutting workshop on skills development was undertaken in Nairobi in November, in which 24 staff and board members of employers' organisations in nine English-speaking African countries participated. This workshop was also conducted in Bangkok in mid-December with 10 Southeast Asian countries participating. The fact-finding mission to West Africa will be followed up in early 2018 by offering the same cross-cutting workshop.





# What did DECP managers and experts learn to guide partners to the future?

Working constantly in the field, developing new ideas and concepts as a result of discussions with partner organisations and colleagues, is part of a lifelong learning process. After more than 12 years of existence, DECP is coming into a 3.0 phase, so to speak. Looking back on the last programme period, DECP can answer the question “What have we learned?”



One of the main things is that a lot of people – organisations – are generally more attached to short-term successes than long-term vision. A lot of processes, however, can only be successful if they are considered a top priority by decision makers. Developing and implementing a new and attractive newsletter can be done in six months. Developing social dialogue, however, needs at least five years. Thus, efforts should be made continuously to encourage partners to never stop spreading the news. For that reason, DECP continues to focus on capacity building and social dialogue as strong building blocks in its portfolio.

## **‘It takes time and perseverance to change’**

This insight convinced DECP of the necessity of working according to the principles of the Theory of Change for the new period. DECP developed a method in which business plans are included. This forces DECP and its partners to define final goals, milestones,

resources and so on. Altogether, this method makes the outcome and impact of efforts more measurable. Besides, it also makes it easier to agree on certain concrete steps and results with partners and to evaluate them.

Secondly, DECP learned that cooperation between neighbouring countries, which often share aspects of culture and language, can speed up processes. The experiences with cross-cutting workshops demonstrate that employers’ organisations that share a lot of their challenges are very open to each other’s arguments, methods and solutions. Their context and backgrounds are similar. Moreover, cross-cutting activities reinforce regional networks and stimulate diffusion of innovation. Peer-to-peer pressure turns out to be very effective. As a follow-up, DECP country managers and specialists stay with their partners in their own country-specific situation.



Thirdly, DECP is responding to the needs of the employers’ organisations. For DECP staff, contributing to the growth of companies and entrepreneurship by reinforcing employers’ organisations is second nature. For the employers’ organisation, this is a lifeline. The more companies and sectors benefit from the employers’ organisation, the stronger the employers’ organisation

will become. The same goes for its influence towards trade unions, governments and other institutions. Generally speaking, the main demand of employers is to be able to operate in a stimulating business environment with a strong and flexible labour market. They should be able to find the right skilled people at the right moment. That is why DECP accelerated the development of skills development programmes, among other social dialogue related issues. Mostly, the direct relationship between companies and other institutions are conditions for success, or reasons for failure. This is about knowing individual people to whom one can address a message. DECP is not talking about 'the educational system', but about the school for vocational education and training around the corner. DECP is not dealing with 'business' or 'industry' in general, but with CEOs and other decision makers. That is why DECP tries to encourage employers' organisations to make concrete action plans, to go out and make things happen, but only with regard to objectives they define themselves. DECP partners are very eager to initiate activities that contribute to increasing youth employment. The skills development activities fit perfectly into this objective. Not only where new entrants are concerned, but with regard to current

employees as well (lifelong learning). These developments will be continued in the new programme period.

According to the principles of the AIDA marketing model (Attention, Interest, Decision, Action), one can change an offer based proposition into a demand driven activity.

Last but not least, DECP learned that several organisations and institutions in the Netherlands and abroad have built up over the years a tremendous set of knowledge and experience. Most of these organisations can be complementary to one another. For that reason, DECP strengthened its network in which Dutch trade unions, foreign likeminded organisations, PUM (the Netherlands Senior Experts), ITC-ILO and Maastricht University all participate. Agendas, countries and projects are shared as well as existing networks, and the first concrete cooperation projects have taken place. This way of working allows all the parties to increase their impact without losing focus.

