



CASSEEA  
Attn. V.

New Delhi  
India

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Department of Social  
Development  
Postbus 20061  
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The Netherlands  
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Date 31 March 2011  
Re Request for Information

**Our ref.**  
DSO/MO-131/11

**Cc**  
Dutch House of Representatives,  
Foreign Affairs Committee

Dear Mr. V

On 22 February 2011 we received your letter in which you request further information about the Dutch development cooperation policy, especially with regard to the Dutch co-financed organisations Cordaid, ICCO and Hivos. Below you will find the answers to your questions:

- 1) *Does the Dutch development aid and international cooperation policy focus on specific religious groups in specific parts of the world?*  
No. The Dutch development cooperation policy does not focus on specific religious groups.
- 2) *How do you explain, being a donor, that specific groups suffer (financial) exclusion from the Dutch government?*  
The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs finances non-governmental organisations such as ICCO, Hivos and Cordaid on the basis of five-year programmes that they submit to the Ministry. They are, however, autonomous organisations that have full ownership over the implementation of their programmes. As such, these organisations are responsible for selecting their own partners. These are careful procedures based on the capacity of a partner organisation to contribute to the objectives of the programme.  
Under the newly implemented Co-financing System II, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs finances 67 NGO's. Religion is not part of the selection procedure.  
There are no specific groups that suffer exclusion from financial support from the Dutch government on the basis of their religion.
- 3) *Is it part of the formal policy of the Dutch government to indirectly support Christian missionary activities?*  
No. Organisations of all religious backgrounds qualify for funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Proselytism does not qualify for funding from the Ministry.
- 4) *What is the reason for not being transparent on the website of the Ministry about the policy towards the support Christian organisations and why is the Dutch government hiding behind the specific mission of Dutch civil society organisations, in stead of disclosing their real policy?*

The Ministry publicly discloses which organisations receive funding and how much they receive. Since religious background or beliefs are not part of the selection procedure, this is not a separate issue for the public to be informed about. The organisations themselves display information on their website and in their annual reports about their activities, their vision and their mission statement.

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I hope to have informed you sufficiently with this information.

On behalf of the Minister for European Affairs and International Cooperation,



Bram van Ojik  
Director Social Development Department