## **'Institutions do not make decisions. People do.'**

DECP is a learning organisation. It is not just a group of experienced people who go out and support employers' organisations as isolated units. DECP interacts constantly with others who are working in the same playing field and our main stakeholders the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and VNO-NCW, as well as with scientists who deliver research results and applicable know-how, and – above all – with DECP's partner organisations in emerging countries that want to contribute to the economic prosperity of their members. DECP partner countries benefit from the resulting stable and favourable a business climate, as do Dutch companies on the longer term.



*The AIDA model*

# Facts, figures and people

Working with employers' organisations means working with people. DECP applies a set of criteria to determine whether cooperation with an employers' organisation in an emerging country might be beneficial for both partners. The same goes for cooperating with likeminded organisations, trade unions and other organisations which can be complementary. However, the most important element is how people manage to work together, with the aim of achieving common objectives. Thus, facts and figures go together with people. That is why DECP asked several partner organisations to give their input on shared activities. This brings facts and figures to life!

In 2016 DECP had to phase out the cooperation with Albania and Macedonia for they are no longer on the Private Sector Development (PSD) list. This list is set up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and indicates with which countries Dutch NGOs can work. Economic growth to a certain level of national income can be a reason to remove countries from the PSD list. For DECP this results in phasing out cooperation step by step. In 2017, DECP phased out the cooperation with Moldova after 11 years of cooperation. Steps forward have been achieved during this period, especially in the field of effective communication and setting up an OSH (Occupational Safety and Health) service.

On the other hand, DECP is constantly looking for new strategic partnerships, especially when countries in a certain region can reinforce each other. That is why a fact-finding mission to Bangladesh took place in May 2017, followed by an advisory mission in October that year. BEF, the Bangladesh Employers Federation, is more than willing to work together with DECP in the field of membership management, for example. Besides, BEF is a member of SAFE, the South Asian Forum of Employers which has led to the fact-finding mission.

## About advisory missions and workshops

In 2017 DECP carried out 50 advisory missions, which is slightly more than in 2016. There was an increase in all types of activities. This is due to the fact that capacity increased and no major organisation changes took place. In 2017 DECP had seven country managers and experts in place. In addition, a new member of the staff was appointed, who is spending more than 50% of his time as a country manager and expert as well. In general, county managers visit their partner organisation two or three times a year. Often, this visit is carried out in combination with a workshop or board retreat.



Workshops and trainings can be country specific or cross-cutting. High-impact workshops and trainings have been carried out in Vietnam and Indonesia. In several cases, cross-cutting workshops are developed and conducted in cooperation with ITC-ILO, using each other's strengths and complementarity. DECP supported six board retreats in several partner countries in Africa and Asia. DECP's support has a high level of expertise – and thus added value – concerning issues such as defining long-term strategy and making it more specific in short-term action programmes, defining responsibilities and tasks of board members and membership management. In 2017 DECP conducted seven cross-cutting workshops together with ITC-ILO.

Table 1: List of countries and partners in 2017

Country	Partner(s)
Bangladesh	Bangladesh Employers Federation (BEF)
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)
Burundi	Association des Employeurs du Burundi (AEB)
Cambodia	Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations (CAMFEBA)
Ghana	Ghana Employers Association (GEA)
Indonesia	Indonesian Employers' Association (APINDO)
	Kamar Kadang dan Industri Indonesia (KADIN)
Kenya	Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE)
Malawi	Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM)
Moldova	Confederatia Nationala a Patronatului din Republika Moldova (CNPM)
Mongolia	Mongolian Employers Federation (MONEF)
Pakistan	Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP)
Peru	Sociedad Nacional de Industrias (SNI)
Philippines	Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP)
Tanzania	Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE)
Uganda	Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE)
Vietnam	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and
	Vietnam Women Entrepreneurs Council (VWEC)
Zambia	Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE)



A new workshop was developed by ITC- ILO called: 'Macro-economics for social negotiators'. Generally speaking, staff of employers' and employees' organisations have a legal and not an economic background, whilst knowledge in economics is needed in order to be efficient, fact oriented and successful in social dialogue, be it tripartite or bipartite. This was the starting point for ITC-ILO to develop this training, which is preceded by an eight-week-long e-learning course.

The training includes exercises on wage bargaining, budgetary policy and insights on collection and analysis of economic data. DECP was pleased to request ITC-ILO to organize this training for a delegation from the EAEO and EATUC (see the article of Rosa van Wieringen).



## Partners and associates describe working together

DECP works together with partner organisations in emerging countries. As a representative of employers' organisations, DECP is rather unique in the Netherlands. But DECP is not the only one working on strengthening social partners in emerging countries. Trade unions play an important role as well. More and more DECP and the Dutch trade unions Mondiaal FNV and CNV Internationaal are working together in order to promote and implement constructive social dialogue on either side of the spectrum and consequently we are increasing the impact of joint efforts. These efforts seem to be working, and not only in the perception of DECP.

## West Java Social Dialogue



*Miss Widarini*

*Dept Coordinator of the West Java social dialogue forum in Bandung*

*Funded by CNV International*

West Java is the location of the biggest industries in Indonesia. There are garment, textile, plantation, metallic, food and beverage industries. West Java has a total population of 46 million and consists of 27 regions and cities, which results in plenty of industrial relationships in various sectors.

Since the regional economic system in Indonesia is autonomous, it is possible for the regions within West Java to decide their own regional minimum wage. As there is a wide range of industrial relationships here, this has resulted in different wage types, including sector wage, labour-intensive wage, and provincial wage. The dissatisfaction of the employees regarding this issue has resulted in conflicts with employers, which usually end up in demonstrations for higher wages. This can affect the employers because higher wages can make these industries move out of the region.

## ‘Social partners work together in this workshop’

Social dialogue is a way for employees and employers to have a discussion about their concerns and needs, which results in a written agreement between both parties. Five years ago CNV Internationaal started a project for better cooperation between the social partners. After some years we developed MC CLA, a regional sectoral collective labour agreement, with the intention to improve social dialogue between partners.

The DECP-CNV workshop had a very good, open atmosphere. The working methods were interactive; the role-play between KBSBI unions and APINDO at the workshop sparked the interest of more trade unions in West Java. It was an eye-opener for us to see social partners working so well and closely together in this workshop.

Notwithstanding these positive steps, I hope that the leaders of all parties concerned, in particular the employers, will wholeheartedly support the social dialogue process which will consequently lead to the reduction of conflicts for the benefit of all.

## FKE participates in cross-cutting workshops

As a member of the leadership team at the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) and also working closely with DECP, I attended two cross-cutting workshops organised by DECP in collaboration with ITC-ILO. The three-day trainings, held separately on membership strategies and skills development, had participants from eight countries.

The Federation of Kenya Employers’ Executive Director and CEO, who champions skills development and membership programmes for members, was in attendance as well as a few of the other countries’ champions.

The membership strategies workshop, held from the 14th to the 16th of November, was a great eye-opener for me since one of my core mandates in the federation is to come up with membership strategies geared towards recruitment and retention. The highlights

were in regard to key metrics on membership for purposes of membership retention, membership cycle, developing a value proposition for different prospective membership, CRM usage, branding, segmentation and what keeps members engaged. The sharing of knowledge from both other countries, ITC-ILO as well as the DECP leadership team was very instrumental in the membership strategies workshop.

## ‘Skills development is an important condition to economic development’

We gained a lot from the workshop and as a federation we plan to improve some of the areas that we are working on and introduce some of the things we were not doing. Some of the things that we will be sure to implement and improve include: setting clear KPIs for membership which should be monitored and drive targets, enhancing usage of CRM, having a compass, improving the Membership Tools, engaging in intensive communication, involving all staff in membership service offering, and involving board members in sector services and the major recruitment influence.

Regarding the Skills Development workshop, as an employers’ organisation we need to recognise the fact that skills development is an important condition to economic development. Therefore it is important to develop programmes that support employers. As employers we should take the lead to change things and involve schools and government in innovative

*Rose Mwaura, Marketing & Business Development Manager, Federation of Kenya Employers*



skills development programmes. At FKE we have taken various initiatives towards ensuring that the skills mismatch and skills gaps are reduced in this country by being involved in boards that make decisions regarding vocational training as well as engagement with the universities to ensure placement of students for internship within membership companies. I look forward to more training with DECP and ITC-ILO.

## DECP conferences and financial support

Conferences are an important way for BMOs to get in contact with their members. DECP is sometimes present at these conferences but they are organized by the BMO, which is fully responsible for its contents. For example, three conferences were held on social dialogue in Indonesia between representatives of the employers' organisation APINDO and trade union KSBSI and six conferences were organized by VWEC/VCCI in various Vietnamese cities to gather recommendations from members on modifications for the new labour law. DECP supported a total of 16 conferences.

### 'Participation of women is obvious'

The increased number of conferences, trainings and workshops mentioned in this chapter has clearly led to an increase in the number of participants. Since 2014, the total number of participants increased from around 800 to 1450. DECP encourages women to parti-

cipate. In a lot of emerging countries that DECP is cooperating with, this participation is already obvious at the level of staff and board of EOs.

As the graph shows, DECP's financial support is kept at a steady, low level and only given in cases where DECP believes it will add value to the partner organisation and the organisation itself cannot fund this activity.



### 'Improve representativeness and income'

DECP's support is always conditional and limited in time and amount, e.g. hiring an intern for a short-term project, carrying out a survey in support of a planned lobbying action, or developing and printing a membership pack in order to reach new members and thus improve the organisations' representativeness and – consequently – income.



## Macroeconomics from various points of view



Rosa van Wieringen, Policy Advisor Africa. Mondiaal FNV

Most staff from trade unions and employers' organisations that engage in negotiations never receive proper macroeconomics training, even though the ability to substantiate policy proposals and positions with economic data and facts is imperative for a successful social dialogue. For this reason, Mondiaal FNV very happily agreed with DECP's proposal to jointly fund the participation of representatives of trade union centres and employers' organisations from several African countries in a course given by ITC-ILO on macroeconomics for social negotiators. The course consisted of 35 hours of distance learning and five days of face-to-face learning in Turin, Italy.

### **'This activity creates a better understanding of the position of the opposite party'**

The added value of having participants from both trade unions and employers' organisations is that this creates a level playing field and, through role play and exchange, gives participants a better understanding of the position of the opposite party. Travelling together and having open discussions also increases the level of trust on both sides.

According to trade union participants, this course helped them feel more comfortable in high-level economic discussions, gave them more insight into factors considered by employers during negotiations and allowed them to use economic data to formulate realistic demands and substantiate their arguments. Since the participating confederations now include macroeconomics for negotiators in their curriculum, the results will go beyond building the skills of the participating staff and contribute to enhanced social dialogue in the countries involved.

## Reinforcing Africa together

By Uzziel Twagilimana

CNV is reinforcing trade unions, while DECP is reinforcing employers' organisations. There is room for the cooperation of both organisations in Africa. While CNV partners strive for the promotion of decent work (labour rights, social protection, job creation/decent wages, and social dialogue), DECP partners strive for a conducive environment for their business growth. Promoting constructive social dialogue and youth employability are the priority areas of CNV partners for the programme 2017–2020. But this can only be achieved if there are viable companies with potential to employ sufficient workforce. This win-win situation can be achieved if DECP and CNV co-organise for instance some joint national or regional training programme on some topics such as "constructive social dialogue, the role of trade unions in the company growth", etc.

This cooperation between CNV and DECP can contribute to the scaling up of sustainable impact on workers and companies, increasing the motivation of the workers and their commitment to increased productivity. Trade unions and employers, as social partners could also conduct joint actions to fight informality (informal workers and informal employers) which does not respect labour rights and leads to illegal competition practices with formal companies.

The direct beneficiaries of our common activities could be the following: the top leaders of the major trade union confederations in the countries, the management team of some multinationals and big local



companies operating in the African countries (which may have a Dutch connection) and also the managers and trade union leaders of some strategic economic key sectors such as mining, breweries, food-processing, etcetera.

## ‘Scaling up of sustainable impact on workers and companies’

Through the opportunity of the new DECP programme 2018–2022 in the French-speaking countries of West Africa, we can even look at some innovative approaches to expand or complete current CNV strategies, working together on issues such as a skills development programme particularly where there is a gap between the labour market and the available workforce.



Cotonou, Benin  
Uzziel Twagilimana, CNV senior programme advisor for Africa

## The Art of Negotiation: why we need it

At MONEF, the Mongolian Employers Federation, we were very much interested to learn about effective communication, negotiation and bargaining because we never appropriately learned about this from the

experts and official materials.

MONEF is one of the key organizations that formulate the national industrial relation policy. It participates in the National Labor Tripartite Committee along with the Government of Mongolia and Mongolian Confederation of Trade Unions. Therefore, we had to acquire the necessary skills and techniques regarding negotiation and collective bargaining. It would definitely benefit us in the long term to protect the interests of employers.

We translated a very useful study book of DECP about collective bargaining, and we’re certain that it will help us to understand the importance of negotiation.

Currently, our internal staffs, our branch managers in all of the Mongolian provinces and some of the employers who participated in the national, sector and regional level collective bargaining committee meetings are reading the book.

The main reason that we translated the book was that it’s pivotal that our internal staff learn about collective bargaining techniques and acquire skills. Thus far, we’re not training our members on negotiation and collective bargaining.



Kh. Ganbaatar, Vice President, Executive Director Mongolian Employers' Federation

## Joint training at BRANA Haiti

CNV Internationaal organised, at the request of HEINEKEN, and with the support of the ITUC, a training seminar on social dialogue for the executive board of the trade union SYTBANA and the management of BRANA, Heineken's brewery in Haiti. CNV Internationaal and DECP jointly facilitated the three-day training programme in March 2017 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The objective of the intervention was to build capacity on social dialogue and negotiation skills in order to contribute to a constructive social dialogue and to work towards improved labour relations at the company. With the trade union expertise of CNV and the

expertise of DECP, the programme was able to provide tailor-made advice, and to facilitate towards improved knowledge and skills for the benefit of both sides, the employer as well as the trade union. The intervention resulted in structural improvements at BRANA; SYTBANA and BRANA informed us in a joint letter (January 2018) about the variety of labour issues that have been discussed and agreed upon, since the intervention, by means of constructive social dialogue.

Esther Droppers, Coordinator Africa,  
CNV Internationaal, the Netherlands



*BRANA employees and management work continuously on social dialogue*

## Learning by evaluating

Participants of workshops are always asked to fill in an evaluation form. This gives a first impression of the perception of the participants. Not only if they appreciate the workshop as such, but above all if they are likely to apply in their programmes what they have learned. The quality of workshops and the level of knowledge and experience of DECP experts is generally recognized and highly appreciated. During several cross-cutting workshops in 2017, a lot of participants once again emphasized the value of sharing experiences with their neighbouring countries and colleagues. Most of the time, they have a lot in common with regard to their cultures and their economic and political situations.

### ‘Putting into practice what has been learned’

Cross-cutting workshops contribute to building regional networks of professionals who reinforce each other. DECP experts use the evaluations to learn from each other’s experiences and to decide when an external expert should be hired to add complementary knowledge. This way, DECP gradually builds up a network of dedicated experts who understand DECP’s mission, its way of working and the expectations of partner organisations.

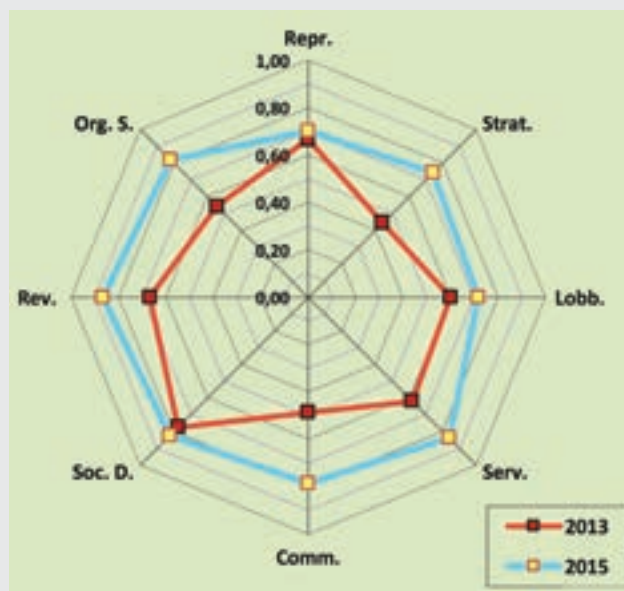
## Spider web graph followed up

Since DECP’s start, a monitoring method has been used that focusses on the eight important characteristics of a BMO to measure the results of efforts. These characteristics are addressed in a questionnaire with a total of 57 questions. 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 as well as to previous assessments.

The characteristics are the following:

1. Representativeness / membership
2. Strategic orientation
3. Lobbying
4. Services to members
5. Communication
6. Involvement in social dialogue
7. Revenues of the organisation
8. Organisational structure



The spider web graph above shows the results per characteristic of assessments carried out in 2013 and 2015 by one of the partner organisations.

### ‘Embracing the Theory of Change’

In 2017 DECP defined a new programme for the period 2018–2022, following the Theory of Change which requires another method of measuring characteristics. This means that, as of 2018, DECP will leave the spider web diagram behind and measure results, outcome and impact according to a new set of questions, which aim to clearly show the progress from a basic to master’s level. The public report of 2018 will explain this system in detail and describe the first experiences and results.

# At a glance

As the president of DECP has already put forward in his preface, practically all of DECP's partner organisations mentioned in the recent evaluation of Berenschot Consultants of the DECP programme 2014–2017 that their effectiveness at lobbying, advocacy and social dialogue has improved during the period of DECP support. This positive message encourages the management, country managers and specialists of DECP to work even harder. The ultimate compliments have to be made to the sponsors of DECP, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch employers' organisations, represented by VNO-NCW; they understood more than ten years ago that social and economic stability combined with an open business climate and constructive social dialogue could be the key to the prosperity of countries and that well-organised and effective employers' organisations had to play a distinctive role in this, as do constructive trade unions.

## 'The regional approach is effective and efficient'

During the course of the recent 2014–2017 programme, aspects of the plan shifted. The development from worldwide cross-cutting events organised on the campus of partner ITC-ILO in Turin to regional events organised in close relationship with regional umbrella organisations taught DECP that the global approach definitely works when it is about getting tacit knowledge. However, when it comes to the question "How do you do this and that?", exchange of experiences and role playing is essential. Cross-cutting activities in a regional setting are more favourable for achieving this, since most of the time one knows one's neighbours and one is aware of the local circumstances and cultural mindset. The request of "outsider" Nigeria to participate in DECP East African events certainly opened our eyes. These experiences encouraged DECP to intensify our regional efforts in Asia with ACE and SAFE, and with the initiation of collaboration in West Africa and the Pacific side of Latin America. An additional benefit of this regional approach is that it is much more effective and efficient to gather all participants

in one location in their region instead of shipping them to Turin. Partner ITC-ILO supports DECP wherever it can organisationally as well as logistically as far as regional events are concerned. All cross-cutting activities will be followed up by a country-specific programme in order to implement what has been learned. That means that cross-cutting and country-specific programmes are aligned and have to be very well tailored.

The introduction of the World Bank's Theory of Change into the new Business Plan 2018–2022 will increase the focus, accountability and sustainability of the programme. What we have seen in the past is that, due to changes in management and staff or due to a changing context, knowledge and experience vanished and DECP would have to start all over again.

Knowledge and experience must be secured in order to continue building upon what has been learned. In the Business Plan, goals and objectives are clearly set and have to lead to the desired impact. In the beginning of 2018, DECP's country managers have started with a zero-base assessment.

In the Business Plan 2018–2022, DECP chose to focus on the improvement of skills development programmes. DECP believes that initiatives by employers' organisations are mutually beneficial. Companies that have more and better skilled workers will be able to increase their productivity. Meanwhile, workers with more skills will find more and better employment. For the government this leads to less unemployment and a decrease in poverty. The success of the triple helix – the close collaboration between companies, education centres and the government – will be introduced to our partner organisations and their members. DECP will introduce and promote a so-called "action agenda": talking must undoubtedly lead to taking steps forward. In combination with the Dutch trade unions, local trade unions will be invited to participate in the skills development programme.

Due to my retirement at the end of 2018, I will close an exciting four-year period as director of DECP. I hope that, in line with my predecessors, my governing period has led to the necessary alterations that were needed for the progress of DECP's partners and will lead to a meaningful future and continuation of the DECP programme.

Paul Witte, director



# The DECP organisation

In 2017 the DECP board consisted of:



Hans de Boer  
Chairman of  
VNO-NCW  
(Chairperson)



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



Mees Hartvelt,  
AWVN  
(Treasurer)



Marc Calon,  
Chairman of LTO  
Nederland  
(Member)



Ineke Dezentjé  
Hamming-  
Bluemink  
Chairperson of  
FME (Member)



Maxime  
Verhagen,  
Chairman of  
Bouwend  
Nederland  
(Member)



Cees Oudshoorn,  
Director general  
of VNO-NCW  
(Member)



Niek Jan van  
Kesteren (DECP  
Board Advisor)



DECP Senior and Office Management 2017.

# About DECP

The 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 employers' organisations in developing and emerging countries.

Via DECP, Dutch employers' organisations offer professional expertise to employers' organisations in developing and emerging countries.

Dutch employers' 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 partner countries by transferring knowledge and experience through cross-cutting activities and country-specific support, by cooperating with national and international organisations and through financial contributions to programme activities. Furthermore, developing and stimulating the social dialogue and constructive negotiation in the partner countries are key objectives.

DECP attempts to connect local companies and sectors with Dutch industries and knowledge centres based on the needs of partner organisations. DECP continuously develops its networks with relevant knowledge institutes – such as universities and research centres – both in the Netherlands as well as in partner countries. 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), the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) in Geneva, NHO in Norway, DI in Denmark and NIR in Sweden.

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, Mondiaal FNV, CNV Internationaal and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO).

## List of abbreviations in the field of employers' organisations

ACE	ASEAN Confederation of Employers
AIDA	Attention, Interest, Decision, Action (Marketing model)
APEX	General term for an umbrella employers' organisation
AWVN	Algemene Werkgeversvereniging Nederland
BEA	Bureau of Employers Affairs of VCCI, Vietnam
BMO	Business Member Organisation
CBA	Collective Bargaining Agreement
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CNV	Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond
CRM	Customer Relations Management system
DECP	Dutch Employers' Cooperation Programme
DI	Confederation of Danish Industry
EAC	East African Community
EATUC	East African Trade Union Confederation
EAEO	East African Employers Organisation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EO	Employers' Organisation
FME	Dutch EO in technology industry
FNV	Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
ILO	International Labour Organisation
L&D	Learning & Development
LTO	Land- en Tuinbouworganisatie
MKB	Dutch BMO for SMEs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHO	Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise
NIR	International Council of Swedish Industry
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PSD	Private Sector Development
PUM	Netherlands Senior Experts
RVO	The Netherlands Enterprise Agency
SAFE	South Asian Forum of Employers
ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VNO-NCW	Verbond van Nederlandse Ondernemingen and the Nederlands Christelijk Werkgeversverbond

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